

## THESIS ABSTRACT

Master of Arts in Biblical and Theological Studies

Adventist University of Africa

Theological Seminary

TITLE: ISAIAH'S "NEW HEAVEN AND NEW EARTH"  
ISAIAH 65:17; 66:22

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The interpretation of "new heaven and new earth" in Isaiah 65:17; 66:22 has attracted scholarly attention leading to polarization of views in scholarship. This enigma seems to come from the divergence among scholars with regard to the eschatology in Isaiah 65-66. Accordingly, this study uses contextual, linguistic and structural analytical methods to conclude that the creation of "new heaven and new earth" in Isaiah 65:17 should be understood as a metaphoric and hyperbolic expression of the future deliverance and restoration of Judah after captivity. The making of "the new heaven and the new earth" in Isaiah 66:22 is an anaphoric nuance of Isaiah 65:17. The phrase "new heaven and new earth" in Isaiah 65:17 and 66:22 is clearly in the context of post exilic restoration of Judah.

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ISAIAH 65:17; 66:22

A thesis

presented in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

Masters of Arts in Biblical and Theological Studies

by

Stephen Darkwa

March 2017





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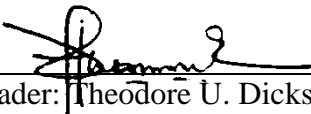
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This thesis is gratefully dedicated to My only lovely daughter Nana Adwoa Serwaa Asante and my supporting wife Doris Asante Darkwa; my parents Nana Kwame Darkwa and YaaSerwaa; all saints who are anticipating the blessed hope of New Heaven and New Earth wherein righteousness dwells, which ends the troubles in this world.

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sustains me every moment. He is the ultimate source of strength, wisdom and power,  
from whom all blessings flow.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BDB	The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon
EBC	Expositor's Bible Commentary
IB	Interpreter's Bible
JAAS	Journal of Asia Adventist Seminary
NAS	New American Standard Version
NKJV	New King James Version
NDOTTE	New Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis
NDT	New Dictionary of Theology
NIDOTTE	New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis
NIV	New International Version
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
SDABC	Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary
TDNT	Theological Dictionary of New Testament
TDOT	Theological Dictionary of Old Testament
TWOT	Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

In Isaiah 65:17, God the Almighty, makes a declaration כִּי־הִנְנִי בּוֹרֵא שְׁמַיִם חֲדָשִׁים וְאָרֶץ חֲדָשָׁה “For behold, I create the new heavens and a new earth” (NAS).<sup>1</sup> This pronouncement is echoed in Isaiah 66:22. This solemn declaration follows the reality that God’s people, Judah, have suffered captivity. Their captivity is due to incredulity, idolatry, and insincerity.<sup>2</sup> They trust in their hypocritical religious rituals instead of true faith and worship, as the result God’s judgment comes upon them in the form of exiles.

Accordingly, the promise כִּי־הִנְנִי בּוֹרֵא שְׁמַיִם חֲדָשִׁים וְאָרֶץ חֲדָשָׁה “for behold, I create new heavens and a new earth” comes as hope for God’s people. There will be “new heavens and a new earth,” but the manner in which they will be ushered in is debatably.<sup>3</sup> Some scholars consider Isaiah 65:17 and 66:22 as a later addition to the text. They explain that the verses which follow it are deemed not to be cosmic in character. They think Isaiah 66:22 has been influenced by Isaiah 65: 16. They see complete “disruption of thought sequence of Isaiah 65: 16 and 66:23, and claim that Isaiah 65: 17f are inserted into the text, in conscious imitation of Isaiah 66:22, after

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<sup>1</sup>Unless otherwise indicated, all the Bible references are from the New International Version (NIV).

<sup>2</sup> Francis D. Nichol, “New Heavens and New Earth [Isaiah 65:17],” in *Seventh-Day Adventist Bible Commentary (SDAC)*, ed. Francis D. Nichol, vol. 4 (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 1976), 328.

<sup>3</sup> Bryan E Beyer, *Encountering the Book of Isaiah* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 237; Nichol, “New Heavens and New Earth [Isaiah 65:17],” 328; Edward J. Young, *The Book of Isaiah* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1972), 513–514.

the rebuilding of the Second Temple with the purpose of shifting attention away from an anti-cultic theme apparent in the original text.”<sup>4</sup> But one indication of the final two chapters of Isaiah, is the *inclusio* forms by the recurrence of reference to “new heavens and a new earth” in Isaiah 65:17 and 66:22.<sup>5</sup>

This phrase כִּי־הִנְנִי בֹרֵא שָׁמַיִם וְאָרֶץ חֲדָשָׁה “For behold I about to create new heavens and a new earth”, which has only seven words in Hebrew, has attracted scholarly attention such that its interpretation is an enigma.<sup>6</sup> It appears much of the work done is devoted to the apocalyptic sense (millennial reign of the Returned Christ) of the phrase, and those “expositors vie with each other in saying that this must not be taken literal.”<sup>7</sup>

Edward J Young may well represent scholars of this view: “With the advent of the Messiah the blessing to be revealed will in every sense be so great that it can be described only as the creation of a new heaven and a new earth. The reference,

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<sup>4</sup> W. Brueggemann, “Isaiah 40-66,” in *Westminster Biblical Companion* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998), 259; E. J. Kissane, *The Book of Isaiah* (Dublin: Browne & Nolan, 1943), 11:326; P. A. Smith, *Rhetoric and Redaction in Trito-Isaiah: The Structure, Growth and Authorship of Isaiah 56-66* (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 1995), 132; Claus Westermann and David Green, “Isaiah 40-66: A Commentary,” in *OTL* (London, UK: SCM, 1969), 307, 428; A. J. Tomasino, “Isaiah 1:1-2: And 63-66 and the Composition of the Isainic Corpus,” *Journal for the study of the Old Testament* 57 (1993): 81–98.

<sup>5</sup> John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah Chapter 40-66* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1998), 655.

<sup>6</sup> Gardner Anne E., “The Nature of the New Heavens and New Earth in Isaiah 66:22,” *Australian Biblical Review*, 2002, 50 edition, sec. 11, 11; S. R. Driver, *An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament* (Edinburgh, Scotland: T & T Clark, 1888), 34; R. H. Pfeiffer, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (London, UK: Adam and Charles Black, 1948), 234; O. Eissfeldt and P. Ackroyd, *The Old Testament: An Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1966), 252; L. Liebreich, “The Composition of the Book of Isaiah,” *JQR* 46 (1955); H. G. Jefferson, “Notes on the Authorship of Isaiah 65 and 66,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 68 (1949): 225–230.

<sup>7</sup> Henry Bultema, *Commentary on Isaiah* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publication, 1981), 612–628.

however, is not to be restricted to the first advent but includes the entire reign of Christ, including the Second Advent and the eternal state.”<sup>8</sup>

An attempt to detail the passage apocalyptically, pointing forward to the new heavens and new earth to be ushered in at the close of millennium has these ramifications.<sup>9</sup> Death is still present in Isaiah 65:20 whereas in Revelation 21:4 death is no more in the new heavens and new earth. Again, in Isaiah 65:23 children are being born, but Luke 20:35 indicate that in the new heaven and new earth “those accounted worthy to obtain that world neither marry, nor are given in marriage (NAS).” Further, Isaiah 65:23-24 disclosures that worshippers on their way to Jerusalem will see the carcasses of wicked ones whereas according to Revelation 20:22 the fires of the last day will renovate the earth completely before it becomes the home of the redeemed.<sup>10</sup>

Gardner puts the commentator’s views connected with the concept of “new heavens and new earth” into two parameters.<sup>11</sup> Those advocating “that the old heavens and old earth are to be physically destroyed and new ones created in their place,”<sup>12</sup> and those who postulate that “the old heavens and old earth are to be renewed in a metaphorical or figurative sense.”<sup>13</sup> This conundrum seems to come from the divergence in scholarship with regard to the eschatology in Isaiah, especially

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<sup>8</sup> Edward J. Young, *The Book of Isaiah: The English Text, With Introduction and Notes*, vol. III (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1992), 514.

<sup>9</sup> Nichol, “New Heavens and New Earth [Isaiah 65:17],” 4: 332.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., 332.

<sup>11</sup> Anne E., “The Nature of the New Heavens and New Earth in Isaiah 66:22,” 11.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., 11.

<sup>13</sup> Westermann explicitly rejects the first view, saying that it belongs to apocalyptic literature. Instead, the created order “is to be miraculously renewed”. Kissane is more specific, saying “the restoration of Sion” is “a new world order in which piety and justice will prevail”. Kissane, *The Book of Isaiah*, 11:326; Westermann and Green, “Isaiah 40-66: A Commentary,” 428.

Isa 65 and 66.<sup>14</sup> Meanwhile, it seems a comprehensive study of postexilic eschatological sense is overlooked. In light of this, it is worthy to reinvestigate Isaiah's eschatology in relation to the concept of creation of "new heavens and a new earth."

### **Statement of the Problem**

Isaiah 65:17 and 66:22 have received considerable scholarly discussions,<sup>15</sup> yet a detailed historical and contextual (a single normative reading of the text) investigation has not been undertaken. Delitzsch observes that the kingdom of God in Isaiah is the kingdom of a "new creation" (2 Cor 5:17). This "new creation" manifests in present lives of believers.<sup>16</sup> This interpretation lacks historical analysis of Isaiah 65:17 and 66:22. Oswalt indicates that "the new heavens and new earth" is the millennial kingdom (the world to come" Heb 2:5) in which this world will be redeemed and renewed (Rev 20:4-6).<sup>17</sup>

Matthew Henry's commentary on Isaiah 65:17 believes that there are "new heavens and new earth" that will exist after "the first heavens and first earth had passed away" (2 Pet 3:13; Rev 21:1).<sup>18</sup> Both Oswalt and Henry have considered remote future fulfillment of Isaiah 65:17 and 66:22, lacking historical and contextual analysis. M. R. Stead observes, the prophet was convinced that the past and present realities did not exhaust God's purpose for his people. For that reason, Israel will be

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<sup>14</sup> See detail discussion in chapter 2 in this study.

<sup>15</sup> Nichol, "New Heavens and New Earth [Isaiah 65:17]."

<sup>16</sup> Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah Chapter 40-66*, 656.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 656.

<sup>18</sup> Henry Matthew, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible*, vol. 5 (New York, NY: Fleming H. Revell, 1935), 1115.

renewed and restored people who would be regathered to their former homeland.<sup>19</sup>

Due to these polarizations, there are legitimate issues that should be addressed.

Whether “new heavens and new earth” is literal or figurative. Whether the meaning of

Isaiah 65:17 and 66:22 be the same as New Testament texts like 2Peter 3:13 and

Revelation 21:1. The nature of the eschatology in Isaiah 65 and 66 be interpreted.

These issues will provide platform for the discussion in this study.

### **Purpose of the Study**

This study attempts to provide the meaning of the “new heaven and a new earth”. The discussion seeks to examine the impact of the “new heaven and new earth creation” and general eschatology in Isaiah.

### **Significance of the Study**

Much hard work has gone into the interpretation of the phrase “new heavens and a new earth.” The reasons for these vary, but certainly interest in the larger shape of Isaiah as a whole corpus has contributed to the fresh investment of labor in scholarship and this paper is no exception.<sup>20</sup> It, however, is determined, among other things, to reshape the evangelical theology of the future hope of the Jew as people of God.

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<sup>19</sup> M. R. Stead, “Isaiah,” in *Dictionary of the Old Testament Prophets*, ed. Mark J. Boda and J. Goedon Mc Conville (Nottingham, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 2012), 370; Geoffrey W. Grogan and Frank E. Gaebelien, “Isaiah,” in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1986), 6:351.

<sup>20</sup> R. F. Melugin and Marvin A. Sweeney, *New Visions of Isaiah* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 214.

## Methods and Procedures

The method for this study is exegesis.<sup>21</sup> This study uses OT historical-grammatical exegesis, particularly, contextual, linguistic and structural analysis. The methods seek to investigate the historical and contextual meaning of the final form of the text in question, rather than biblical and systematic theology.<sup>22</sup>

This study is divided into five chapters. The introductory chapter provides the justification for the study and its methods and defines the parameters. The chapter two surveys the scholarly materials which consider the views of the authorities. Chapter three presents the context of the book of Isaiah; the author, audience, purpose, structure and genre. The chapter 4 presents an analysis of Isaiah 65:17 and 66:22 in the context of exegesis. The grammatical analysis, lexical elements and intertextuality are relevant for this section of discussion. This chapter also studies the relationship between Isaiah 65:17; 66:22 and 2 Peter 3:13 and Revelation 21:1. The final chapter summarizes and concludes the findings of the study with all the references.

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<sup>21</sup>”There are several methods used by biblical scholars of persuasions in doing biblical exegesis. Examples are: historical-critical (question the historicity of the Bible events and accounts), literary-critical (question biblical literary structure and content), redaction-critical (attributes much of the Bible works of redactors), source-critical (questions the source of biblical information), and historical-grammatical (accepts and utilizes biblical history and language)”. See Michael Onyedikachi Akpa, *Summarized Lecture Notes for Introduction to Biblical Exegesis and Hermeneutics* (Accra, Ghana: Adventist University of Africa, 2012).

<sup>22</sup> Henry A. Virkler and Karelyne Gerber Ayayo, *Hermeneutics: Principles and Processes of Biblical Interpretation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 17–18. Biblical theology studies the divine revelation as was given through old and New Testament. It shows the development of theological knowledge during the Old and New era. Those who use biblical theology would use the principle of double fulfillment and *sensus plenior*. They may have both immediate fulfillment (postexilic) and remote (apocalyptic) fulfillment of the prophecy. Even though, this method has merits, yet, it seems to over-interpreted textual relation, and its preference of multiple canonical possibilities as opposed to single normative reading of a text. Whiles Isaiah 65:17 and 66:22 should be studied in their own context; these texts may be compared to New Testament apocalyptic texts

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This review of literature involves two types of discussions: The first deals with the eschatology in Isaiah, which may include the nature of eschatology in Isa 56-66. The second part discusses the views of “new heavens and a new earth” in Isaiah exclusive of commentaries on New Testament concept of “new heaven and a new earth.”

#### **The Eschatology in Isaiah**

As per the motif of the eschatology, it is a pivotal of the book of Isaiah.<sup>1</sup> Anyone who takes the book of Isaiah seriously must seek to understand its eschatological elements. These elements are significant for both its quantity and its role. But with regard to the definition of the eschatology, scholars are divided. Some scholars insist that it should be restricted only to the apocalyptic view of the end.<sup>2</sup>

The adjective “apocalyptic” comes from the Greek word *apokalypsis* which means “revelation” or “disclosure”, now it functions as noun to describe revelatory

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<sup>1</sup> J Alec Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah: An Introduction & Commentary* (Downers, Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 23; James Mullenburg, “Isaiah 40-66,” in *The Interpreter’s Bible*, ed. George Arthur Buttrick, vol. 4 (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1956), 399; William J. Dumbrell, “The Purpose of the Book of Isaiah,” *Tyndale Bulletin* (36, 1985), 111–128.

<sup>2</sup> Jan Fekkes, *Isaiah and Prophet Tradition in the Book of Revelation* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 631; David Mathewson, *A New Heaven and New Earth: The Meaning and Function of the OT in Revelation 21:1-23:5* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003), 231; Ranko Stefanovic, *Revelation of Jesus Christ: Commentary on the Book of Revelation* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2009), 631–652.

literature.<sup>3</sup> The “apocalyptic” reveals the hidden things of God and also provides a glimpse of divine world. It shows divine involvement in the affairs of human salvation through symbolism.<sup>4</sup> The “apocalyptic” view looks forward to the reign of Jesus Christ.<sup>5</sup> The role of the “apocalyptic” is to offer explanation why the righteous suffers and why the kingdom of God delays, and also focuses on a period of time yet future when God would intervene to judge the world and establish kingdom of righteousness.<sup>6</sup>

In the judgment of Rowley, “apocalyptic is the child of prophecy.”<sup>7</sup> D.S. Russell admits that “there can be no doubt that the tap root, as it were, went deep down into Hebrew prophecy.”<sup>8</sup> One significant aspect of “apocalyptic” is that it perceives good and evil at the beginning of humankind. And this good and evil involves not only human beings but also angelic world (Gen 3:1-24; cf. Rev 12:7-12).<sup>9</sup> Hence, apocalyptic takes into accounts the creation of a real new heaven and new earth devoid of sin and its related consequences where the originator of sin plus his host of angelic world will be destroyed.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> William G. Johnson, “Biblical Apocalyptic,” in *Handbook of Seventh-Day Adventist Theology (HSDAT)*, ed. Raoul Dederen, vol. 12 (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 2000), 784–790.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, 784-790.

<sup>5</sup> Robert Mounce, *The Book of Revelation* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1997), 1–5.

<sup>6</sup> Robert L. Thompson, *Revelation 1-7* (Chicago, IL: Moody, 1992), 25.

<sup>7</sup> H. H. Rowley, *The Relevance of Apocalyptic* (New York, NY: Association Press, 1964), 15.

<sup>8</sup> D. S. Russell, *Method and Messages of Jewish Apocalyptic* (Philadelphia, PN: Westminster, 1964), 88.

<sup>9</sup> Koch Klaus, “Damnation and Salvation: Prophetic Metahistorical and the Rise of Eschatology in the Book of Isaiah,” *Journal of America Theological Library Association (ATLA)* 5, no. 12 (1972).

<sup>10</sup>See apocalyptic discussions in the book of Revelation.

In contrast, eschatology is the “doctrine of a principal change in the destiny of the world which brings forth new structures and circumstances.”<sup>11</sup> Eschatology includes the conviction of a final, everlasting and incorruptible community between God and humankind.”<sup>12</sup> Thus, eschatology is the study of “last things.”<sup>13</sup> The eschatology should be understood as hope in coming of the new epoch which transcends the present-day conditions of history.<sup>14</sup> It follows the direction set by God, but does not automatically involve the end of the history of the world.<sup>15</sup> It is more than just a hope. However, P. R. Davies and Donald E. Gowan, are of the views that eschatology is by trusting that some days to come the present problems will be solved, and the new epoch will annihilate evil and forever bring solution to the present problem according to God’s intention for humankind since creation.<sup>16</sup>

Zlatko Musija proposes passages that constitute eschatology in the book of Isaiah on the premises of the content of the eschatological hope as follows: Isaiah 2:2-4, Zion’s mountain will attract others to come to Zion. Isaiah 9-11 is messianic hope and Isaiah 40-55 is redemption of Israel from violent Babylon. Isaiah 51:14 indicates

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<sup>11</sup> Klaus, “Damnation and Salvation: Prophetic Metahistorical and the Rise of Eschatology in the Book of Isaiah,” 34.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., 34.

<sup>13</sup> S. H. Travis, “Eschatology,” in *New Dictionary of Theology*, ed. S. B. Ferguson and D. F. Wright (Leicester Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1994), 227; S. Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 1994), 780; W. Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994), 1091.

<sup>14</sup> Klaus, “Damnation and Salvation: Prophetic Metahistorical and the Rise of Eschatology in the Book of Isaiah,” 18.

<sup>15</sup> P. R. Davies, “Eschatology in the Book of Daniel,” *Journal Studies of the Old Testament* 17 (1980): 38; Donald E. Gowan, *Eschatology in the Old Testament* (London, UK: T & T Clark, 2000), 8–9.

<sup>16</sup> Gowan, *Eschatology in the Old Testament*, 8–9.

hope to return from captivity. Isaiah 60:1-4 describes glorification of Zion.<sup>17</sup> Koch acknowledges Isaiah 1:21-28 as eschatology for the lost righteousness of the city shall regain.<sup>18</sup> He bases his proposal on the premises of damnation and salvation. For him the very characteristic of prophetic description of God's attitude regarding his chosen people is salvation and damnation.<sup>19</sup> Dumbrell considers Isa 24-27, 33-35, 40-55 as the eschatological passages on the point of hope and history.<sup>20</sup>

Errol Hulse claims that Isaiah 2 "they will beat their sword into ploughshares" is a prophecy concerning Judah and Jerusalem. He contests that Isaiah 62 is prevailing intercession to establish Jerusalem and makes it famous in the earth.<sup>21</sup> He believes that Isaiah 9-11 "the government will be on his shoulders" is prediction of the future Messiah who will stand as a banner of the people. He sees better time ahead of Egypt in Isaiah 19-13 and prophecy of wide world redemption in Isaiah 59-60 because nations will come to the light.<sup>22</sup> For Micheal A. Grisanti, Isaiah envisions the nation Israel in the midst of the Babylon exile, but comfort them and promise that God will bring them back (Isa 40-66).<sup>23</sup>

As per some scholars, the eschatological structure of the book of Isaiah is categorized in two blocks of divisions. Chapters' 1-39 deal with judgments and

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<sup>17</sup> Zlatko Musija, "The Eschatological Hope in the Book of Isaiah," *European Theology Teachers Convention ATI 4* (May 28, 2011): 4.

<sup>18</sup> Klaus, "Damnation and Salvation: Prophetic Metahistorical and the Rise of Eschatology in the Book of Isaiah," 56.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., 56

<sup>20</sup> Dumbrell, "The Purpose of the Book of Isaiah," 111-128.

<sup>21</sup> Hulse Errol, *The Amazing Eschatological Dimensions of Isaiah* (Cukfield, Sussex: FIEC Church Planter's Conference, 2003), 35-40.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., 35-40.

<sup>23</sup> Micheal A. Grisanti, "Israel's Mission to the Nations in Isaiah 40-55: A Update," *The Master's Seminary Journal* 40-50 (Spring 1998): 39-61.

chapters 40-66 solely for hope.<sup>24</sup> But Dumbrell intrudes into these two blocks of division, that, there are intertwined of judgments and hope.<sup>25</sup> Accordingly, Dumbrell proposes eschatological structure of the book of Isaiah as follows. Isaiah 1-12 deal with hope and judgments,<sup>26</sup> Isaiah 13-23 is for history, Isaiah 24-27 eschatology, Isaiah 28-33 is for history, Isaiah 34-35 deal with eschatology, Isaiah 36-39 is history, Isaiah 40-55 is for eschatology, and Isaiah 56-66 is history/ judgment and eschatology.<sup>27</sup>

On the contrary, Musija, considers his proposal to be reductionist, because in Isaiah 13-23, even though, he considers the passages to be history, yet there are even implanted hope for the worse enemies of God.<sup>28</sup> Similarly, in Isaiah 28-33 there are identifiable hope that comes as surprise in few places (Isa 28:5, 6, 16-17; 29:17-24; 30:18-26; 32:1-7; 32:15-19; 33:5-24).<sup>29</sup> In Isaiah 19:16-25, the biggest antagonists of Israel, “great and arrogant Egypt and Assyria will ‘in that day’ be attracted to Israel and its God.”<sup>30</sup> Again, in Isaiah 29:17-24 there is the interlude of hope for those who are suffering: deaf, blind, afflicted, and needy will experience gladness in the Lord,

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<sup>24</sup> R. E. Clements, “Isaiah and the Deliverance of Jerusalem,” *Sheffield Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Press* (1980): 124; W. L. Holladay, *Scroll of a Prophetic Heritage* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1978), 91-113; John N. Oswalt, “Judgment and Hope: The Full-Orbed Gospel,” *Trinity Journal* 17 (1996): 191-202.

<sup>25</sup> Dumbrell, “The Purpose of the Book of Isaiah,” 111-128.

<sup>26</sup> Dumbrell divides the first 12 chapters of Isaiah into smaller units; judgment (1:2-31), hope (2:1-4), judgment (2:5-3:26), hope (4:1-6), judgment (5:1-8:8), hope (8:9-9:7), judgment (9:8-10:19), hope (10:20-12:6).

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 111-128.

<sup>28</sup> Musija, “The Eschatological Hope in the Book of Isaiah,” 2.

<sup>29</sup> Alec Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah: An Introduction & Commentary*, 185.

<sup>30</sup> John Goldingay, *Old Testament Theology: Israel's Faith*, vol. 2 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 2: 355.

and Isaiah 30:18–26 God will be gracious, takes away their weeping and He will, as their Teacher hears their prayers and shows them the way to walk in.<sup>31</sup>

Likewise, Isaiah 40–55 which are often described as “hope from end to end” has some warning of judgments. Koch traces the growth of eschatology in Isaiah into these segments to form a structure as follows. Isaiah 1:21-27 is mixer of judgment and restoration, Isaiah 2:1-4 the city of Jerusalem and its temple become prominent and God becomes only true God among nations, Isaiah 4:1-6 the shame of childless will be no more, Isaiah 8:9-9:7 an ideal Monarch will provide peace especially for Judah and Israel, Isaiah 10:20-12:6 God will provide a rod of deliverance-“Emmanuel God with us”, Isaiah 28:33 God gives discerning spirit to leaders and judges especially Hezekiah, and the worst enemies of Israel will come to know God of Israel and serve Him.<sup>32</sup>

Oswalt concurs with other scholars that the book concludes with judgment and salvation. However, the last two chapters, the eschatology reaches its zenith, for the promise of “new heaven and a new earth” (Isa 65:17; 66:22).<sup>33</sup>

The above discussions of the eschatology in the book of Isaiah have the following implications. First, whenever the prophet is primarily speaking with regard to judgment, he steps further to underline that there is hope (salvation) for those who wait and trust Yahweh. Thus, the prophet paints the image of splendid future to reflect

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<sup>31</sup> John Goldingay, *Old Testament Theology: Israel's Faith*, vol. 2 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 2: 355

<sup>32</sup> Klaus, “Damnation and Salvation: Prophetic Metahistorical and the Rise of Eschatology in the Book of Isaiah,” 56.

<sup>33</sup> Grogan and Gaebelien, “Isaiah,” 6:348; Robert Fausset Jamieson and David Brown, *Jamieson & Brown's Commentary on the Whole Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1961), 592; Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah Chapter 40-66*, 510–516; Mark J. Boda and J. Gordon McConville, *Dictionary of the Old Testament Prophets* (Nottingham, England: InterVarsity Press, 2012), 391–394.

God's basic characteristic which is love and salvation.<sup>34</sup> Second, even the judgment itself is "continual expression of divine compassion and redemptive activity."<sup>35</sup> Normally, those who undergo injustice and violence zealously expect to see judgment over those who subjugate them, so, through judgment of the wicked people, salvation may come for those who are oppressed. Third, Yahweh's judgment of the present situation warrants a glorious future. The future eternity will be characterized by peace, faith, joy, justice, and intimacy with God.<sup>36</sup>

### **The Nature of Eschatology in Isaiah 65-66**

The nature of eschatology in Isaiah 65-66 is perceived in two main ways: postexilic or apocalyptic.<sup>37</sup> The postexilic view proposes that the glorious future promises of the book of Isaiah especially chapters 65-66 are to be fulfilled after the return of the exiles from the Babylonian captivity.<sup>38</sup>

Page H. Kelly says that "the circumstances reflected in these chapters are those that prevailed in Jerusalem following the return of the exiles from Babylon in

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<sup>34</sup> Musija, "The Eschatological Hope in the Book of Isaiah," 4.

<sup>35</sup> William A. Dyrness, *Themes in Old Testament Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1977), 185; David Allan Hubbard, "Hope in the Old Testament," *Tyndale Bulletin*, 1983.

<sup>36</sup> Oswalt, "Judgment and Hope: The Full-Orbed Gospel," 201.

<sup>37</sup> Daniel Bediako, "Isaiah's New Heavens and New Earth (Isa. 65:17; 66:22)," *Journal of Asia Adventist Studies* 11, no. 2 (2008): 1-2.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

538 B.E.,<sup>39</sup> and that Isaiah 65-66 mirrors the postexilic period,<sup>40</sup> and designates the current situation of the returned exiles.<sup>41</sup> Whybray concurs with Westermann that Isaiah 65:17 lacks the general marks of apocalyptic predictions, but it marks the beginning of a new radical theology, born of the despair of post exilic life which was later taken over by the apocalyptic writers.<sup>42</sup>

In light of this, Bediako submits that “The ‘new heaven and new earth’ constitutes a poetic expression of the return of the exiles from captivity to rebuild and settle in Judah under renewed conditions and that new heaven and new earth in Isaiah 65:17; 66: 22 are not to be equated with those in Revelator 21.”<sup>43</sup> Watts picks up the reference in Isaiah 65:17 to “the new heavens and a new earth” as backdrop to believes that Isaiah 66:22 is an address to the faithful pilgrims in Babylon who would

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<sup>39</sup> Page H. Kelly, “Isaiah” *The Broadman Bible Commentar*, Clifton J Allen., vol. 5 (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1971), 350–351.

<sup>40</sup> Alec Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah: An Introduction & Commentary*, 526; Kelly, “Isaiah” *The Broadman Bible Commentar*, 5:350–351; Ridderbor Jan, *Isaiah*, trans. John Vriend (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1985), 508; Elizabeth Achtemeir, *The Community and Message of Isaiah 56-66: A Theological Commentary* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 1982), 32; Joseph A. Alexander, *Commentary on the Prophecies of Isaiah* (Grand Rapid: Zondarvan, 1953), 334; John L. Mckenzie, “Second Isaiah: Introduction, Translation, and Notes,” in *AB 20* (Garden City: Doublyday, 1967), 2.

<sup>41</sup> Bediako, “Isaiah’s New Heavens and New Earth (Isa. 65:17; 66:22)”; G. A. F. Knight, “The New Israel: A Commentary on the Book of Isaiah 56-66,” in *ITC 238* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1985), 96, 117–117, 246; J. Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 56-66: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New York: Doubleday: AB 19B, 2003), 285–290; Ramond E. Brown, “Deutero-Isaiah,” in *New Jerome Bible Commentary*, ed. Joseph A. Fitzmyer and Roland E. Murphy, vol. 2 (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1990), 34.

<sup>42</sup> Westermann and Green, “Isaiah 40-66: A Commentary,” 310–341; J. Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 56-66: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, 285–287; Daniel Bediako, “Isaiah’s New Heavens and New Earth (Isa. 65:17; 66:22),” *Mission and Society Research Institute sahyook University* 6 (2012): 3; Roger N. Whyby, “Isaiah 40-66,” in *New Century Bible*, ed. Roger N. Whyby (London, UK: Oliphants, 1975), 275.

<sup>43</sup> Daniel Bediako, “Sabbath in Isaiah 66:22,” *Asia -Africa Journal of Mission and Ministry* 6 (2012): 170–173.

endure before Yahweh in worship (Isa 56:5), but this promise is not eternal life in the New Testament sense (John 10:27-29; 1 Pet 1:23).<sup>44</sup>

Kidner asserts that Isaiah just uses ordinary Old Testament terms to describe such new creation.<sup>45</sup> Henceforth, such promises of creation appear to pertain to the remote future, yet these promises will be fulfilled just after the return of the exiles from captivity.<sup>46</sup> Later, Grogan and Mauser place Isaiah 65:17 between the postexilic and the apocalyptic by indicating that Isaiah 65-66 deal primarily with post exilic people, even though, there are traces of apocalyptic elements.<sup>47</sup>

Some schools of thought posit that Isaiah 65-66 is a pre-exilic material, even though, some of the prophecies are to be fulfilled after the return from exile.<sup>48</sup> These scholars envisage transformation of the existing one rather than a literal creation of “new heaven and a new earth.”<sup>49</sup> They maintain that the glorious promises are intended to be fulfilled in restored Judah, yet, since literal Israel were not ready to

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<sup>44</sup> John D. W. Watts, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 25 (WACO, Texas: Word Books, 1987), 365.

<sup>45</sup> Derek Kidner, “Isaiah,” in *The New Bible Commentary: 21st Century Edition (TNBC)*, ed. D. A. Carson (Leicester Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1994), 669; John Goldingay, “Isaiah,” in *NIBC 13* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2001), 368–369; P. D. Hanson, *The Dawn of Apocalyptic* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1975), 134–136.

<sup>46</sup> Kidner, “Isaiah,” 145.

<sup>47</sup> Grogan, “Isaiah,” 314, 322; Mauser, “Isaiah 65:17-25,” 184.

<sup>48</sup> Ronald F. Youngblood, *The Book of Isaiah: An Introductory Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993), 143; Young, *The Book of Isaiah*, 3:427; “I create” [Isa 65: 17], *SDABC*, 7: 332.

<sup>49</sup> H. C. Leupold, *Exposition of Isaiah* (Michigan, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House 1971), 1: 366; Alexander, *Commentary on the Prophecies of Isaiah*, 456; Achtemeier, *The community and message of Isaiah 56-66*, 132; Brevard S. Childs, *Isaiah* (OTL; Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 2001), 539.

keep their part of the covenant, the promises were transferred to spiritual Israel, the church.<sup>50</sup>

According to the apocalyptic view of the Isaianic eschatology, the glorious promises in Isaiah 65-66 focus on the earthly millennial reign of the Messiah. This may either be before or after the return of Jesus Christ.<sup>51</sup> Grogan submits that the “new heavens and a new earth” (Isa 65:17; 66:22) presumes the advent of God’s new order, where all will be perfected (Rev 21-22).<sup>52</sup> Thus he sees both earthly millennial and postmillennial dimensions in the Isaiah eschatological promises.<sup>53</sup>

### **Views on “New Heavens and a New Earth”**

There are two positions concerning the view of “new heaven and new earth”, namely literal and figurative.<sup>54</sup> Accordingly, this portion of the review explores studies that focus on the phrase in Isaiah 65:17 “a new heavens and a new earth.” Whereas most commentators treat the concept of “new heavens and new earth.” this

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<sup>50</sup> Merrill F. Unger, *Unger’s Commentary on the Old Testament (UCOT)* (Chicago: Moody, 1981), 2:1334-1339; See Kidner, “Isaiah,” *The New Bible Commentary: 21<sup>st</sup> century Edition (TNBC)*, 670.

<sup>51</sup> Scholars who advocate on this view think that some promises were fulfilled during the post exilic period; however, their true fulfilment will be either before or after the return of Christ Jesus. See Youngblood, *The book of Isaiah*, 161 ed. Charles F. Pfeiffer and Everett F. Harrison, *Wycliffe Bible Commentary* (Chicago: Moody, 1990), 653; Bultema, *Commentary on Isaiah*, 619-620; Oswalt, *Isaiah: NIV Application Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 23: 689; Grogan, “Isaiah” EBC, 6:315; Ridderbos, *Isaiah Commentary on the Bible* ed. James D. G. Dum (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 541; Young, *The Book of Isaiah*, 3:514; Unger, *Unger’s Commentary on The Old Testament*, 2:1306; Willem VanGemeren, “Isaiah,” *Evangelical Commentary* ed. Walter A. Elwell (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1989), 513-514; Oswalt, *The book of Isaiah* chapter 40-66, 656; Wann M. Fanwar, “Creation in Isaiah” (Ph. D, Dissertation, Andrews University, 2001), 136-139, 191-197; Gerhard Hasel and W.G.C. Murdoch, “The Sabbath in the Prophetic and Historical Literature of the Old Testament, in *The Sabbath in Scripture and History*,” ed. Kenneth A. Strand (Washington, D.C.: Review & Herald, 1982), 49F.

<sup>52</sup> Grogan and Gaebelien, “Isaiah,” 14.

<sup>53</sup> Merrill F. Unger, *Unger’s Commentary on the Old Testament (UCOT)*, vol. 2 (Chicago, IL: Moody, 1981), 1334.

<sup>54</sup> Young, *The Book of Isaiah*, 514; Paul E. Kretzmann, *Popular Commentary of the Bible: The New Testament*, vol. 2 (St. Louis: Concordia House, 1923), 555.

review focuses on the commentaries that draw attention to “new heavens and a new earth” in Isaiah 65:17. This study actually highlights on the interpretations of the Early Church Fathers, Reformers and contemporary scholars.

The early church Fathers link “new heavens and a new earth” in Isaiah 65:17; 66:22 with the future “day of the Lord.”<sup>55</sup> Consequently, they underscore the motivation for godly living.<sup>56</sup> They base their hope on the prophetic declaration of Isaiah 65:17 and 66:22. For that matter, they interpret the creation of “the new heaven and a new earth” as the second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. According to them, the Apostle John sees the fulfillment of Isaiah 65:17 in his vision at Patmos: “Then I saw a new heavens and a new earth for the first heavens and the first earth had passed away...I saw the Holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband” (Rev 21:1-2 NKJV).

Whiles the early Church Fathers hold to the hope of “a new heaven and a new earth” in the future, they disagree as to how a new heaven and a new earth will come into existence, whether through God’s renewal of the existing heaven and earth or total annihilation of the existing universe, which then follows God’s recreation out of nothing.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Gregg R. Allison, *Historical Theology* (Grand Rapid , Michigan: Zondarvan, 2011), 67. Tertullian, *The Shows, or De Spectaculis*, 30, ANF 3:91; Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, 5. 36, ANF, 1:566-567. Similarly, Origen reasons from Paul’s statement in 1 Corinthians 7:31 that “this world in its present form is passing away.” He continues that “if the form of the world is passing away, it is by no means an annihilation or destruction rather than a change in quality and a transformation of appearance.” See Origen, *First Principle*, 1.6.4, in ANF, 4:262

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., 67.

<sup>57</sup> The Early Church Fathers denied that the final and convulsive event would come about by the annihilation of the current heavens and earth: “Irenaeus explained that there will be the new heavens and the new earth, in which the new man will remain, continually enjoying new communion with God”. For Origen and Methodius, the end of the current universe would not be destructive rather transformative of the existing ones. See Methodius, *The Discourse on the Resurrection, I.8. in ANF*, 366 365AD. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2001), 6; Allison, *Historical Theology*, 72.

Thomas Aquinas affirms the concept of “new heavens and new earth” when he responds positively to the question of whether the world will be renewed. He cites Isaiah 65:17 and Revelation 21:1 to explain that the world is made for man as his dwelling place, therefore, since man will be renewed, likewise the universe. Aquinas understands the creation of “new heavens and a new earth” in Isaiah 65:17 as total renewal of present universe; “That the future renewal of the world proceeded in the works of the six days by way of a remote likeness, namely in the glory and grace of the angels.”<sup>58</sup>

Saint Augustine opines that the new heaven and new earth will come after the judgment of the one who sits on the throne, from whose face heaven and earth fled. The wicked will go away into everlasting punishment of fire while the righteous will go into life eternal. He indicates that “the qualities of the corruptible elements suited our corruptible bodies shall utterly perish, and our substance shall receive such qualities as shall, by a wonderful transmutation, harmonize with our immortal bodies, so that, as the world itself is renewed to some better thing, it is fitly accommodated to men, themselves renewed in their flesh to some better thing.”<sup>59</sup>

John Calvin distinguished himself to interpret the prophecy of “new heavens and new earth” in Isaiah 65:17 as metaphor of the church.<sup>60</sup> Calvin elucidates that by these metaphors, the life that exist now will undergo a future renewal. The corruption of heaven and earth will be purged by fire. That God has both the proclivity and the power not only to restore his church, but to restore it in such a manner that it shall

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<sup>58</sup> Thomas Aquinas, “Summa Theologica, Sup,” *Basilica*, last modified 1991, accessed August 2, 2016, <http://www.basilica.org/pages/ebooks/St.%20Thomas%20Aquinas-Summa%20Theologica.pdf>.

<sup>59</sup> Saint Augustine, *The City of God* (New York, NY: Random House, 1950), 735.

<sup>60</sup> John Calvin, *Commentary on the Prophet Isaiah*, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids: Baker Book, 2005), 397–398.

appear to gain new life and dwell in a new world. The church will see her great blessing at the coming of Jesus Christ, wherein the restoration of the church shall be accomplished and the last resurrection will be fulfilled which will usher into the whole reign of Christ.<sup>61</sup>

Mueller, posits that it is not appropriate to take the passages concerning a “new heaven and a new earth” (Is 65:17; 66:22; 2 Pet 3:13; Rev 21:1) in a literal sense, since the “new heaven and the new earth” are “symbols of the heavenly mansions and eternal life.”<sup>62</sup> He remarks “Just as this earth now offers man a comfortable home, so the children of God receive the most comfortable homes, full of all manner of blessedness, in heaven (John 14:1-4).”<sup>63</sup> However, Mueller could not discuss as to the time in history the heavens mansion and eternal life will be realized.

Edward Young claims that the “new heavens and a new earth” should be understood as a symbol to indicate a broad restoration in the present course of matters.<sup>64</sup> He concludes that with the coming of Christ, the Messiah, which includes His entire reign both Second Advent and eternal is, perfectly, the description of the creation of “a new heavens and a new earth.”<sup>65</sup>

Watts believes that the “new heavens and a new earth” in Isaiah 65:17; 66:22 address the faithful pilgrims<sup>66</sup> who come and worship Yahweh. He points out that Yahweh also promises the worshippers permanency thereby their names and their

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<sup>61</sup> Calvin, *Commentary on the Prophet Isaiah*, 3:398.

<sup>62</sup> John Theodore Mueller, *Christian Dogmatics* (St. Louis: Concordia House, 1955), 633.

<sup>63</sup> John Theodore Mueller, *Christian Dogmatics*, 633.

<sup>64</sup> Young, *The Book of Isaiah: The English Text, With Introduction and Notes*, III:514.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid*, 514.

<sup>66</sup> John D. W. Watts, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 25 (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1987), 365.

children will have place before Yahweh. Watts is alluding to the post exilic creation order where the returnees from Babylonian captivity will come before God as faithful children in order to offer sacrifices and offering unto God.<sup>67</sup>

George Arthur Buttrick looks at the concept of “new heavens and a new earth” in Isaiah 65:17 from different viewpoint. He proposes that the “new heavens and a new earth” are the redemptive acts of God that reflect in the natural world.<sup>68</sup> For him, the poem in Isaiah 65:17-25 is purely devoted to the new age amidst joy and peace. Against this backdrop, the creation of “new heavens and a new earth” is the description of the community life.<sup>69</sup> Thus the pronouncements in Isaiah 65:17 “new heavens and new earth” imagery undergirds redemption act of God. The primary purpose of it all is to get across a message of redemption. Therefore, the creation of “new heavens and new earth” shall be understood as God’s continuing creative work,<sup>70</sup> which may express itself as redemption in the present, but not the original creation like Genesis 1:2. Oswalt adds that “redemption is certainly primarily in terms of space and focus.”<sup>71</sup> Likewise, Ph. B. Harner concedes that “creation serves as the basis for the prophet’s belief in God’s imminent redemption of Israel.”<sup>72</sup>

John De Gruchy states Israel’s hope in her struggles for justice and peace as “but be glad and rejoice forever in what I am creating; for I am about to create

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid, 365.

<sup>68</sup> James Philip Hyatt, “Exegesis of the Book of Isaiah and Jeremiah,” in *The Interpreter’s Bible (IB)*, ed. George Arthur Buttrick, vol. 5 (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1956), 754.

<sup>69</sup> “The meaning is not that the present world will be completely destroyed (cf.51:6) and a new world created.” See Hyatt, "Isaiah," *IB*, 5:754-755.

<sup>70</sup> John Reumann, *Creation and New Creation: The Past, Present and Future of God’s Creative Activity* (Minneapolis, MN, August), 58.

<sup>71</sup> Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah Chapter 40-6*, 221.

<sup>72</sup> Harner Ph B., *Vestus Testamentum*, 1967, 306.

Jerusalem as a joy, and its people as a delight. I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and delight in my people; no more shall the sound of weeping be heard in it, or the cry of distress.”<sup>73</sup> Walton approaches the concept of “new heavens and a new earth” upon the reflection on the Ancient Near East, Marduk commands that new holy city of the gods, and Babylon will be rebuilt.<sup>74</sup> He associates “new heavens and a new earth” with the creating of new temple of God.<sup>75</sup> He posits that God announces plan for His servant and their final vindication: “creation of new heavens and a new earth” involves the reconstitution and repopulation of Zion.<sup>76</sup> The components of the Zion are the returned exiles to the newly created Jerusalem and the work of the servant of the Lord.<sup>77</sup>

Pursuing somewhat different argument, Brueggemann acknowledges that Isaiah 65:17 offers inclusive vision of New Jerusalem.<sup>78</sup> He postulates that God will forget the past and create a “new heavens and a new earth” which is universal rather than reestablishment of Davidic kingdom. He also contends that the prophet Isaiah is not heralding an impending doom and tragedy for the whole creation as a sign to

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<sup>73</sup> John W. De Gruchy, “A New Heaven and a New Earth: An Exposition of Isaiah 65:17-25,” *EBSCOhost*, accessed July 12, 2015, <http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=f61bd392-874b-4b84-a006-80c372c8715f%40sessionmgr112&vid=0&hid=101>.

<sup>74</sup> John H. Walton, Victor H. Matthew, and Mark W. Chavalas, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary Old Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 641.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 641.

<sup>76</sup> Patrick D. Miller, “Isaiah,” in *NIB The New Interpreter’s Bible*, ed. George Arthur Buttrick (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1994), 544–551.

<sup>77</sup> Larry L. Walker and Elmer A. Martens, *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary: Isaiah, Jeremiah & Lamentations*, vol. Volume 8 (Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale house Publishing, 2005), 280.

<sup>78</sup> Brueggemann Walter, *Theology of the Old Testament : Testimony, Dispute, Advocacy* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1997), 446.

justify peace as in apocalyptic literature.<sup>79</sup> Kretzmann's work appears to take the "new heavens and a new earth" in a literal, material sense.<sup>80</sup> He argues that the expected promise "new heavens and a new earth" wherein righteousness dwell will materialize after this old earth has passed away<sup>81</sup> according to the apostle's description. He claims that the apostle's description of hope is grounded on Isaiah 65:17 and 66:22. The resultant expectation is the end of sin and pain because every creature groans with the pain of the curse of sin (Rom 8, 22 NKJV), and that the "new heavens and new earth" will be the abode of the saints.<sup>82</sup>

In sum, the eschatological nature of the book of Isaiah is in two levels: apocalyptic or postexilic. The former sees the glorious promises in Isaiah 65-66 focus on the earthly millennial reign of the Messiah, either before, or after the return of Jesus Christ and the latter espouses that the glorious promises in Isaiah 65-66 are to be fulfilled after the return of the exiles from the Babylon captivity. Similarly the views of "new heaven and new earth" are debated on two grounds: literal and metaphor. Whereas the literal interpretation looks for future day of the Lord Jesus's new heavenly mansions, the metaphoric interpretation is post exilic creation order, redemption act of God, faithful pilgrim who worship God and restoration of the church.

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<sup>79</sup> John W. De Gruchy, "New Heaven and a New Earth: An Exposition of Isaiah 65:17-25," *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* 105 (November 1999): 65-74.

<sup>80</sup> Paul E. Kretzmann, *Popular Commentary of the Bible: The New Testament*, vol. 2, (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1923), 555.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 555.

<sup>82</sup> Kretzmann, *Popular Commentary of the Bible: The New Testament*, 2:555.

## CHAPTER 3

### THE CONTEXT OF ISAIAH

This section deals with the book of Isaiah in general. This chapter specifically focuses on the various elements of its context: the authorship, audience, purpose, historical context, genre and structure.

#### **Authorship**

The authorship of the book of Isaiah has received voluminous literature in scholarship due to the scholarly divergence in the composition of the book. There are three main level of arguments, namely single,<sup>1</sup> double,<sup>2</sup> and multiple authors.<sup>3</sup> This study adopts the position that Isaiah, the son of Amos, writes the entire prophecy, and the authenticated evidences will shortly be provided.

The scholars who advocate for the single authorship believe that Isaiah prophesies around 740-680 B.E.C.<sup>4</sup> They point out that the prophet's messages touch

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<sup>1</sup>These scholars accept the unity and authorship of Isaiah: Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah Chapter 40-66*, 510; Alexander, *Commentary on the Prophecies of Isaiah*, 206; Oswald T. Allies, *The Unity of Isaiah* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reform, 1950), 17-50; Herbert C. Leupold, *Exposition of Isaiah* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book, 1971), 3: 307; Rachel Margalioth, *The Indivisible Isaiah* (New York: Yesheva University, 1964), 50; Herbert M. Molf, *Interpreting Isaiah: Suffering and Glory of the Messiah* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1985), 307; Young, *An Introduction to Old Testament*, 511. Scholars like R. Stier, F. Delitzsch and American J. A. Alexander, Moritz Drechsler, Carl Paul Caspari, H. A. Hahn, and Rudolph Stier argued forcefully for the single authorship of the book. But these scholars later modified their opinion. See Oswalt, "Isaiah," *The NIV Application Commentary*, 67.

<sup>2</sup> Oswalt, "Isaiah," *The NIV Application Commentary*, 67.

<sup>3</sup> Gleason L. Archer, *A Survey of Old Testament* (Chicago: Moody, 1974), 339.

<sup>4</sup> Marvin A. Sweeney, "Prophetic Exegesis in Isaiah 56-66" in *Writing and Reading the Scroll of Isaiah*, ed. Craig C. Broyles and Craig A. Evans (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 34.

on all political and military activities that emerge in that time.<sup>5</sup> Those scholars admit that Isaiah prophesied about the coming of the Messiah (Jesus Christ), his reign from the time of his ascension into eternity. According to those scholars, Messiah's reign encompasses all nations and the covenant people of Yahweh.<sup>6</sup> This position was the traditional view of the church until the eighteenth century A.D, when some scholars who were influenced by the Enlightenment began to question the claims of the scriptures and subjected authenticity of the scripture to human reasoning.<sup>7</sup>

There are arguments for double authors of the book of Isaiah. Those scholars based their arguments on two premises: stylistic and vocabulary between chapters 1-39 and 40-66.<sup>8</sup> The commentary of Moses ben Samuel Ibn-Gekatilla (ca 1100 A.D), on the works of Ibn Ezra appears to regard the prophecies in the first section of Isaiah as belonging to the period of Hezekiah, and the other parts to the second temple.<sup>9</sup> Similarly, the Talmud, Baba Bathra, 15a Isaiah, Proverb, Song of Songs and Ecclesiastes are the work of Hezekiah and his company.<sup>10</sup> Young counteract the assertion by identifying the phrase "Hezekiah and his company" as the

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<sup>5</sup> These scholars contend that Isaiah serves under these Monarch ; Uzziah (Isa 1:1; 6:1 NKJV), Jotham (Isa 1:1 NRSV), Ahaz (Isa 1:1; 7:1, 3,10,12; 38:8 NRSV), and Hezekiah (Isa 1:1;36-39 NRSV); kings of Judah; Pekah son of Remaliah, king of Israel (Isa 7:1,4,5,9; 8:6 NRSV); and Rezin, king of Aram (Isa 7:1, 4, 8; 8:6; 9:10 NRSV). During that period Assyrian is menace to Israelites (Isa 7:17, 20; 8:4, 7; 10:12 NRSV) and Babylon serves as "divine rod" (Isa 10:5: 13 NRSV). Uncharacteristic of Babylon Kings, is Babylonian monarch, Merodach-baladan, who features as the well-wisher of King Hezekiah's recovery from sickness (Isa 39:1 NRSV). See, Oswalt, "*Isaiah*," *The NIV Application Commentary*, 33.

<sup>6</sup> Albertus H. Edelkoort, *De Christusverwachting in Het Oude Testament* (Wageningen, Netherlands: Veeneman, 1941), 137; John N. Oswalt, "Isaiah," in *The NIV Application Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003), 33–55.

<sup>7</sup> Oswalt, "Isaiah," 33.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, 33.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, 200.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

contemporaries of Hezekiah who outlived him, hence, equivalent to the expression “men of Hezekiah in Proverb 25:1.”<sup>11</sup> Even the verb “wrote” is used here in the sense of “edited” or “published” by the Talmud.<sup>12</sup>

In the eighteenth century, J.C. Doderlein, a German scholar, in 1775 points out that the book of Isaiah contains a “conflation of two different works.”<sup>13</sup> A similar line of reasoning emerges in 1780 A.D. a German edition of Lowth’s commentary by J. B. Koppe. He asserts that Isaiah 50 seems to suggest the work of Ezekiel or someone who lives at the time of exile.<sup>14</sup> J. G. Eichhorn supports the idea and gives more weight to this idea when he writes that all the chapters 40-66 were written by another person instead of Isaiah himself.<sup>15</sup> Similarly, Charles Cutler argues that chapters 34-66 with the exception of 36-39, are one author who lives in Palestine. He pushes his argument further that the two occurrences of the word “Cyrus” and the word “Babylon” and “Chaldea” are interpolations which are to be removed from the text.<sup>16</sup> But, Torrey’s viewpoint is totally displaced by Qumran Scroll of Isaiah which indicates sound unity of the book.<sup>17</sup>

Due to this, some Scholars developed interest for Masoretic text of Isaiah which probably landed that there are two separate sections written by two authors at

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<sup>11</sup> Oswalt, “Isaiah,” 199.

<sup>12</sup> See Young, *An Introduction to Old Testament*, 199.

<sup>13</sup> Oswalt, *Isaiah: The NIV Application Commentary*, 33; See J. C. Doderlein, *Esaias* (Altdorfi, 1775), 67

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, 67-68.

<sup>15</sup> W. Gesenius, *Philologisch-Kritischer unter Historischer Kommentar Über Der Prophet Jesaia* (Leipzig: Vogel, 1821), 34; J. G. Eichhorn, *Einleitung in Da Alttestament*, vol. 3 (Leipzig, Germany: Weidmanns, 1780), 432.

<sup>16</sup> Young, *An Introduction to Old Testament*, 201.

<sup>17</sup> In the twentieth century the traditional position was upheld by scholars like Margoliouth, G. L. Robinson, Lias, Ridderbos and Kaminka.

different times. The first section is chapter 1-39 composed by Isaiah ben Amoz of Jerusalem. It is usually refers as first or Proto-Isaiah. The second section is chapters 40-66 which is composed by an anonymous prophet refers as second or Deutero-Isaiah.<sup>18</sup> But Isaiah's scroll discovers in Cave1 of khirbet Qumran (1QIsa<sup>a</sup>), dates to the mid-second century BC has no features of separation between the two sections of the book.<sup>19</sup>

The multiple authors view the book of Isaiah as follows: Proto-Isaiah writes Isaiah 1-39, Deutero-Isaiah is responsible for Isaiah 40-55 and Trito-Isaiah composes Isaiah 56-66.<sup>20</sup> This proposal has revolutionary influence in the study of Isaiah.<sup>21</sup> However, the discovery of the Qumran Scroll in 1947 of Isaiah testifies for the unity of the book of Isaiah,<sup>22</sup> making these views short lived.

Karl Elliger, who writes three books of Isaiah, postulates that Isaiah 56-66 are from one author who lives in sixth century BC but Isaiah 52:13-53:12; 40-55 are composed by another author.<sup>23</sup> But the infallible witness of the New Testament throws this position overboard. In the New Testament Isaiah is quoted more than any

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<sup>18</sup> Shalom M. Paul, *Isaiah 40-66 ; Translation and Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1990), 1.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid*, 2-3.

<sup>20</sup> Archer, *A Survey of Old Testament*, 339-345. Berhard Duhm maintains that there are three important steps in the compilation of Isaiah: First is the collection (Isa 1-12; 13-23), second is the uniting of the groups (Isa 1-12; 13-23; 24-35) and third is the completion through the addition of Isaiah 36-39; 3 and addition of Isaiah 40-66. For him each of these steps suggests the work more than one man. One of the effects of form criticism is to divide books into smaller units with increasing skepticism about the author. This is actually the result of Isaiah's studies.

<sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*, 339-345.

<sup>22</sup>Young, *An Introduction to Old Testament*, 201; Archer, *A Survey of Old Testament*, 339-340.

<sup>23</sup>*Ibid.*, 201. Karl Elliger maintains that the author of servant passages (52:13-53:12) is also responsible for chapters 40-55.

other prophets which show clearly that in the eyes of New Testament Isaiah is the sole writer of the whole prophecies (cf. John 12:38 NKJV).<sup>24</sup>

The critical scholars argue from three grounds: theological, stylistic and internal.<sup>25</sup> First, they underscore theological differences such that Isaiah 1-39 emphasizes the majesty of God whereas Isaiah 40-66 focuses on universal dominion. They contend that a reader's first contact in the book is Davidic ruler ship (Isa 11:1) but in the second section the leadership moves to priests, Levites and princes (Isa 61:6; 66:21). The Messianic figure who is the king at the beginning of the book (Isa 9:6-7; 11:1-11), shifts to the servant of the Lord at the close of the book.<sup>26</sup> They construe that the remnant motif of Isaiah 1-39 constitutes the faithful ones who remained in Jerusalem whereas Isaiah 40-66 refers to the faithful exilic group who would return to Jerusalem and Judah.<sup>27</sup> Moreover, they advance their argument that the historical background for speeches are available in the first part but the other part lacks that setting completely.

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<sup>24</sup>The NT has a lot of quotation to confirm Isaiah's authorship: John 12:39 is quoted from Isaiah 53:1; 6:9 which explained why the people could not believe Jesus. These things were quoted from both sections of Isaiah. Here, it is cleared that John 12:38-41 are quotations made from parts and attributed to the man Isaiah as author. Romans 27-33, Paul makes abundant use of Isaiah's prophecy saying "Isaiah cries concerning Israel", "Isaiah says," "Isaiah becomes bold and says"(65:1); (Matt 3:3; 8:17;12:17; 13:14; 15:7; Mark 1:2; 7:6; Luke 3:4 4:17; John 1:23, 12:38; 12:39; 12:41; Acts 8:28; 8:30; 8:32; 28:25; Rom 9:27; 9:29; 10:16; 10:20)

<sup>25</sup>Dillard, *Tremper Longman 111: An Introduction to the Old Testament*, 269. As contrasted with the emphasis found in the first thirty-nine chapters, where Jehovah was exalted above all other gods, the remaining chapters of the prophecy denied their very existence, and instead discussed the concept of God as the sole deity.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., 269.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., 269.

But Margalioth contested the view that there is no single chapter in chapters 1-39 that is not mirrored in chapters 40-66.<sup>28</sup> He enumerates fifteen parallel aspects from both sections to indicate one author and that confirms the unity of the book. His work maintains that even God is called “the holy one of Israel” (12) twelve times in the first section and (13) thirteen times in the other section.<sup>29</sup>

Second line of argument from Critical scholars is based on the stylistic consideration. Those who uphold this idea maintain that the style in chapters 1-39 is more of “terse and compact, exhibiting a measured movement of thought and rhetorical,”<sup>30</sup> while chapters 40-66 is “given to impassioned lyricism, and drew for His imagery upon the sphere of human emotion.”<sup>31</sup> Driver argues from vocabulary perspective as an evidence for two authors.<sup>32</sup> He reasons that some words and constructions from chapters 40-66 are only found in these chapters not in the other half of the book, and concludes that a different person composed that section of the book.<sup>33</sup> However, traditional scholars like Kaminka, Margalioth, Allis, and Young,

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<sup>28</sup>Margalioth, *The Indivisible Isaiah*, 35; Margalioth argued from fifteen aspect:(1).for God, (2)for Israel, (3) for introductory formulas for oracles, (4) for pairing Zion and Jerusalem, (5) for the ingathering of the exiles, (6)for message of consolation and encouragements, (7) for expressions of joy and gladness, (8) for hope of a universal millennium, (9) for words of admonition , (10) chastisement, (11) in the use of thesis-antithesis pairs, (12)in distinctive words and linguistic forms, (13) for word pairs, (14) for similar constructions, (15) for parallel groups having similar content. Even God is called “the holy One of Israel” twelve times in the first half and thirteen times in the second. Thus far a number of specific parallels confirm one author.

<sup>29</sup>Oswalt, *Isaiah: The NIV Application Commentary*, 774-775.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid, 774-775.

<sup>31</sup> T. K. Cheyne, *Introduction to the Book Of Isaiah*, 1894, 255–774; Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah Chapter 40-66*, 774–775.

<sup>32</sup>Driver, *An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*, 238-240.

<sup>33</sup>Dillard, *Tremper Longman 111: An Introduction to the Old Testament*, 270. To explain how two books written by two authors could have coalesced into a single volume, Pfeiffer suggests that a scribe had room left on his scroll after copying Isaiah 1-39 and he filled out the scroll with the writings of an anonymous prophet (Isa 40-66). Since no superscription or title separated the words, they were soon read as one book.

refute this argument by presenting evidences of common themes and vocabularies that tie the book. They postulate that even other pre-exilic prophets call attention to the dependency of Isaiah as sole author.<sup>34</sup>

Third line of argument is internal evidence. Driver opines that at the time of the composition of chapters' 40-66, Isaiah has in mind a period towards the close of Babylonian captivity. From this viewpoint, "the exile was presupposed rather than predicted, and those who were addressed were thought to be experiencing suffering in Babylon and looking forward to a return to the homeland."<sup>35</sup> Accordingly, it is not possible for Isaiah to maintain such an elongated futuristic position and interacts with generations over a century distant.<sup>36</sup>

On the contrary, the conservative scholars have theological conviction about the reality of prophetic revelation. That the Spirit of God reveals to Biblical writers' insight into the future because in Isaiah 40-66 Yahweh who announces the future is also able to bring them to pass (Isa 40:21; 41:4, 21-29; 43:12-13; 44:6-8, 24-28; 45:11-13).<sup>37</sup> Margalioth also argues that there is not a single chapter in Isaiah 1-39 that is not reflected in Isaiah 40-66, and that hundreds of words and phrases which are unique to the book of Isaiah occurred in both sides.<sup>38</sup> Young concurs with Margalioth's idea and argues further that 2Chronicles 32:32 refers to "the vision of

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<sup>34</sup> Dillard, *Tremper Longman 111: An Introduction to the Old Testament*, 270; Rachel Margalioth, *The Indivisible Isaiah* (New York, NY: Yesheva University, 1964), 217; A. Kaminka, *Studies in the Bible, Talmud and Rabbinic Literature* (Hebrew: Tel Aviv, 1935), 270.

<sup>35</sup> Young, *An Introduction to Old Testament*, 201; Dillard, *Tremper Longman 111: An Introduction to the Old Testament*, 270.

<sup>36</sup> Robert B. Christoln Jr., *Hand Book on the Prophets* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2002), 24–15.

<sup>37</sup> Dillard, *Tremper Longman 111: An Introduction to the Old Testament*, 274; R. K. Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1969), 764–768.

<sup>38</sup> See the argument put forward by Margalioth, *The indivisible Isaiah* 217.1935.

the Prophet Isaiah Son of Amoz, which is found in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel.”<sup>39</sup>

In the light of the above discussions, this study appears to suggest Isaiah the son of Amoz as the sole author of the whole prophecy. The reasons are outlined below. The authorship of the book of Isaiah comprises God, the divine Author (Isa 1:10; 6:8 NAS) and the human author, who identifies himself in the book as Isaiah (Isa 1:1, NAS).<sup>40</sup> He describes himself as Isaiah son of Amos of Jerusalem and the servant of God (Isa 1:1; 2:1 NRSV). He receives his vision at the rulership of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, and he is the one who heard and “saw visions concerning Judah and Jerusalem” (Isa 2:1; 3:1 NRSV).<sup>41</sup> Therefore, the superscription at the commencement of the book of Isaiah clearly points to no other direction than Isaiah the son of Amoz as the only author.

There are testimonies from the New Testament supporting single author. Scholars generally agree that NT quotes the book of Isaiah, by name Isaiah more than all the other writing prophets combined. All the quotations refer to Isaiah as the author of the book. For example, John 12:38-40 tells that despite all the miraculous signs the people did not believe Jesus such that the words of Isaiah, the prophet will

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<sup>39</sup> Young, *The Book of Isaiah: The English Text, With Introduction and Notes*, III:513.

<sup>40</sup>It is factual that God is the true writer of the Bible, even though He chooses to allow human agent to transmit into human languages (Isa 10; 6:8 cf.Rev.1:1)

<sup>41</sup> Brevard S. Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (London, UK: SCM, 1979), 311–320; R. E. Clements, “The Unity of the Book of Isaiah,” *Int* 36 (1982): 117–29; Admin, “Beyond Tradition History: Deutero-Isaianic Development of First Isaiah’s,” *Journal Studies of the Old Testament* 31 (1985): 95–113; Gerald T. Sheppard, “The Anti-Assyrian Redaction and the Canonical Context of Isaiah 1-39,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 104 (1985): 193–216; John D. W. Watts, “Isaiah,” in *WBC* (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1987), 24; Tomasino, “Isaiah 1:1-2: And 63-66 and the Composition of the Isaianic Corpus,” 61–80; Craig A. Evans, “On the Unity and Parallel Structure of Isaiah,” *VT* 38 (1988): 129–147.

be fulfilled. Notice that John 12:38-41 uses direct quotation from both sections of the book of Isaiah yet attributed to only Isaiah as author.

Apostle Paul makes abundant use of Isaiah especially in Romans 9 and 10. In Romans 9:27, Paul refers to Isaiah's proclamation and says Isaiah "cries out concerning Israel" (cf. Isa 1:9; 8:14; 28:16:10). Romans 10:16 is a quotation from Isaiah which says "Lord, who has believed our messages?" (cf. Isa 53:1) and Romans 10:20-21 states "and Isaiah boldly says" follows a quotation from Isaiah 65:1. Paul regards Isaiah as the only author of the book that bears his name. NT writers know that Isaianic languages are inspired words and regard it as the work of the prophet Isaiah.

Traditionally, the Jews accept the name Isaiah son of Amoz as the only one who links with the book in any of the Hebrew MSS or ancient versions.<sup>42</sup> In the early second century BC, Ecclesiasticus writes "by the spirit of might he Isaiah saw the last things and comforted those who mourned in Zion. The pre-Christian Isaiah scroll from Qumran has complete text of the book without division, and the discovery of the Qumran Scroll in 1947 of Isaiah which has single unity attest to the fact that the book is single scroll and the author is a single man, Isaiah the son of Amoz."<sup>43</sup>

Finally, the prophecy is an incorporated whole that discloses a progression in theological content as historical circumstances developed as they were prophesied. This theological conviction about prophetic revelation allows room for the Spirit of God to reveal to Isaiah insight into the future since God who announces the future is able to bring it to completion (cf. Isa 40-66).

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<sup>42</sup> Oswald T. Allies, *The Unity of Isaiah* (Philadelphia, PN: Presbyterian and Reform, 1950), 6.

<sup>43</sup> Edward J. Young, *An Introduction to Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1956), 201.

In sum, the traditional position about the authorship is Isaiah, the son of Amoz, who bears the name of the book, can be relied on. However, the critical scholars present double authors and multiple authors based on their own studies, yet they are unsettled as to the exact number of the writers of the book. Again they could not provide evidential author apart from Isaiah, the son of Amos.

### **Audience**

Scholarship is divided into two major positions concerning Isaiah's audience: single and three. The three audience groups argue that the prophet addresses three historical epochs that demonstrate a difference in the geographical locus of the prophecies.<sup>44</sup> In chapters 1-39, he delivers his messages of condemnation to the eight-century Israelites in Jerusalem, pronouncing judgment on their immoral and idolatrous lifestyles.<sup>45</sup> Another unique audience is located in chapter 40-55. Isaiah comforts the future generation of weary exile (the Jews) who think that God has forgotten them (Isa 40:27).<sup>46</sup> In a series of prophecies, Isaiah presents the case that Israel's captivity is not due to the superiority of Babylon's idol, but rather the disciplining rod of Israel's Lord (Isa 42:23-25).<sup>47</sup> He predicts the exiles' return and encourages them to rouse themselves (Isa 52:1-10), to flee Babylon (Isa 48:20, 21), and to entrust their future to Almighty Yahweh (Isa 41:14-20).<sup>48</sup> Driver reiterates that the prophecies of the prophet Isaiah point to the period of Babylonian captivity. And

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<sup>44</sup> Shalom m. Paul, *Isaiah 40-66 ; Translation and Commentary* (Grand Rapid , Michigan: William B. eerdmans Publishing company, 2012), 6–8.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., 6-8.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., 9.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., 9.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., 9-10.

for that matter the prophet addresses exiles in Babylon (Isa 40:21, 26, 28; 43:10; 48:8; 50:10; 51:6).<sup>49</sup>

The third audience is in chapters 56-66. Isaiah exhorts the Jews who have returned to the land.<sup>50</sup> This is the period before the temple is rebuilt (Isa 58:12; 61:4; 64:10), or while it is being built (Isa 66:1).<sup>51</sup>

This study adopts single audience for Isaiah's prophecy. Isaiah was called to preach to a sinful people that were rebellious, obstinate, and disobedient. Isaiah pleaded with his recalcitrant people to repent and turn from their sinful ways. But his audience mocked him. Isaiah graphically depicted the horrors of Assyrian warfare and the resultant suffering of the people and destruction of their lands.<sup>52</sup>

Even his own family was involved in communicating God's messages of warning. His sons had symbolic names (Maher-shalal-hash-baz means "swift to plunder and quick to carry away" Isaiah 8:1. The other son bore a name of hope, Shear-Jashub means "a remnant will return" Isaiah 7:3). Isaiah was commissioned to "go and tell this people" (Isa 6:6-8). In Isa 6:11-13, "then I (Isaiah) said "For how long, Oh Lord?" and He answered: "Until the cities lie ruined and without inhabitant, until the house are left deserted and the fields ruined and ravaged, until the LORD has sent every one far away and the land is utterly forsaken, but stump shall remain in the land." The statement indicates that Isaiah's prophesy addresses total condition of the

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<sup>49</sup>William Sanford Lasor, David Allan Hubbard and Frederic W M Bush, *Old Testament Survey* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans, 1983), 371.

<sup>50</sup> Paul, *Isaiah 40-66 ; Translation and Commentary*, 9-10.

<sup>51</sup>Isaiah encourages these Jews to put away greed (Isa 56:9-11), self-indulgence (Isa 56:12), idolatry (Isa 57:3-10), cynicism (Isa 57:11-13), and hypocritical self-righteousness (Isa 58:1-5). He also predicts that the community will be split between true and false worshipers.

<sup>52</sup> Larry L. Walker, *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary: Isaiah, Jeremiah & Lamentations*, ed. Elmer A. Martens, vol. 8 (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 2005), 9.

life of Israel to one audience, however, its fulfillment will take some time. This is not an address to different people in different locations at different time.

### **Purpose of the Book of Isaiah**

The purpose of the whole corpus of Isaiah is to teach the truth that salvation is by grace, solely from God and not from man.<sup>53</sup> “Zion shall be redeemed with justice and her penitents with righteousness” (Isa 1:27 NKJV). Young says that “this very verse introduces the theme upon which the prophet continually expands.”<sup>54</sup> It appears Isaiah 40-66 give general exposition of this idea. As has been discussed earlier, Isaiah’s ministry occurs at the crucial time in Judah’s history. Due to the rising power of the Assyrian that confronts Judah; two groups of people emerge within the nation.<sup>55</sup> Whiles one group seeks alliance from Egypt, another group leans on the Assyria.

In this contradiction, Isaiah counsels and forbids any human alliance and exhorts the nation to trust only in God.<sup>56</sup> Yahweh can be trusted. Indeed Yahweh alone is worthy of trust because there is no other Lord. Let Israel put their trust in the Lord and not in alliances, nor in ceremonies, nor in their own religiousness.<sup>57</sup> God has chosen them and their true strength is in "quietness and trust" in the LORD.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Young, *An Introduction to Old Testament*, 207.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 207.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 208.

<sup>56</sup> The very thought of Isaiah is that salvation is of God, for that matter as a sign of God’s deliverance he proclaims the birth of the Messiah and the nature of His kingdom. See Young, *An Introduction to Old Testament*, 208.

<sup>57</sup> William J. Dumbrell, “*The Purpose of the Book of Isaiah*” *Tyndale Bulletin* 36, 1985, 36.

<sup>58</sup> Admin, “Interpreting the Book of Isaiah: Yahweh’s Changeless Purpose in the Changin...” *EBSCOhost*, 449–452, accessed September 28, 2015, <http://web.a.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail/detail?sid=f13e36c4-ab2e-493b-b8ee-f01214a1a6f9%40sessionmgr4004&vid=0&hid=4104&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWwhvc3QtbGl2ZQ%3d%3d#AN=ATLA0000933567&db=rfh>.

## Genre of the Book of Isaiah

The book of Isaiah contains different genre features. The majority of the book is prophecy, which is written in poetic form.<sup>59</sup> The prose sections are largely historical narratives (Isa 6:1-9:7 and Isa 36:1-39:8).<sup>60</sup> The scant narratives are located mostly in the reigns of Ahaz (Isa 7-8) and Hezekiah (Isa 36-39). The nature of the poetry includes “non-predictable word order, figurative language, the use of parallelism, the presence of acrostics, unusual and older vocabulary, assonances and alliteration, and imagery in the form of metaphor and similes.”<sup>61</sup>

It seems Isaiah has the highest proportion of formal poetry of all the latter Prophets.<sup>62</sup> Likewise, Walker intensifies that Isaiah uses the poetic style of his age, and the main characteristic of which is parallelism, and asserts that there are beautiful features of chiasm and inclusio.<sup>63</sup> VanGemeran articulates that “much of the book’s brilliance derives from imagery: war (Isa 63:1-6), social life (Isa 3:1-17), and rural life (Isa 5:1-7)”<sup>64</sup> and variety of symbols to communicate spiritual truth to the people in a graphic and vivid manner.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Allan Harman, *Isaiah* (CPD, Scotland: Wales, 2005), 19.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

<sup>62</sup> It is true that there is a high, poetic style. While Jeremiah and Ezekiel begin with missionary narrative, the opening chapter of Isaiah samples various themes that are characteristic of the book. The narrative starts Isaiah 6 which is equivalent to Jeremiah 1 and Ezekiel 1-3. See Alec Motyer, *Isaiah*, 23; Dillard, *Tremper Longman 111: An Introduction to the Old Testament*, 95.

<sup>63</sup> Walker and Martens, *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary: Isaiah, Jeremiah & Lamentations*, Volume 8:11.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>65</sup> Walker and Martens, *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary: Isaiah, Jeremiah & Lamentations*, Volume 8:11.

## Structure of the Book of Isaiah

The structure of the book of Isaiah is a puzzle among scholars. This scholarship enigma has drawn attention to divergent observations.<sup>66</sup> These observational structures include: Assyrian and Babylonian backdrop, three part structure, bifid, envelope, extended doublet, vision, prologue and elaboration, literary styles, and creation thought.

Herbert M. Wolf structuralized the book in two parts: the Assyrian and Babylonian backdrop. Isaiah 1-39 focuses on the Assyrian incursion and the Isaiah 40-66 is assigned to the Babylonian's victory<sup>67</sup> meanwhile, he acknowledges Isaiah 36-39 as a historical interlude.<sup>68</sup> These historical dimensions coupled with the theological ingenuity of the book of Isaiah make some scholars divide the book into two: Isaiah 1-39 and Isaiah 40-66.<sup>69</sup>

Larry L. Walker elucidates his structure that Isa 1-35 contains judgment against God's covenant people and foreign nations;<sup>70</sup> Isa 36-39 covers historical materials and

Isaiah 40-66 emphasizes words of consolation and comfort for the exile people of God.<sup>71</sup> Similarly, J. Daniel Hays breaks down the structure such that Isaiah 1-39,

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<sup>66</sup> William H. Brownlee, *The Meaning of the Qumran Scroll for the Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964), 247–253; Young, *An Introduction to Old Testament*, 199.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid.,247-253.

<sup>68</sup> Herbert M. Molf, *Interpreting Isaih: Suffering and Glory of the Messiah* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1985), 39–69.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid,50-66.

<sup>70</sup> Walker and Martens, *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary:Isaiah, Jeremiah & Lamentations*, Volume 8:15; Young, *The Book of Isaiah: The English Test, With Introduction and Notes*, III:70.

<sup>71</sup> Harman, *Isaiah*.23. With regard to the critical scholars the book compose of three sections .Thus Isaiah 1-39, 40-55, 56-66.The first section on the judgment of God The historical section is primarily related King Hezekiah and the Assyrian siege. The third section emphasis restoration and comfort.

focuses on the judgment but also a sign of deliverance, Isaiah 40-55 focuses on deliverance and restoration through the servant but also has some glimpses of judgment and Isaiah 56-66 focuses on righteous living by Yahweh's true servants in the time.<sup>72</sup>

Barry Webb derives the structural pattern from the shift in the literary styles of the book, providing a compelling analysis of Isaiah's structure.<sup>73</sup> From his investigation, Isaiah 1-35 and Isaiah 40-66 constitute the prominent poetry, while Isaiah 36-39 contains the block of the prominent prose.<sup>74</sup> This block of predominantly prose has two parts: First, Isaiah 36-37 is the description of the invasion of Sennacherib and Assyrian crisis which seems to dominate the first section of the book. Second, Isaiah 38-39 describes Hezekiah's illness and the envoy from Babylonian king Merodach-Baladan.<sup>75</sup>

He, thus, submits that Isaiah 36-39 constitutes "structural pivot on which the whole book turns"<sup>76</sup>. The construction of the bifid structure of the book of Isaiah also shows up amid contradictions among proponents. For instance, William H. Brownlee insists that ruin and restoration (Isa 1-5) parallel Isaiah 34-35, Biographical (Isa6-8) parallel with (Isa 36-39), warning against the nation (Isa 13-23) parallel (Isa 46-48),

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<sup>72</sup> J. Daniel Hays, *The Message of the Prophets: A Survey of the Prophetic and Apocalyptic Books of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 100–101.

<sup>73</sup> Barry Webb, "Message of Isaiah," *Good Reads*, 30, accessed August 2, 2015, [https://www.goodreads.com/user/sign\\_in?rd=true](https://www.goodreads.com/user/sign_in?rd=true).

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid*,30

<sup>75</sup> Webb, "Message of Isaiah," 30.

<sup>76</sup>This block of Isaiah 36-39 is preceded by three units chapters 1-12 ; 13-27 and 28-35, It is also followed by another three units: chapter 40:1-51:11; 51:12-55:13; and 56-66 which end in the same way.

universal redemption (Isa 24-27) parallel (Isa49-55), and ethics (Isa 28-30) parallel (Isa 56-59).<sup>77</sup>

But Avraham Gileadi presents complex bifid structure and divides the book into two parts: Isaiah 1-33 and Isaiah 34-66.<sup>78</sup> His studies into “structural, rhetorical and typological analyses, found that the bifid structure of Isaiah is arranged chiastically containing seven categories of parallel.” He concludes that “the composition of the book of Isaiah according to the bifid model binds inseparably all its parts... within the bifid structure, all these concepts cohere and are established cumulatively from beginning to end.”<sup>79</sup>

Another giant bifid structure is from Dumbrell who leans on “the pendulum structure” which vacillates between two key themes; history and eschatology.<sup>80</sup> He considers that the book begins and closes with an *inclusio* with both history and eschatology (Isa 1-12 and Isa 56-66), but the remaining chapters interchange between history and eschatology.<sup>81</sup> Watts views the structure of the book by concentrating on the vision.<sup>82</sup> For him, the vision is dramatic and less in realistic than other books. He

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<sup>77</sup> Brownlee, *The Meaning of the Qumran Scroll for the Bible*.

<sup>78</sup> Avraham Gileadi, *The Literary Message of Isaiah* (New York, NY: Hebraeus Press, 1994), 15–16.

<sup>79</sup>The seven categorical parallel advocates by Avraham are; Ruin and Rebirth (Isa 1-5 and 34-35), Rebellion and compliance (Isa 6-8 and 36-40), Punishment and deliverance (Isa 9-12 and 41-46:13b), Humiliation and Exaltation (Isa 13-23 and 46:13c-47:15), Disloyalty and Loyalty (Isa 28-31 and 55-59), and Disinheritance and inheritance (Isa 32-33 and 60-66). See also Fanwar “creation in Isaiah”, 81-87.

<sup>80</sup>Dumbrell, “*The Purpose of the Book of Isaiah*” *Tyndale Bulletin* 36, 123.

<sup>81</sup>Ibid, 123.

<sup>82</sup> Watts, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 25, p. 12. He argued that “the vision is much more dramatic and less realistic in setting than other books... The vision is much more suited to drama hypothesis, he proceed to demonstrate that the book is comprised of 12 Acts divided into two parts. Both parts 1 and 11 are made up of 6 Acts each, with the former emphasis judgment and curses while the latter stresses salvation and blessings.”

demonstrates that the book comprises twelve acts which are divided into two parts. The first part emphasizes judgment and curses while the other part stresses salvation and blessings.<sup>83</sup> Likewise, Walter C. Kaiser maintains two parts Isaiah 1-39 are crucial to judgment and Isaiah 40-66 emphasizes comfort.<sup>84</sup>

Sweeney has developed an interesting structure pattern based on prologue and explanation.<sup>85</sup> The explanation segment follows an “A-B-A” pattern, so Isa 2-35 announces God’s plan for new world order, Isa 36-39 serves as transition to explain the delay in the implementation of the plan, and Isa 40-66 acts as exhortation to the people of Judah for God’s renewed covenant.<sup>86</sup> It appears poetry-prose-poetry in Isaiah replicates in the books of Job and Daniel. The former has “prologue-poetry dialogue- epilogue, whereas the latter stresses on Hebrew text-Aramaic text –Hebrew text. Even the Hammurabi Law Code features poetic prologue-prose section poetic epilogue.”<sup>87</sup>

Other scholars like Edmond Jacob opines an envelope structure for the book of Isaiah.<sup>88</sup> He believes that Isaiah 1 and Isaiah 66 form the inclusio. He grounds upon

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<sup>83</sup> Watts, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 25, p. 12.

<sup>84</sup> Walter C. Kaiser, *Towards on Old Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Academic, 1978), 204.

<sup>85</sup> Sweeney, “*Prophetic Exegesis in Isaiah 56-66*” in *Writing and Reading the Scroll of Isaiah*, 56.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>87</sup> Fanwar M Wann, ““Creation in Isaiah’ Ph.D Dissertation” (Andrews University Theological seminary, 2001), 85.

<sup>88</sup> Edmond Jacob, *Esaie 1-12, Commentaire Del’ancien Testament*, vol. 8 (Geneva: Labour et Fides, 1987), 18; Marvin A. Sweeney, Craig C. Broyles, and Craig A. Evans, “Prophetic Exegesis in Isaiah 56-66,” in *Writing and Reading the Scroll of Isaiah* (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 1985), 455,472; Dumbrell, “The Purpose of the Book of Isaiah,” 36; Gileadi, *The Literary Message of Isaiah*. Sweeney concurs with the single envelope idea that Isaiah 1 and 65-66 serve as introduction and conclusion. The features of this envelope structure include, for instances, the flowing of nation to Zion (Isa 2:2; 60:12;), the heaven-earth merism (Isa 1:2 ;64:1;65;17; 66:1,22), earth’s fruit (Isa 1:19; 3;10; 4:1,2; 5;17; 62:9; 65:4, 13 21-25; 66:17), unburied corpses (Isa 5:25; 66:24), new moon and Sabbath (Isa 1:13b-14; 66:23), sacrifices (Isa 1:10-15; 66:3,4), summon to hear Isa 1:2,10; 66:5), oaks and garden (Isa 1:29; 65;17. Apostasy (Isa 1:2-4; 66:3-4), unquenching fire (Isa 1:31; 66:24), desolation of the earth versus

the linguistic and literary elements and combines with some themes shared in the two chapters. This demonstrates the imprint of the structural intent that the passages enclose a unity within a single envelope.<sup>89</sup> Bediako concurs with Jacob when he writes that “Isa 66: 1, 3, 24 and Isaiah 1:2, 31 form an inclusio and thus constitute the borders of the envelope structure of the book of Isaiah.”

Likewise, Alec Motyer proposes “extended doublet” pattern of the structure of the book of Isaiah.<sup>90</sup> He points that some truth is seen in two “consecutive steps”. For instance, Isaiah 7:1-9:7 are followed by Isaiah 9:8-11:16, both passages reflect the same themes. Again Isaiah 42:18-43:21 and 43:22-44:33 follows above pattern. But he is quick to indicate that this pattern is not applicable to chapters 56-66 which used ‘trajectory’ pattern instead.<sup>91</sup>

Oswalt also posits ten- distinct- unit- structure of the book of Isaiah with the themes servanthood (Isa 1-6; 7-12; 13-23; 24-27; 28-35; 36-39; 40-48; 49-55; 56-59; 60-66).<sup>92</sup> He points out that Isaiah 1-5 serve as overall introduction for the whole book.<sup>93</sup>

Modern scholar, Wann investigates the book of Isaiah and arrives that Isaiah’s creation thought<sup>94</sup> is another form of structural consideration. He argues that Isaiah 1-35 form the introductory phase, then a crescendo in Isaiah 40-55, and a notable climax

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its new creation (Isa 1:7; 5:5.6.9 and 65:17; 66:22, captivity and return (Isa 5:13 and 65:19-10; 66:6,10, 20), Famine versus plenty (Isa 5:13 and 65:13,21; 66:11,) and Sheol (Isa 5:14);

<sup>89</sup> Jacob, *Esaie 1-12, Commentaire Del’ancien Testament*, 8:18.

<sup>90</sup> Alec Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah: An Introduction & Commentary.*, 24.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

<sup>92</sup> Oswalt, *Isaiah: The NIV Application Commentary*, 35.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 35.

<sup>94</sup> Wann, “Creation in Isaiah’ Ph.D Dissertation,” 86–88.

in Isaiah 56-66, which is the creation of “new heaven and new earth.” Wann concludes that the entire book has symphonic structure.<sup>95</sup> The expression symphonic structure seems to account for three things operational in Isaiah’s structure: (1) the book consists of various movements, each one sufficiently distinctive, yet the whole is bonded by common literary and thematic strands “symphonic” recognizes this multi-movement features of Isaiah; (2) Isaiah is also characterized by frequent and sudden transitions via ideas that oscillate and recur, thus “symphonic” (3)the book is also “symphonic “because a theme is presented and briefly discussed, a second theme is introduced, which in turn may lead to a third theme , and then the preceding themes are reiterated.<sup>96</sup>

### **Observations**

The structure of the book of Isaiah is an unending debate due to lack of a scholarly consensus, as the result, every interpreter attempts to produce a different structure.<sup>97</sup> From the above proposals and discussion of the structure of book of Isaiah, several issues stand out. First, there is no single proposal on the structure of Isaiah that is complete, and perfect and independent of the other. Noticeably, each proposal focuses on a particular structure clue, such that, other clues are neglected. For example, those who pursue the study of envelope structure generally do not pay much attention to the vision, or extended doublet or bifid structure.

Second, a superficial reading of the various proposals reveals that even scholars of a similar persuasion differ in the details of their respective structures. For

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<sup>95</sup> Allan A. MacRae, *The Gospel of Isaiah* (Chicago, IL: Moody, 1977), 31.

<sup>96</sup>Ibid., 31.

<sup>97</sup>See Wann for another detail discussion of the structure.

instance, Browlee, Kaiser, Dumbell and Gileadi differ significantly in the details in the bifid structure of the book. Third, due to the complex nature of the composition of the book of Isaiah, it is practically impossible to assign a single structure that could take care of all the convincing components and issues raised by various scholars of the book.

Four, it is true that each proposal on the structure of the book has something distinctive to contribute to the overall discussions and meaning of the book of Isaiah. Since each proposed structure contribute to the understanding of the book, it is not appropriate to choose one proposal at the expense of the others. So, to get bigger picture and clearer comprehension much attention ought to be paid to all the various structures develop from various studies.

This study of the review of the structure of the book of Isaiah, does not intend to contribute to the unending pool of varying structure. Notwithstanding, it considers the bifid structure of Avraham Gileadi as a model to be emulated.

1. A: Deterioration and Resurgence (Isa 1-5 and 34-35)
2. B: Insurgence and Obedience (Isa 6-8 and 36-40)
3. C: Punishment and Delivery (Isa 9-12 and 41-46:13b)
4. D: Degradation and Encouragement (Isa 13-23 and 46:13c-47:15)
5. C<sup>1</sup>: Distress and Salvation (Isa 24-27 and 48-54)
6. B<sup>1</sup>: Untrustworthiness and Trustworthiness (Isa 28-31 and 55-59)
7. A<sup>1</sup>: Disinheritance and Inheritance (Isa 32-33 and 60-66).<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> This assertion is based on the premises that each sectional element reappear in the corresponding counterpart. See Gileadi, *The Literary Message of Isaiah*, 15.

Regarding this bifid structure, the book is divided into two: Isaiah 1-33 and Isaiah 34-66 as stated earlier.<sup>99</sup> Moreover, this chiasmic structure reveals that the elements in theme A recur in theme A<sup>1</sup>.<sup>100</sup> Gileadi's argument leans on the premises that, within these chapters are pair of sections for each major theme that contains parallel elements. It means that the elements in Isaiah 1-5, "deterioration and resurgence" reiterate in Isaiah 34-35. Similarly, Isaiah 6-8 and 36-40 share a common theme of "insurgence and Obedience". The "punishment and delivery" elements in Isaiah 9-12 appear in Isaiah 41-46:13b. The "humiliation and encouragement" themes in Isaiah 13-23 are reflected in Isaiah 46:13c-47:15. "Untrustworthiness and trustworthiness" are found in this pair Isaiah 28-31 and Isaiah 55-59, and Isaiah 60-66 recaps "disinheritance and inheritance" themes in Isaiah 32-33.<sup>101</sup>

A significant artifact in the structure is the inclusio. Observably, Isaiah 66:1, 2, 31 and Isaiah 1:2, 31 form an inclusio, which serves as a boundary to the envelope structure of the whole book (Isa 1-5 and Isa 60-66). Bediako supports this idea when he writes that "in chapters 1 and 66, there is high frequency of common linguistic and literary elements as well as shared themes. These chapters then form an inclusio to the book."<sup>102</sup>

This observation suggests that the conditions in chapters 65-66 are the reversal of the conditions in chapter 1-5. Then, the declaration of the creation of "new

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<sup>99</sup>This Gileadi bifid structure tells oppositional directions of the disobedience (Isa 1-33) and the faithful ones (Isa 34-66). That is judgment and salvation. *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>100</sup>The nature of the Gileadi chiasmic structure shows parallelism between A and A<sup>1</sup>, B and B<sup>1</sup>, c and c<sup>1</sup> and D becoming the center of concern.

<sup>101</sup>The distinction between the wicked and righteous servants in chapters 32-33 and 60-66 is paramount, and that, this separation seems to indicate disinheritance of the land by the wicked servants as well as inheritance of the land by the faithful servant.

<sup>102</sup> Bediako, "Isaiah's New Heavens and New Earth (Isa. 65:17; 66:22)," 19.

heavens and a new earth” in Isaiah 65:17 and 66:22 are expression of the restoration of the people and the city after the period of calamity.<sup>103</sup> Indeed, the poor conditions in Isaiah 1-5 seem to suggest a call for redemption. This redemption is manifested by the creation of “new heavens and a new earth” in Isaiah 65:17. Again, the creation of “new heavens and new earth” parallels the creation of “Jerusalem and her people” (Isa 65:18) where God’s people would be restored to possess their inheritance which is ruined.

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<sup>103</sup> Bediako, “Isaiah’s New Heavens and New Earth (Isa. 65:17; 66:22),” 19.

## CHAPTER 4

### ANALYSIS OF ISAIAH 65:17; 66:22

This section underscores the exegetical analyses of Isaiah 65:17 and 66:22. It sheds more light on the meaning of “New Heavens and New Earth” in the passage under review. It draws heavily on the book of Isaiah, few books in Old Testament and selected books from New Testament that shed light on the issue under discussion. The following approaches are followed as much as possible: the text and its translation, structure and genre, literary context, linguistic and semantic analyses. The discussion also featured New Testament concept of “New Heavens and New Earth” thereby establishing relationship between Isaiah 65:17; 66:22 and the selected New Testament texts; 2 Peter 3:13; Revelator 21:1. As an integral part of the process of exegesis, the interpretation of the passage in view also deals with the analysis of the theological issues that arise in the process.

#### **Text and Translation of Isaiah 65:17**

כִּי־הִנְנִי בּוֹרֵא שָׁמַיִם הַדְּשִׁים וְאֶרֶץ הַדְּשָׁה

וְלֹא תִכְרְתֶנָּה הַרְאֵה שְׁנוֹת

וְלֹא תַעֲלֶינָה עַל־לֵב:

The LXX, which was translated from MT, paraphrases בּוֹרֵא כִּי־הִנְנִי “for behold, I am about to create” in verse 17 with ἔσται and also paraphrases two occurrences of “create” in verse 18 so that one verb does not appear.”<sup>1</sup> In other words, they missed

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<sup>1</sup> For detail versions of Masoretic Text see Douglas Stuart, *Old Testament Exegesis* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009), 88-100.

one verb “create” in their translation. They do not translate בְּנִיָּהּ in v.18a, but renders בְּנִיָּהּ in v.18b with ποιῶ “making.” All the other witnesses support MT.<sup>2</sup> LXX ἐπιτήγκαρδίαν and Hebrew text עַל־לֵב are rendered literally as “upon the heart.”<sup>3</sup>

The translation of Isaiah 65:17 below follows the generally accepted text in WTT Leningrad Hebrew Old Testament text:

“For behold, I am about to create new heavens and a new earth, The former shall not be remembered, Nor go up on (her) heart.”<sup>4</sup>

### Structure of Isaiah 65

Isaiah 65 begins with God making Himself available to His own people (v1.NAS). Isaiah echoes the rebellious and obstinate nature of the people of Judah (vv.2-5 NAS).<sup>5</sup> Because of their defilement, God’s judgment will come upon the nation (vv.6-7 NAS), yet, there is promise of hope, for “my servant” and “my chosen people” will possess and inherit “my mountains” (vv. 8-10 NAS),<sup>6</sup> whereas the wicked or apostates are destined for sword (vv.11-12 NAS). The destiny of the peaceful life of the righteous ones, “My servants” is compared with the death end of the wicked, “you” (vv.13-15).

The peaceful life of the righteous is marked in v.16b, where “the former or the past troubles will be forgotten and hidden from my eyes.” The verses 17-25 give new direction of life wherein God declares “I will create new heaven and new earth: and

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<sup>2</sup> See Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah Chapter 40-66*,652.

<sup>3</sup> The heart was not so much the seat of emotion and affection as of the will and the decision – making processes. Other translations may be read as “mind.”

<sup>4</sup> This is the author’s own translation.

<sup>5</sup> Judah is obstinate, atrocious, idolatrous, and unclean (Isa 65:2-5).

<sup>6</sup> In Isaiah 65:8-10, the promise to preserve a remnant is foreseen.

the former things will not be remembered nor come to mind” (v.17 KJV). Verse 18 indicates that the creation focuses on Jerusalem. The new conditions of life of the created Jerusalem are outlined in vv19-25 (NAS). Thus, verses 17-25 (KJV) predict the restoration of Judah after exile. They will build houses to inhabit, farms to eat from, children not doomed for misfortune, and God will hearken to their petitions. The lion, wolf and serpent will harm no more. It is the time when the ruin shall be reinstated, Isaiah 61:2-4; 62:4. Below is the summarized structure of Isaiah 65:1-25:

1. A: God avails 65:1
2. B: Rebellions repeat 65:2-5
3. B<sup>1</sup>: Rebellions, God judges 65:6-7
4. C: My servant inherits my mountain and apostate destine for death 65:8-12
5. C<sup>1</sup>: My servant rewards and apostates’ rewards compare 65:13-15
6. A<sup>1</sup>: God creates new heavens and new earth 65:16c-25

This structure suggests a picture of parallelism. A Parallels A<sup>1</sup> such that God who makes Himself available is the One who will create “new heaven and earth.” This parallelism seems to indicate that God reveals Himself to redeem his people from suffering. Further, A and A<sup>1</sup> form an inclusio, constituting the boundaries of Isaiah 65. Again, B<sup>1</sup> bears the consequences of the actions of B, forming syntactic parallelism which allows C and C<sup>1</sup> their respective rewards. Having received their respective awards in C sections, A sections have to provide conducive environment to live. If this observation is true then redemption may be comparable to creation of “new heavens and new earth.”<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Miller, “Isaiah,” 754.

### Literary Context of Isaiah 65:17-25

Isaiah 65:17-25 forms a literary unit/pericope. Several reasons support that assertion. First, Isaiah 65:17 announces a new scene in the poetry after he underlines a sharp contrast between the fate of the apostates and faithful remnant of God in the preceding verses 13-16.<sup>8</sup> Second, this unit connects with v.16 through the linking word הַרְאֶשְׁנוֹת “former” and makes declaration with the introductory marker כִּי־הִנְנִי “for behold” which points to the beginning of a unit. Third, there is a shift in locus of the event from judgment and rewards to creation in Isaiah 65:17. Fourth, the thought and ideas of Isaiah 65:16c flows naturally into Isaiah 65:17-25 without break, thereby marking Isaiah 65:17-25 out as a complete smaller unit within the larger unit.

Based upon the above reasoning, this study considers Isaiah 65:17-25 as a literary unit. The immediate context of Isaiah 65:17-25 is Isaiah 65:1-25 which discusses apostasies and syncretism. Those who abandoned Yahweh shall receive curses and death, and the faithful remnant shall possess unimaginable divine munificence.<sup>9</sup> The larger context of Isaiah 65:17-25 is Isaiah 65:1-66:24 which discusses judgment and salvation as God distinguishes between obedient and disobedient people.<sup>10</sup> The larger literary context concludes with a vision of new era of creation of heaven and earth, and pilgrimages to Jerusalem on the New Moons and Sabbaths. In contrast, those who forsake God shall expire, and their unburied bodies shall be left to rot (vv. 17-24).<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Walker, “Isaiah,” *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary*, 280.

<sup>9</sup>AlecMoyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah: An Introductory & Commentary*, 524; Paul, *Isaiah 40-66: Translation and Commentary* 588.

<sup>10</sup>Walker, "Isaiah," *Cornerstone Biblical commentary*, 8: 431; See AlecMoyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah: An Introduction & Commentary*, 522.

<sup>11</sup> Paul, *Isaiah 40-66 ; Translation and Commentary*, 608.

## Structure of Isaiah 65:16b-25

There is no agreement as to the structure of Isa 65:16b-25.<sup>12</sup>

- פי נשכחו הצרות הראשונות וכי נסתרו מעיני:  
 (16b) כִּי־הִנְנִי בּוֹרְאֵ שָׁמַיִם חֲדָשִׁים וְאָרֶץ חֲדָשָׁה (17a)  
 וְלֹא תִזְכְּרֶנָּה הַרְאֵשׁוֹת וְלֹא תִעְלֶינָה עַל־לֵב: (17b)  
 כִּי־אִם־שִׂישׁוּ וְגִילּוּ עַד־עַד אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי בּוֹרְאֵ (18a)  
 כִּי־הִנְנִי בּוֹרְאֵ אֶת־יְרוּשָׁלַם גִּילָה וְעִמָּה מְשׁוּשׁ: (18b)  
 וְגִלְתִּי בִירוּשָׁלַם וְשִׁשְׁתִּי בְעַמִּי (19a)  
 וְלֹא־יִשְׁמַע בָּהּ עוֹד קוֹל בְּכִי וְקוֹל זְעָקָה: (19b)  
 לֹא־יִהְיֶה מִשָּׁם עוֹד עוֹל יָמִים וְזָמַן אֲשֶׁר (20a)  
 לֹא־יִמְלֵא אֶת־יַמִּי כִּי הִנְעַר בּוֹ־מָאָה שָׁנָה יָמוֹת וְהַחֹטָא בּוֹ־מָאָה שָׁנָה יִקָּלֵל: (20b)  
 וּבְנֵי בָתַיִם יִשָּׁבוּ וְנִטְעוּ כְרָמִים וְאָכְלוּ פְרִיָם: (21)  
 לֹא יִבְנוּ וְאֶחָד יֵשֵׁב (22a)  
 לֹא יִטְעוּ וְאֶחָד יֵאָכֵל כִּי־כִימֵי הַעֵל יָמֵי עַמִּי וּמַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵיהֶם יִבְלוּ בְחִירֵי: (22b)  
 לֹא יִיָּגְעוּ לְרִיק וְלֹא יִלְדוּ לְפִהֲלָה כִּי זָרַע בְּרוּכֵי יְהוָה הֵמָּה וְצִאֲצָאֵיהֶם אִתָּם: (23)  
 וְהָיָה טָרֶם־יִקְרָאוּ וְאֲנִי אֶעֱנֶה עוֹד הֵם מְדַבְּרִים וְאֲנִי אֶשְׁמַע: (24)  
 זָאֵב וְטֶלֶא יִרְעוּ כָאֶחָד וְאֶרְיָה כַּבָּקָר יֹאכְלֵ־תֶבֶן וְנֶחֱשׁ עָפָר לְחֶמּוֹ: (25a)  
 לֹא־יִרְעוּ וְלֹא־יִשְׁתִּיתוּ בְּכָל־הַר קְדֹשֵׁי אֱמֶר יְהוָה (25b)

This study assumes above structure of Isa 65:16b-25. The above structure reveals thematic parallelism that focuses on the creation of “new heavens and new earth” which is centered in verses 16b, 17a, 17b, and 18b. It is the reversal of the “former things”. Here the “former thing” seems to indicate the ruin and exile of Judah and Jerusalem.<sup>13</sup> This structure suggests that v. 16b parallels v.17b and, v. 17a parallels v.18b, and v. 18a parallels v. 19a. However, Verse 19b recalls vv. 16b and 17b “former trouble”. The new situations state in vv.19b-25 represents a reversal of the “former trouble” (vv.16b, 17b). Verses 17-18 proclaim the new creation of God.

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<sup>12</sup> Bratcher divides the unit as follows: 17-19a and 19b-25 (183-185). Motyer also divides the unit into two 17-20, 21-25 (529-530); Ulrich Maure just separates v.17 from the rest of the passage, but points out that, while v.17 introduces the universal action of “new heaven and new earth.” The remaining concentrates on Jerusalem “Isaiah 65:17-25”. Eberhard Semsdorf gives more complex structure for Isaiah 65:17-25 as follows:16b-19 is promise of creation of new heaven and new earth and Jerusalem, v.20 is explanation that there would be no more mortality in Jerusalem. Verses 21-22a explain that in Jerusalem one will not work for free and verses 22b-23 are the summary of the explanations. Finally, verses 24-25 are some explanation that on God’ holy hill is general peace.

<sup>13</sup>The time of distress and despair will no more because the former trouble of destruction of Jerusalem will cease to exist (cf.63:9; 43:18-19; 48:3, 6-7).The chosen remnant will forget their former afflictions not even with painful memories. The restored Israel will not vex with remorse, sin and guilt will be covered. See Herry Bultema, *Commentary on Isaiah* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 1981), 612-628.

These verses speak about a new heaven and new earth (cosmological and general, and also about New Jerusalem (historical and specific)).<sup>14</sup> The move from cosmic or general to historical or specific creation is reminiscent of the same pattern in Genesis 1:1-2. The language of the passage is also reminiscent of the language in the parts of Isaiah. It echoes the language of chapters 40-55, recaps the great promise found in Isaiah 26, 30, 32, 33, and 65:25 recalls 11:6-9.<sup>15</sup> Verses 19b-25 describes the conditions that prevail as a consequence of this new creation of God.<sup>16</sup>

The negative notation  $\text{לֹא}$  featured in verses 20a, 20b, 22a, 22b, 23, and 25b give explicit indication of the reversal of the condition of the “former trouble” and highlight peaceful life.<sup>17</sup> The awareness of joy is emphasized in vv.16b-19. The parallelism nature of the above structure testifies that “creation” in vv. 17-19 seem to prefer complete restoration of the people of Judah and Jerusalem, rather than literal creation. Thus, creation of “new heavens and new earth” and “creation of Jerusalem and her people” are juxtaposed.

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<sup>14</sup>See Wann, *creation In Isaiah*, 132-134.

<sup>15</sup>Oswalt, *The book of Isaiah: Chapters 40-66*, 654; Whybray, *Isaiah40-66 New Century Bible*, 127-278; and also Fanwar, *creation In Isaiah* 132.

<sup>16</sup>Several “Commentators like Cheyne point out that the reference to Jerusalem, birth and death and building and planting in the succeeding verses, show that this is really not new heavens and new earth, but only a transformed one” or restored Jerusalem. See Oswalt, *The book of Isaiah: Chapters 40-66*, 657.

<sup>17</sup>The syntactic construction, where the emphatic negative particle  $\text{לֹא}$  plus an imperfect is utilized 8 times (vv.19, 20, 22, 23, and 25) accentuates this sense of finality and completeness.

## Genre of Isaiah 65:17-15

Isaiah 65:17-25 is purely poetry.<sup>18</sup> The book of Isaiah has both prose and poetry.<sup>19</sup> It has very rich poetry in the OT.<sup>20</sup> The main prose is featured in chapters 36-39 NKJV, which happened to be a historical interlude of the king. The poetry are: series of oracles in chapters 13-23 (NKJV), songs against king Babylon 14;4-23, an apocalyptic section that stress last days 24:1-27:21, a wisdom poem in 28:23-29 cf. 32:5-8 (NRSV), and the song of the vine yard in 5:1-7 which describes the relationship between God and Israel. Isaiah 12:1-6 and 38:10-20 contain hymns of praise, while national lament occur in 63:7-64:12.

## Linguistic Analysis of Isaiah 65:16-25

Isaiah 65:13-14 (NAS) identify four antithetic parallel between “My servant and you”<sup>21</sup>. In verse 15 a name pattern emerges: the name that leads to curse and death, “you” (v.15a-c NAS) and another name associates with blessing and allegiance to the God of truth, “My servant” (15d, 16a-d NAS). This shift in v. 15, suggests that “My servant” in vv16-25 is to be taken as servant of God.<sup>22</sup> Verse 16 begins with a relative- participial clause (אֲשֶׁר), which has the antecedent in v.15c. This is a dependent relative clause without resumption, and it is in the nominative function as a subject. Significantly, it refers to the servants of God.

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<sup>18</sup>See for example, Alec Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah: An Introduction & Commentary*, 23.

<sup>19</sup>Geoffrey W, Grogan, “Isaiah,” *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, 6: 352.

<sup>20</sup> Kennerth L. Barker, *Zondervan NIV Study Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 1032.

<sup>21</sup>There are four contrastive sentences indicating the destinies of the servants of God and the wicked (Isa 65:13-14): “My servants...but you”. But in verse 15, the order changes to “you... but my servants”. While “you” receive death destiny, my servants will have new name. It then follows that the switch in v. 15 allows vv. 16-25 to refer to the servants of God. Interestingly, v.16 starts with the use of a relative-participial clause אֲשֶׁר הִמְתַּבְּרָךְ whose antecedent is וְלַעֲבָדַי (v.15c).

<sup>22</sup> Bultema, *Commentary on Isaiah*, 617.

The verse 16 indicates that the servants of God will invoke blessings and also swear by the God of truth, thus, they will have peaceful life.<sup>23</sup> The introductory usage of causal כִּי “for” in verse 16b (for the former troubles will be forgotten) warrant logical statement in verse 16a. It seems that the peaceful life of the servants of God in verses 13-16a re-echoes in vv. 19-25. It is worth mentioning that vv. 16b-18 give the explanatory causality and logical basis for vv. 13-16a and 19-25.<sup>24</sup>

Verse 17 starts with the phrase “for behold.” The passages where כִּי הִנְנִי “for behold” occur the subject is God whereas the context is the exile.<sup>25</sup> Likewise, the כִּי הִנְנִי clause in Jeremiah 1:15; 8:17; 45:5; Amos 6:14 and Habakkuk 1:6 shed light of the punishment of the people by means of captivity. Nonetheless, God promises to restore a remnant after the captivity in Jeremiah 30:10; 46:27; Ezekiel 36:9; Zechariah 2:13, 14; 3, 8. Noticeably, five of the clauses envisage ruin and exile; the other six bring hope of restoration after ruin and exile. Again, כִּי הִנְנִי has potential force of the immediacy or certainty of God’s action when it combines with a particle.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>Verse 16a ushers the servant of God into new realm of prosperity and blessing. Verse 16b starts the sentence with כִּי. When כִּי stands alone, it has an intensive force, introducing a statement with emphasis (surely or certainly). See Bruce K. Waltke and M O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 333; See Ernest Jenni and Claus Westermann, *Theological Lexicon of The Old Testament* (USA: Hendrickson, 1997), 195.

<sup>24</sup>Bediako is true when he says the peaceful life of YHWH’s servants in vv. 13-16a seems to be reverberated in vv. 19-25, with vv. 16b-18 giving the explanatory causality and logical basis for vv. 13-16a and 19-25.

<sup>25</sup>See Jeremiah 1:15; 8:17; 30:10; 45:5; 46:27; Ezekiel 36:9; Amos 6:14; Habakkuk 1:6; Zechariah 2:13; 2:14; 3:8. Note that verse 17 begins with the phrase כִּי הִנְנִי “For behold.” It occurs twice in Isaiah (vv. 17, 18), and eleven more in OT.

<sup>26</sup>Besides, כִּי הִנְנִי which occurs twice in Isaiah 65:17, 18, כִּי הִנְנִי without the pronominal suffix appears four times in Isaiah (3:1; 26:21; 60:2; 66:15). It is interesting to note that the context is either a looming judgment (3:1; 26:21; 66:15) or salvation after judgment (60:2). See Waltke and O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 674-678; Bill T Arnold and John H. Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 158-159; See also Takamitsu, *Emphatic Words and Structure in Biblical Hebrew* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1985), 138-140; Thomas O. Lambdin, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew* (New York: Scribner, 1971), 168.

According to Thomas O. Lambdin, הֲנִי when used with or without the pronoun “emphasizes the immediacy, the here-and-now-ness, of the situation.”<sup>27</sup> So, in Isaiah 65:17-18, the two הֲנִי clauses introduce God’s creative activity in the context of the future restoration of Judah. The element of immediacy appears to be marked by the use of הֲנִי with the particle.

The particle הֲנִי that starts in v.17 appears to be an exclamatory interjection which confirms the statement in v.16 because the reference to “former” in v.17 directly harks back to, and takes its meaning from, the “former” of v. 16b.<sup>28</sup> Isaiah 65:1-25 contains antithetic subjects suggesting that the chapter should be read as one unit.<sup>29</sup>

The asseverative use of הֲנִי in v.17 renders “surely.”<sup>30</sup> The particle may also serve to introduce v.17 as an evidential,<sup>31</sup> causal<sup>32</sup> and logical marker<sup>33</sup> for v. 16. Considering הֲנִי in v.18b gives reason for v.18a. Note that the particle הֲנִי in both vv. 17 and 18 appears to draw the reader’s focus on the content of the clause that follows,

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<sup>27</sup> Thomas O. Lambdin, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew* (New York, NY: Scribner, 1971), 168.

<sup>28</sup>See Mauser, “Isaiah 65:17-25,” 184. He seems to take v.16 as beginning a subunit.

<sup>29</sup>See Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 40-66*, 654; Watts, *WBC*, vol. 25: 351; Bratcher, “Salvation Achieved” 182-183; Alec Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah*, 529-530.

<sup>30</sup>Here v.17 may be translated “surely God will create new heaven and new earth”. “The asseverative הֲנִי can function in other types of discourse as well, to place emphasis on the surety of a fact or situation” See, Arnord and Choi, *A guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 153-154.

<sup>31</sup>From Arnord and Choi, הֲנִי can present the “evidence or motivation that lies behind a statement, rather than presenting the cause of an action or situation. Thus, the causal link is with the action of speech, not the contents of speech; the focus is not on what is spoken but on the reason the speaker is saying something”

<sup>32</sup>“This conjunction forms a causal link between two clauses, introducing the reason an action or situation takes place, or providing the motivation for why something should be done” See Kautzsch 1910 369-370 ; Meyer 1992, 436; Brockleman 1956, 151.

<sup>33</sup>See Waltke and O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 663-665; James Muilenburg, *The Classic Studies of הֲנִי*, T. F. Best. (Chico: Scholars Press, 1984,208-244; J. L. Kugel, “Adverbial Use of Ki Tob,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 99 (1980), 433-435.

and then כִּי logically connects vv. 17-18 with v. 16b.<sup>34</sup> According to Arnold and Choi, כִּי functions as a presentative exclamation, emphasizing immediacy of the clause it modifies more especially with the participle.<sup>35</sup> That כִּי uses with verbs or participle may point to the immediacy of the action of the verb or participle<sup>36</sup>

The above usages of כִּי and הִנֵּנִי seems to suggest that the function of כִּי-הִנֵּנִי in v. 17 may be the basis or evidence that the הַצָּרוֹת הַקְּדָמוֹת “former troubles” in verse 16b will be forgotten: Because God is about to create “new heavens and new earth.”<sup>37</sup> Thus, כִּי-הִנֵּנִי “clauses of vv. 17a and 18b do not only logically connect with v. 16, but also have conjunctive-sequential function, introducing the fact upon which the statements of vv. 17b and 19a are based respectively.”<sup>38</sup>

Both verses 17a and 16b are subordinated to the independent clauses of 16a. And that v. 17a gives evidence for v.16b on the ground that v. 16b and v. 17b seems to be semantically parallel. Verse 18a on the other hand is subordinated to v. 18b but seems to parallel v. 17a semantically.

As noted above, the former motif and semantic parallelism between v.16b and v. 17b indicate that “former” הַקְּדָמוֹת in v. 17b refers back to הַצָּרוֹת הַקְּדָמוֹת “the

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<sup>34</sup>See Muraoka, *Emphatic Words and Structure in Biblical Hebrew*, 138-340; Garret and DeRouchie, *A Modern Grammar for Classical Hebrew*, 38; Arnold and Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 157-158; Waltke and O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 300, 578.

<sup>35</sup>This exclamatory emphasis is often related to the presence of people or certain objects, calling attention to and focusing upon an object”. See, Arnold and Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 158.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., 158.

<sup>37</sup> Young, *The Book of Isaiah*, 513.

<sup>38</sup>Bediako writes that “Since Isa. 65:16-18 are participial and הִנֵּנִי +participial clauses, it can be argued that these clauses do not belong to the primary line of prediction but rather backgrounded activities or, specifically, a predictive reason paragraph.” Bediako, “Isaiah’s New Heavens and New Earth”, *JAAS*, 15.

former troubles” in v. 16b. It implies that literal former heavens and earth is out of the question.

Again, the conditions stipulated in vv. 19b-25 suggest a reversal of הַצָּרוֹת “former trouble” in v. 16b or הַרְאֵשׁוֹת “former” in v. 17b which is clearly incorporated in v. 16b, 17b, and 19b.<sup>39</sup> Verse 17a “Behold, I will create new heavens and new earth” and 18b “for I will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy” clauses provide semantical parallelism to each other. This implies that the creation of “new heaven and new earth” in v. 17a is equated to the creation of “Jerusalem and her people” in v. 18b. The interpretation is supported by the peaceful life of God’s servants outlined in vv.19-25.

In v.18a כִּי־אֵם is restrictive in the clause especially after וְלֹא a negative clause. The combination כִּי־אֵם can be used to restrict or counter the preceding statement,<sup>40</sup> and may be translated “rather.” Thus, verse 18a should be read “rather, rejoice and shout for joy forever in what I am about to create.” This gives additional light to the thought in vv. 17a and 18b.<sup>41</sup> “That I am about to create” אֲשֶׁר אֶנִּי בּוֹרֵא in v. 18a refers back to v. 17a, and also points forward to v. 18b. The two imperative verbs in v.18 וְגִילוּ וְשִׂחוּ “rejoice and delight” emphasize the inevitability of the promise.<sup>42</sup> For the expression עַד־עַד “forever” and synonymous pair וְגִילוּ וְשִׂחוּ “rejoice/delight” in v.

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<sup>39</sup>Syro-Ephraimite crisis (Isa 7:1-6; 2Kgs 15:19; 16:10; 17:3-6; 18:9-11), Sennacherib’s invasion of Judah (2Kgs 18:13-37; Isa 36:1-37:13); Merodach-Baladan’s envoy (2 Kgs 20:12-15; Isa 39:1-4); the captivity that awaited Judah (2Kgs 20:16-18; Isa 39:5-8).

<sup>40</sup> Waltke and O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 675.

<sup>41</sup> Bediako, “Isaiah’s New Heavens and New Earth” *JAAS* 11.1 (2008),16; See also Gileadi, *The Literary Message of Isaiah*, 32.

<sup>42</sup> Bediako, “Isaiah’s New Heavens and New Earth” *JAAS* 15; Waltke and O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 675.

18b, which also appears in v.19 as substantive “joy” certainly emphasizes the restoration of Jerusalem, which makes Jerusalem epitome of joy and happiness.<sup>43</sup>

The doubling of the imperatives is itself a guarantee of total joy. Even the nouns “delight” and “joy” are in apposition, respectively, to “Jerusalem” and “people.”<sup>44</sup> Hence, the creation of “new heavens and new earth” and the creation of “Jerusalem and her people” hyperbolically depict the salvation and restoration of the people of Judah.<sup>45</sup> When Judah is restored, there will be peace with God and the environment (vv.20-25).

In summation, the text and translation, couple with the structures and linguistic analysis portrays salvation and restoration of Judah as the creation of “new heaven and new earth.” In verse 18 the creation of “Jerusalem and her people” and creation of “new heavens and a new earth” in v.17 have the same meaning. It metaphorically portrays the redemption of Judah from captivity. The two imperative verbs “to rejoice and to delight” make Jerusalem an epitome of joy, so that the former trouble of ruin and captivity will be no more. The blessed destiny of the righteous in vv13-16a which is based on the assertion that the “former trouble” will be over (v16b), is encapsulated in vv. 19-25.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> God’s creations are described in detail in the clause “for I shall create Jerusalem as a delight and her people as a joy” (v.18). Thus Jerusalem shall epitomize joy and Jerusalem’s citizenry shall epitomize delight (see Isa. 62:5; 66: 10); See also Paul, *Isaiah 40-66 ; Translation and Commentary*, 603.

<sup>44</sup> Hebrew uses apposition when one thing is so identifiable with another that they can be said to be the same, i.e. here Jerusalem and delight, its people and joy, are interchangeable (cf. Isa. 60:18). See J. Alec Motyer, *the Prophecy of Isaiah* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity press, 19983), 530.

<sup>45</sup> See Bratcher, “salvation Achieved,” 183.

<sup>46</sup> See Walker, *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary*, 280-284. God proclaims that He is creating “new heaven and a new earth” to be wonderful that the old ones will not come to mind (Isa 65:17). In this new setting, invaders will not take their houses (Isa 65:22), they will work not in vain (Isa 65:23), and God will answer them before they call (Isa 65:24). Verse 25 closes with reference to the peaceful environ by using the imagery of change in the animal instinct.

## Syntactical Issues

There are some syntactical issues that need to be discussed: the “former heaven and earth,” and creation of “new heaven and new earth” and “creation of Jerusalem and her people.” The creation of “the new heavens and new earth” seems to parallel the creation of “Jerusalem and her people” in Isaiah 65:17, 18. The clause “creation of new heavens and new earth” is syntactically dependent upon the “creation of Jerusalem and her people” for its rightful meaning. The creation is intended to be joyful which reverse the sadness in Isaiah 1-39. At first there was no reason to rejoice over Jerusalem because the armies of Sennacherib defeated the city, Assyrian King boasted over Hezekiah and the city. Even, Micah, Isaiah’s contemporary, foresaw the time Zion would be “plow as a field, Jerusalem will become a heap of rubble, the Temple hill a mound overgrown with thickets (Mic 3:12).” But, in this situation, God was planning a glorious future for Jerusalem (Isa 52:9; 62:1, 7; 65:17-25).<sup>47</sup>

The rebuilding of Jerusalem is the focal point of God’s creative action and it is intended to be rejoicing and her people are to become a joy in them.<sup>48</sup> This seems to suggest that both the creation of “new heavens and a new earth” in v.17 is the same as the creation of “Jerusalem and her people” in v. 18b. It should be seen as equated, not successive events.<sup>49</sup>

The next issue is the “former heaven and earth.” The “former things” in Isaiah 65:16, 17 is the reference to the “former heavens and earth.” This alludes to the

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<sup>47</sup>“Isaiah” *SDABC* 4, 333.

<sup>48</sup>Watts, *WBC*, vol. 25, 354.

<sup>49</sup> Bediako, “Isaiah’s New Heavens and New Earth (Isa. 65:17; 66:22),” 16.



sense it renders as “first, former situation, preceding, and former.”<sup>54</sup> It appears five times (5) in the book of Isaiah (41:22, 42:9, 48:3, 65:16, 65:17). “Former” הָרְאִישׁוֹת in these passages function as adjective feminine plural absolute.<sup>55</sup> In Isaiah 41:22, הָרְאִישׁוֹת, “former” seems to refer to some prophecies of judgment spoken of by Isaiah in chapters 1-35. God challenges the false gods to set forth convincing evidence of their power. Verses 21-26 stands to suggest that ability to foretell the future is a test of divine power.<sup>56</sup> Not only the predictive prophecies of Isaiah that serve as a proof of true God but also His creative power which is not so with the idols.

The context of “former things” הָרְאִישׁוֹת in Isaiah 42:9 is the predictions made by Isaiah and other prophets. The fulfillments of these prophecies give weight and value to the present prediction by God.<sup>57</sup> In Isaiah 48:3 God calls the people of Judah to recognize the foreknowledge of God. The “former things” הָרְאִישׁוֹת are God’s creative works and establishment of Judah as a nation. Isaiah 65:16,17, the “former things” הָרְאִישׁוֹת shift from God’s prophecies and creation to “former troubles” or distresses of Judah due to their sin.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> See Harry F. van Rooy, "רִאשׁוֹן" *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, (NIDOTTE), ed. Willem A. VanGemeren (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1997), 3: 1015-1023.

<sup>55</sup> Brown, *BDB*, s.v. “new,” 910-911.

<sup>56</sup> Barry Webb, *The Message of Isaiah* (Nottingham, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 2011), 164–165.

<sup>57</sup> “Isaiah” *SDABC*, 4:256.

<sup>58</sup> Young, *The Book of Isaiah: The English Test, With Introduction and Notes*, III:514.

## “New” חדש

The root of חדש appears in all Semantic languages.<sup>59</sup> This word could be used as a verb or adjective.<sup>60</sup> This word has a broad range of meaning. The meaning of the verb in Piel are “make new , restore, reaffirm” and kingship (1 Sam 11:14; Ps 51:10-12; 104:30; Job 10:17; 2 Chron 15:8; 24:4, 12; Lam 5:21; Isa 61:4). The verb in Hitpha’el is rendered “to become new again, renew yourself” (Ps 103:5 cf. Isa 40:31; 2 Chron 15:5; 24:4, 12). In 2 Chronicles 15:5; 24:4, 12 “to make new” means to restore the temple to their previous state and purpose, and to dedicate them anew to the service of the Lord.<sup>61</sup>

The adjectival use of חדש “new” is in contrast to “old” in the historical context. With regard to other usages, reference is made of a “new king” (Exod 1:8 NKJV), a “new wife” (Duet 24:5NAS), “new gods” (Judg. 5;8; Duet. 32:17 NAS), “new grain-offering” (Lev 23:16; Num 28:26 NAS), a “new spirit/heart” (Ezek 11:19; 18:31; 36:26NAS), a “new covenant” (Jer 31:22 NKV). Isaiah’s “new things” have to do with the experience of Judah and Israel as a nation while both Ezekiel and Jeremiah place much on the spiritual renewal of the individuals. Further, a figurative use is located in Job 32:19 “new wineskins.” The “new wineskin” applies to Elihu, as contrast to his “old” friends. A reference is also made to “new song” which is a

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<sup>59</sup> Pieter A. Verhoef, “ חדש ” *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis (NIDOTTE)*, Willem A VanGemeren., vol. vol.2 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), 31.

<sup>60</sup> The verb חדש is mentioned 10x: 9x as Piel and 1 as Hithael. The preservative meaning of the verb in Piel is to cause something to become new and different, to make new to restore, to reaffirm, and repair. The adjective has 53x. It is used in the sense of (a) someone or something previously unknown, and (b) especially the state of being new and different. In all occurrences “new” and “old” are correlative and contrary ideas. See Verhoef, “ חדש ,” *NIDOTTE*, 30.

<sup>61</sup> Verhoef, “ חדש ” *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis (NIDOTTE)*, vol.2:31.

response people give to the new act of God's deliverance (Ps 33: 3; Isa 42:10; Rev 5:9NRSV).

The duality concept of the "former things" and the "new things" pervades throughout the message of Isaiah 40-66, few are sported in Isaiah 40-48. In Isaiah 40-48, the context of "new thing" refers to the appearance of Cyrus on the horizon of history,<sup>62</sup> and the message interconnected to the new era of redemption from sovereign God. R. North is correct, when he writes that "renewal is thus a synonym of creation, however, he emphasizes the dynamic movement of continuity rather than replacement."<sup>63</sup>

Westermann proposes that all these occurrences of "new" were confined to the time of the exile. He argues further that it was only during the exile that reference was made to God's new dealings with Israel.<sup>64</sup> "The exile was a calamity of total proportion and to restore His people God had to enact a new dispensation, which would be radically different from the 'former' one."<sup>65</sup> Thus, the usage of new should be understood in figurative sense rather than literal sense.

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<sup>62</sup> Verhoef, "שׁוֹרֵר" *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis (NIDOTTE)*, vol.2:30-37.

<sup>63</sup> Ernest Jenni and Claus Westermann, *Theological Lexicon of The Old Testament* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997), 240.

<sup>64</sup> J. Furst, *Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon*, trans. S. Davidson, 3rd ed., rev. by Williams & Norgate, (1867), s.v. "new."; R. North, "שׁוֹרֵר," *TDOT*, 4:225-244; Watts, *WBC*, 25: 353-355.

<sup>65</sup> It seems the prophet understands Yahweh's new activity in leading Israel back out of the Babylonian exile as a new creation, which will embrace the nation and the whole created order.

## Heaven שמיים

This word appears several times in the book of Isaiah.<sup>66</sup> The root for שמיים is שׁמ which means “heaven, sky, firmament, air.”<sup>67</sup> The word שמיים may refer to heaven as the divine sphere (Ezek 1:1 NAS).

Usage of heaven/earth: The pair is used to refer to the universality of creation (Gen 1:1 NAS) and to describes God as the only God (Duet 3:24; NRSV), Omnipresent (Deut 4:39; Jer 23:34), and Omniscient (Joel 2:30). Heaven and earth are called to hear Israel’s sin (Isa 1:1 NSRV), tremble and shake at the wrath of the Lord of host (Isa 13:13 NAS) and stand at God’s call (Isa 48:13 NAS). Heaven and earth are to shout for joy because the LORD has redeemed Israel (Isa 44:23; 49:13 (NAS)).

The pair is used in territorial sense (Isa 14:12; 24:21; 55:9 NAS). God’s power to create heaven and earth is connected with His ability to deliver Judah from captivity (Isa 44:24-45:25 NRSV). Heaven and earth testify God’s creatorship (Isa 37:16; 40:12, 22; 42:5; 44:24; 45:12, 18; 48:13; 51:13 NRSV). Heavens are to rain down righteousness for earth to receive salvation (Isa 45:8 NRSV), again rain and snow come down from heaven and watered the earth (Isa 55:10 NRSV) because the windows of heavens are opened and foundation of earth are tremble (Isa 24:18-20 NRSV).

There are several appearances of the tripartite expression “heaven-earth-sea(s) in OT (Exod 20:11; Neh. 9:6 Ps 69:34-35; 96:11; 135:6; Hag 2: 6 NRSV) which refer

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<sup>66</sup>See Isaiah 1:2; 13:13; 40:22; 44:23; 44:24; 45:8; 47:13; 48:13; 49:13; 50:3; 51:13; 55:9; 63:19; 65:17.

<sup>67</sup>The cognates of שמיים are attested in semantic languages. For Akkadians heaven is a realm of the gods, sky is region above the earth. In ANE the sky is often personified and even deified as the Mesopotamian god Anu. See David Toshio Tsumura, "שמיים," *NIDOTTE* ,4:160-170; Watts, *WBC*, 25:353-355.

to entire universe.<sup>68</sup> The structure of heaven is described metaphorically<sup>69</sup> as “dome heaven” (Job 22: 14), and the greatness of God is use metaphorically as “even heaven and the highest heavens cannot contain God” (1 Kgs 8:27). Note that many references of heaven are often personified or used as a metonymy for its inhabitants.<sup>70</sup> Moreover, heaven is used as an idiomatic expression. For instance, the expression “between earth and heaven” means “in the air” (2 Sam 18:9 NKJV), “under the heaven” refers to whole earth (Dan 9:12; Duet 2:25), so to destroy “from under the earth” (Gen 6:17) means total destruction of the whole earth.

The phraseology “The God of heaven” occurs nine times (9x) in the OT and presents Yahweh as a universal deity. Abraham asked his servant to swear by “the LORD, the God of heaven and earth” (Gen 24:3, 7 NRS). Cyrus king of Persia said that “the LORD, the God of heaven” gave him all the kingdoms of the earth (2Chron 36:23; Ezra 1:2 TNIV). Nehemiah also prayed before “the God of heaven” (Neh 1:4; 1:5; 2:4, 20 NAS).

### “Earth” ארץ

It appears 2,505 times in OT, contains very broad range of meaning, and translates “earth or land.”<sup>71</sup> Theologically, ארץ concentrates on the two dominant senses: the earth and the land of Israel. The earth expresses the totality of the created world (Gen 1:1; 2:4 NAS) and Yahweh is recognized as creator and universal God of

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid., vo.4.:160–166.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.,162.

<sup>70</sup> For example, heavens declare the glory of God (Ps 19:1-2), proclaim his righteousness (Ps 50:6; 97:6), hear (Duet 32:1; Isa 1:1-2) as well as sing (Isa 44:23; Jer 51:48) and praise (Ps 69:34-35), and human’s guilt (Job 20:27).

<sup>71</sup> Christopher J. H. Wright, *New International Dictionery of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis (NIDOTTE)*, ed. Willem A. VanGemeren, vol. I (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1997), 518.

heaven and earth who gives stability and durability to the world (Gen 14:19, 22; 1 Sam 2:8; Ps 78:69; 93:1 NAS). In fact, the earth is entrusted to human beings to live, (Gen1:28; Ps 115:16; Gen 2:15 NRSV), to serve and to keep (Gen 2:15 NAS).

Since the earth is connected with the relationship between the personal God and human personal creation, it at times portrays in personified terms (rhetorical personification and metonymy).<sup>72</sup> When earth is personified, it refers to the whole earth, or the land of Israel, or to their inhabitants depending on the context.<sup>73</sup>

In OT, אֶרֶץ “the earth” sometimes refers to Palestine, the Land of Israel. The land on which Israel lives forms one of the primary theological and ethical foci of the faith of Israel and the OT scriptures. The land functions as intimate relationship between God and Israel. God gave the land as an inheritance to Israel in “the great historical-redemption tradition” (Gen 12:7; 15:18-21).<sup>74</sup> The gift of the land proofs God’s faithfulness and dependability and therefore called forth the response of appreciation and worship (Deut 26:1-11 NAS). The land giving as Israel’s inheritance underscores the status of Israel as God’s “first son” so if the land is taken away, it symbolizes the broken covenant relationship between God and Israel. The prophets feature the vision of restoration to the land in the context of obedience and renewed covenant.<sup>75</sup>

Isaiah uses אֶרֶץ in reference to the land of Israel and Palestine. Therefore, creating it anew is in the sense of regaining agricultural fertility, a new political and

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<sup>72</sup>Wright, *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, 1:520.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid., 1:518.

<sup>75</sup>See Jeremiah 24:5-7, 30-31; 32:36-44; Ezekiel 36-37; Hos 2:14-23; Amos 9:14-15.



## ברא “To Create”

This word has range of meanings as “shape, create and fashion,”<sup>77</sup> however, the etymology of the word ברא is in two forms, namely “to create” and “to be fat.”<sup>78</sup> And there is no significant contribution from the older Semitic languages.<sup>79</sup> It appears forty- eight times (48x) in OT, twenty-one (21x) in Isaiah, nine times (9x) in Genesis and others. ברא functions in both Qal and Niphal stems.<sup>80</sup> The key role of ברא in OT is to indicate the source of creation; the meanings connect to divine activities and many objects,<sup>81</sup> and normally, the subject of ברא is only God. The Hebrew verb ברא has semantic and syntactic elements.<sup>82</sup> Indeed the real meaning of ברא is “create.” It is a special term for creation because it is an exceptionally non-metaphorical, non-anthropomorphic verb.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>77</sup>Brown, BDB, s.v. “create,” 135.

<sup>78</sup>Ibid., 135.

<sup>79</sup> Karl-Heiz Bernhardt, “ברא , 'ברא' ,” in *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1975), 245.

<sup>80</sup>See Brown, BDB, s.v. “ברא,” 135.

<sup>81</sup> Usually the subject of the word ברא is God and the object differs. The object are:(a) heaven and earth (Gen 1:1; 2:3; Isa 45:18); mankind (Gen 1:27;5:1-2; Deut 4:32; 89:48; Isa 45:12); the host of heaven (Isa 40:26); heaven (Isa 42:5); wind(Amos 4:13); (b) the individual man Mal 2:13;Smith and waster (Isa 54:16); Israel as a nation (Isa 43:15) Jacob (Isa 43:1); the seed of Israel (Isa 43:7) (c) new conditions and circumstances like righteousness and salvation( Isa 57:19); darkness and evil (Isa 45:7) fruit of lips (Isa 57:19) ; a new thing (Jer 31:22 a woman encompassing a man) ,(d) of transformation: a clean heart; new heaven and new earth (Isa 65:17), transformation of nature ( Isa 41:20), transform Jerusalem into rejoicing (Isa 65:18); others (Eze 21:35, Eze 28;13—15, Exod 34:10; Isa 48:6; Josh17:15). See, *BDB,s.v. "ברא" 135*.

<sup>82</sup>Fanwar, “Creation in Isaiah,” 55.

<sup>83</sup> Raymond C. Leeuwen, “ברא,” in *The New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, ed. Willem A. VanGemeren, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1997), 1:731.

Its usage in Qal and Niphal is restricted to divine activity,<sup>84</sup> and the subject is usually God.<sup>85</sup> Note that the verb normally takes on the accusative of the object<sup>86</sup> like heaven and earth (Gen 1:1 NAS), humankind/man (Gen 1:27), Israel (Isa 43:1 NRSV), new things (Isa 48:6NRSV), historical events, new conditions and circumstances, and transformation and new life.<sup>87</sup>

God, functioning as subject calls attention to Himself in the process of creation in OT. God creates a cloud of smoke and flaming fire (Isa 4:5) , heaven and the starry hosts (Isa 40:26; 42:5; 45:18 NRSV),the earth (Isa 40:28;42:5 NRSV),mankind (Isa 45:12), the call of Israel as a nation (Isa 43:1, 7, 15), righteousness and prosperity, and peace and calamity (Isa 45:7-8 NRSV), light and darkness(Isa 45:7), the environment (Isa 41: 19, 20), new things Isa 48:7 RSV), and new heaven and new earth (Isa 65:17-18 RSV) and transformation of Jerusalem for rejoicing (Isa 65:18 NAS ).<sup>88</sup>

Considering the usage of ברא in the book of Isaiah, one can deduce that the word does not always meant literal creation as used in Genesis 1. God’s calling and redemption of His people form creation but not in creation sense in Genesis 1 (Isa 43:1, 3-7, 15; 65:18). Fanwar makes extensive discussion of the three dimensional use

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<sup>84</sup> Michael J. Gruenthaner, “The Scriptural Doctrine on First Creation,” *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 9 (1947): 50; Wann, “‘Creation in Isaiah’ Ph.D Dissertation,” 54.

<sup>85</sup>Eugene Carpenter, “עשה,” *NIDOTTE*, 3:548.

<sup>86</sup>See Brown, BDB, s.v. “עשה,” 136.

<sup>87</sup>Ibid., 135.

<sup>88</sup> The 21 occurrences of the verb in Isaiah are in Qal, either as perfect or participle. The participial form refers to God as the “creating one “, is used 12 times in Isaiah. The verb is seen in Isaiah as: once in chapters 1-35, 16 times in chapters 40-55, 4 times in chapters 56-66, (but two times in 65:17-18). Surprisingly, ברא is conspicuously missing in chapters 36-39. Moreover, the participial form appears 8 times in 40-55, 4 times in 56-66. The distribution of the verb indicates higher concentration of the verb in chapters 40-55. The verb “ברא” appears in Isa 4:5; 40:26,28; 41:20; 42:5; 43:1, 7, 15; 45:7 (twice), 8, 12, 18 (twice); 48:7; 54:16 (twice); 48:7; 54:16(twice); 57:19’ 65:17, 18 (twice).

of ברא, namely, cosmological creation or primordial creation (40:26, 28; 45:18), historical creation (Israel as a nation 43:1-7), and eschatological creation (new realities, 65-66).<sup>89</sup>

This Hebrew verb appears in the creation account in Genesis 1 and 2 as first verb in the OT. It is used in connection with the creation of creature (Gen 1:1-25 NRSV) and human beings (Gen 1:26-28). In these references, ברא is in singular form and God is the subject. It means that God renewed what was in the chaotic state. God changed the chaotic to cosmos, disorder into order, and emptiness into fullness.<sup>90</sup> The primarily concept of ברא is inserted in the first creation account (Gen 1:1, 21, 27; 2; 3).

According to Elliot-Hogg “in Genesis where it is used ... the verb appears in the cosmological sense only, and it is evidently theological technical term for the primordial creation.”<sup>91</sup> Some scholars like Howard E. Hanson posit that ברא is "a technical, theological term for creation" in the OT and “has received almost universal acceptance.”<sup>92</sup> However, Hanson’s studies of how the term is used in Num16:30, settles that “it cannot be assumed as axiomatic” that the verb always means “create” in the Qal.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Bernhard W. Anderson, *Creation Versus Chaos: The Reinterpretation of Mythical in the Bible* (Philadelphia, PN: Fortress, 1987), 145–147; Wann, “Creation in Isaiah’ Ph.D Dissertation,” 124–126.

<sup>90</sup> Earl D. Radmacher, “Genesis,” in *NKJV Study Bible*, ed. Earl D. Radmacher (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2007), 4.

<sup>91</sup>See, Fanwar, “Creation in Isaiah,” 57.

<sup>92</sup>Howard E. Hanson, “ Num. xvi 30 and the Meaning of ברא ”, *Vetus Testamentum* 23 (1972): 354; Fanwar, “Creation in Isaiah,” 57; Michael J. Grunthaner, “The Scriptural Doctrine on First Creation,” *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 9 (1947): 50.

<sup>93</sup>Ibid., 354.

On the other hand, the secondary use of ברא is God's redemptive and historical acts in and through His people, especially creation of Jerusalem. This secondary use of ברא is intended in Isa 65:17, 18 rather than primordial creations. Although, Isaiah speaks of many new things God creates: new society and environment (Isa 4:5; 41:20 NRSV), new things (Isa 48:7 NAS), a new heaven and new earth (Isa 65:17; 66:22 NAS), and new Jerusalem (Isa 65:18),<sup>94</sup> he is much interested in how ברא portrays the whole concept of creation. ברא does not only denote the creative work of God in the remote past, or presence but also in the eminent future<sup>95</sup>

## יער

Another important verb in Isaiah as far as creation is concerned is יער. It occurs (70) seventy times in OT, out of these twenty three (23) occurrences are in the participial form<sup>96</sup>. The verb appears twenty-seven (27) times in Isaiah, with a few exceptions, it is employed in the Qal, with the participial form "the forming one" being used twelve (12) times. It is used once in Niphal (Isa 43:10), Pual (Ps 139:16, and Hophal (Isa 54:17).<sup>97</sup> Etymologically, יער relates to similar West Semantic forms and appears to have the same meaning as these forms.

The basic meaning of the semantic root יער is "shape, form and fashion."<sup>98</sup> In the West Semantic (Ugaritic, Phoenicians), the noun form of יער is "potter."<sup>99</sup> The Akkadian have analogous root "esern" meaning "form, sketch, or the like," but also

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<sup>94</sup>See Alec Motyer, "Prophecy of Isaiah: An Introduction & Commentary," 378.

<sup>95</sup> Bernhardt, ברא, "ברא" *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, 2:247.

<sup>96</sup>See A. H. Konkel, "יער," *NIDOTTE*, 2:504

<sup>97</sup>See, Brown, BDB, s.v. "יער."

<sup>98</sup>Ibid., 427-428

<sup>99</sup>Ibid., 135;

with the secondary meaning “plan, determine.”<sup>100</sup> The root and its derivatives permeate pre-exilic prophetic text, post exilic prophetic text and the Psalter.<sup>101</sup> The Hebrew verb ברא stands parallels with יער, this case the root יער is appropriate surrogate to ברא but not in exalt synonym.<sup>102</sup> The function of יער is to describe a specific object of God’s design and care. It is particularly significant in the creation of man/humans, both in term of their unique relation to God and God’s purpose for them.<sup>103</sup>

This Hebrew verb יער has semantic and syntactic elements that need to be observed carefully. As mentioned earlier the basic meaning of יער is “shape, form, and create”. The verb is associated with the work of a potter. It indicates the “specialized technique as oppose to that of forming objects by pressing them into mold or modelling them freehand.”<sup>104</sup> McComiskey proposes that יער in its participial form means “potter” especially in the secular usage.<sup>105</sup> Hudson adds that whenever the term is used secularly it indicates craftsmanship, especially that of a potter.<sup>106</sup>

The subject of יער is both God and human, unlike ברא that takes only God as the subject. When God is the subject usually creation is in view and the objects are man and animals (Gen 2:7-8, 19 NRSV), the earth (Jer 33:2 NRSV), the universe (Isa 45:18 NAS), and natural phenomena/mountains and wind (Amos 4:13 NAS).

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<sup>100</sup>Ibid., 427.

<sup>101</sup> B. Otzen, “יער,” in *Theological Dictionary of Old Testament (TDOT)*, vol. 6 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990), 256.

<sup>102</sup> Thomas E. McComiskey, “יער,” vol. 1 (Chicago, IL: Moody, 1980), 396.

<sup>103</sup>Konkel, “יער,” *NIDOTTE*, 2:504.

<sup>104</sup>Hanson, “Num. xvi 30 and the Meaning of ברא,” 357.

<sup>105</sup>McComiskey, “יער,” *TWOT*, 1:396.

<sup>106</sup>Fanwar, “Creation in Isaiah,” 56.

In Isaiah, יָעַר is used exclusively to refer to the creation and election of Israel, utilizing both senses of formation and purpose.<sup>107</sup> The use of יָעַר for the formation of Israel as a people is extremely noted in Isaiah (Isa 27:11, 43:1, 21; 44:2, 21; 45:9; 49:5; 64:7). God is the subject of the verb where the context is creation and the objects are water (Isa 22:11 RSV), light (Isa 45; 7 NRSV), the earth (Isa 45:18 NRSV), and mankind (Isa 64:7 NRSV).

### עָשָׂה

The third verb associated with creation is עָשָׂה. It has 2600 appearances in OT,<sup>108</sup> and 90 times in Isaiah. And out of these occurrences, God functions as the subject 49 times. This verb normally parallels with בָּרָא and יָעַר in the creation context both in Genesis and Isaiah. The basic meaning of עָשָׂה is “do, make”, but not certainly found in Semantic Languages.<sup>109</sup> Unlike בָּרָא, the subject of עָשָׂה varies, but when God is the subject עָשָׂה is used to describe His creative acts.<sup>110</sup>

In Gen 1:31, the use of עָשָׂה is presumed to summarize the whole creation account.<sup>111</sup> In Psalms עָשָׂה is used as a main verb in the phrase “maker of heaven and earth” to describe cosmos. It worthy to note that the combination of עָשָׂה with בָּרָא and יָעַר, the subject is God and the object usually is creation thought. So, עָשָׂה is simple creation verb in OT. The object of the verb includes: water (Isa 22:11 NRSV), heaven

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<sup>107</sup>Fanwar, “Creation in Isaiah” 56.

<sup>108</sup>See Carpenter, “עָשָׂה,” *NIDOTTE*, 3:548. According to Long, it is used 2900 times in the MT(4), Carpenter has 2627 times, out of these 2527 are in Qal and 99 in Niphal and once in Pual/Qal passive.

<sup>109</sup>See Brown, BDB, s.v. “עָשָׂה.”

<sup>110</sup>*Ibid.*, 547.

<sup>111</sup>See Fanwar, “Creation in Isaiah,” 67; Carpenter, “עָשָׂה,” *NIDOTTE*, 3:547.

and earth (Isa 37:16 NAS), and breath (Isa 57:16 NAS), people (Isa 27:11; 29:16; 43:7), Israel (Isa 44:2; 45:7, 9 NAS) and world affairs (Isa 40:23; 41:4 NAS)

The verb עשה affirms three dimensions of creation, namely cosmological, historical and eschatological.<sup>112</sup> The idea of “making heaven and earth” (Isa 66; 1-3), and the “making of a new heaven and a new earth” provide envelope for last chapter of Isaiah, thus captures Isaiah’s creation accounts in a temporal continuum between primordial and eschatological creation.<sup>113</sup>

In sum, the usages of ברא, יער and עשה in Isaiah clearly indicate that the verbs do not always connote literal creation in the sense of *ex nihilo* in Genesis 1. For instance, Isaiah 44:24-45:25 connects God’s promised deliverance of Judah from captivity with his creation of heaven and earth. Likewise, ברא in 65:17, 18 and עשה in 66:22, seems to suggest historical-redemptive-dimension of creation. Thus, the usage of ברא in Isaiah 65:18 and עשה in 66:22 should be taken figuratively. The use of יער for the formation of Israel as a people is extremely noted in Isaiah (Isa 27:11, 43:1, 21; 44:2, 21; 45:9; 49:5; 64:7), utilizing both senses of formation and purpose.<sup>114</sup>

### **Text and Translation of Isaiah 66:22**

כִּי כַאֲשֶׁר הַשָּׁמַיִם הַחֲדָשִׁים וְהָאָרֶץ הַחֲדָשָׁה אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי עֹשֶׂה  
עֹמְדִים לְפָנַי נְאֻם־יְהוָה כֵּן יַעֲמִד זַרְעֲכֶם וְשִׁמְכֶם:

Generally, the WTT Leningrad Hebrew Old Testament agrees with translation as: “As the new heavens and the new earth that I am doing will stand before me, declares Yahweh, so will your seed and name stand.”

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<sup>112</sup> Wann, “Creation in Isaiah’ Ph.D Dissertation,” 68.

<sup>113</sup>Ibid., 68.

<sup>114</sup>Ibid, 16.

## Structure of Isaiah 66

There are several arguments concerning the structure of Isaiah 66.<sup>115</sup> Despite the seemingly divergences in scholarship, “scholars generally agree that the block of materials are more or less coherent.”<sup>116</sup> Nonetheless, this study assumes the following block as the structure for Isaiah 66: vv. 1-6, 7-14, and 15-24. The verses 1-6 are judgment passages<sup>117</sup> which links 65:17-24 passage of hope. This interchange between judgment and hope is a unique feature of this closing section of the book (65:17-66:24).<sup>118</sup> The judgment declarations are cast in the setting of hope to address the remnant to believe the promises of chapters 60-62, and that those opposing them will not triumph always. Verses 7-14 segment focuses on Jerusalem or Zion as a

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<sup>115</sup>Oswalt’s structure concurs with E. Webster (vv.1-6, 7-14, 15-24). Cheyne has (vv. 1-5, 6-24; ) Duhm has( vv.1-4, 5-11, 12-17, 18-22, 23-24); Skinner, Pieper, and Young have the same structure like vv.1-4, 5, 6-16, 17-23, 24; Kissane and Muilenburg have also vv. 1-16, 17-24; Westerman has v. 1-4, 5, 6-16, 17-23, 24.

<sup>116</sup>Oswalt, *The book of Isaiah*, 664-668; While some questions remain un answered other block of materials like vv. 1-4, 7-14, 17-24, scholars agreed to its coherency. Some scholars like McKenzie and Achtemeier attach v. 5 to what follows because there is supposedly a change of address from the apostates to the believers. But Oswalt posits that there is no change, because the apostates have not been addressed in vv.1-4. He argues that the repetition of “who tremble at my word” from v.2 echoes and continues in v. 5 and that encouragement is being offered to those whom the apostates just described (vv. 1-4) have attacked. He expands his argument that if v.5 is separated from vv. 1-4, then there is no way v. 6 can be included with that section , although it continues the note of judgment that features it, and does not clearly share the note of hope that vv. 7-14 sound. Considering this situation Westermann proposes that vv. 7-14 have been encased in an announcement of doom on enemies. That makes it possible for the statement about judgment in the first six verses of the chapter to be taken together, as would be most natural.

<sup>117</sup> The question about delimiting the unit comes in v. 6. Either the verse stands alone thus follows in vv.7-11 that relate to Zion, or it completes the indictment of 66:1-5 with an oracle of accomplished judgment. The judgment is more preferable here.

<sup>118</sup>Oswalt, *The book of Isaiah*, 665.

mother giving birth<sup>119</sup> and her children will spring to life effortlessly, and a future of fruitfulness and laughter stretches endlessly ahead.<sup>120</sup>

The children of Zion, who were mourning, now birthed and ready to be nourished in delight and overflowing abundance. The new creation is also new national identity and a new beginning inside of a history with God set in motion long ago.<sup>121</sup>

Verses 12-16 have a compendium of previous promise and judgment language which is familiar in Isaiah's discourse. Isaiah 66: 15-24 intertwines with theme of judgment, worship and hope of restoration. Verses 15-17 showcase the coming of the LORD with fire to execute judgment upon those who are doing abominable things. The fire, flames of fire, whirlwind and chariot together constitute the symbolic of the irresistible power of the holy God acting in judgment.<sup>122</sup>

In verses 18-19 God announces the gathering of all nations to see his glory through messengers. Again God announces that He will set a sign among those gathered. In verses 20-22, the messengers bring back their brothers in Jerusalem where they offer sacrifices unto the Lord. Due to the sacrifices and offering, some of "your brothers" will be selected to be priests and Levites. The resumption of worship is enshrined in "new heaven and new earth" (v.23). Therefore, the creation of "new heavens and earth," and the new city is the climax towards which all is moving.

Verses 23- 24 are the final warning to the wicked. In fact, the unit of 15-24 constitutes the conclusion of Isaiah 65:17-66:24, Isaiah 56-66, and the book as a

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<sup>119</sup>In some places, this theme has been used to speak of bereavement and deprivation (Isa 26:16-18; 37:3; 51:18-20).

<sup>120</sup>This block of material Isa. 7-14 divided as: an announcement of salvation (Isa 7-9), a call to rejoice in the new reality (Isa 10-11), a fuller description of the blessing of Jerusalem's inhabitants (12-14); See Oswalt, *The book of Isaiah*, 674.

<sup>121</sup> Miller, "Isaiah," 547-552.

<sup>122</sup> Alec Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah: An Introduction & Commentary*, 539-540.

whole. This segment appears to have diversity of themes; hence, scholars are strongly divided about the structure of the passage.<sup>123</sup> According to Oswalt, this diversity of scholarly opinion makes it impossible to speak with dogmatic assurance about the structure of the material.

The Structure of Isaiah 66 is as follows:

1. A: Judgment from the temple on those who engage in abomination (Isa 66:1-6)
2. B: Jerusalem as mother who delivers children painlessly (Jerusalem repopulation, Isa 66:7-14)
3. A<sup>1</sup>: Judgment by fire, flames of fire, whirlwind, chariot (Isa 66:15-17)
4. C: God to gather all nations and tongue to see His glory (Isa 66:18-19)
5. B<sup>1</sup>: Remnants return to Jerusalem from all nations (Jerusalem repopulation, Isa 66:20-22)
6. C<sup>1</sup>: Worship God every new moon and Sabbath, worshippers see corpses of the rebellious (Isa 66:23-24)

This structure supports the two major themes of judgment and hope in the book of Isaiah. According to the structure, A parallels A<sup>1</sup>, B parallels B<sup>1</sup> and C parallels C<sup>1</sup>. The A sections shed light that those who involve in cultic manipulation received punishment from God, meanwhile, C sections call attention to all nations to see the glory of God and glory of God is manifested in worship. Those worshippers shall see not only the glory of God but also the rebellion carcasses. Further, the structure of Isa 66 draws attention to Jerusalem's repopulation in the B section which is cast in the metaphor as a mother who delivers painless children and the gathering of all nations.

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<sup>123</sup>Due to the manifestation of diversity of styles and forms, NRSV presents vv.15-16, 22-23 in poetic format, and vv.17-21, 24 in prose; JPSV agrees, but puts v. 24 in poetry; has all of vv. 17-24 in prose; NEB and CBAT have the entire passage in poetry; NKJV has 15- 17, 22-23 in poetry but vv.18 and 24 in prose.

Observably, the creation of “new heavens and new earth” falls within this repopulation section (Isa 66:7-14; 20-22). If this observation is correct, then Jerusalem giving birth to children painlessly may match God’s promise to create “Jerusalem and her people” in Isaiah 65:18. The children are promised “to be satisfied at her comforting breasts.” They “will drink deeply and delight in her overflowing abundance” (Isa 66:11). It appears the idea of repopulation of Jerusalem with children parallels the creation of “new heavens and new earth” in Isaiah 66:22, 65:17. It is “to reinforce the depth of God’s concern and care for His children.”<sup>124</sup> Noticeably, the “repopulation of Jerusalem” section especially “creation of new heavens and new earth” are cast in the figurative sense.

### **Literal Context of Isaiah 66:22**

Isaiah 66:15-24 constitutes a literal unit which includes v.22. Several reasons support this assertion. First, the LORD makes announcement of the coming judgment by fire in Isaiah 66:15. Isaiah uses of introductory כִּי־הִנֵּה “for behold” to begin the clause in Isaiah 66:15 couple with the colon in v.14 give a signal of the opening of new unit.<sup>125</sup> Second position is based on the observations of the nature of the entire book.

The book of Isaiah switches between judgment and hope: chapters 7-39 are for judgment and 40-66 is hope. But within each of these sections are deposits of judgment and hope and Isaiah 66:15-24 units are no exception. It is out of judgment that hope emerges, but hope never removes the potential and the reality of judgment.

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<sup>124</sup>Oswalt, *The book of Isaiah*, 678.

<sup>125</sup>The asseverative use of כִּי emphasizes the clause it. It normally renders “surely” .The asseverative כִּי can function in other types of discourse as well, to place emphasis on the surety of a fact or situation. See Muilenburg, *The Classic Studies of כִּי* (T. F. Best, Chico: Scholars Press, 1984), 456.

Third verse 18 serves as a bridge between v.17 and vv19-24. Verse 18 completes the activity of the apostate Jews and introduces all nations to see the glory of God.

Fourth, there is shift of locus from birth and mother's comfort imaginary in Isaiah 66:7-13 to gathering of all nations and "brothers" to Jerusalem (Isa 66:15-24). Fifth, worshipping idea and thought in Isaiah 66:20-23 naturally flow without obvious break, thereby marking Isaiah 66:15-24 out as a complete smaller unit within the larger unit.

Based on the aforementioned reasons this study considers Isaiah 66:15-24 as a literal unit. The immediate context of Isaiah 66:15-24 is Isaiah 66:1-24 discusses the final action of God to establish His people at Jerusalem. This section contrasts wicked Jews who will receive fire judgment and the faithful remnant who will be restored to possess their possessions. The larger context of Isaiah 66:15-24 is Isaiah 65:1-66:24 which discusses the judgment and salvation of the people of God.<sup>126</sup>

### **Structure and Genre of Isaiah 66:15-24**

The last unit structure of the book of Isaiah is Isaiah 66: 15-24. This section begins with a shift of attention from the apostates to the gathering of the remnant from all nations. Having cursory look at the sentence structure seems to suggest someone who is emotionally intense. The mood alludes to different idea from v. 17. The phrase, "their actions and their thought" in v.18 makes reference to apostates Jews who had departed from the true God in v.17. But later part of Isaiah 66:18 and 19 call all nations to see the glory of God. Then the scattered remnant of all Israel's brother would be brought back to Jerusalem as an offering to the Lord (v.20-21).

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<sup>126</sup> Walker, *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary: Isaiah, Jeremiah & Lamentations*, 8:283.

The central locus of the unit is the creation of the new heaven and the new earth (v.22). Isaiah finishes his prophecy with two categories of people: those who worship Yahweh will live forever, and those who rebel against Yahweh will die forever, their worm and their fire unending (vv. 23-24).

Below is the structure of Isaiah 66:15-24

1. A<sup>1</sup> אֶת-כָּל-הַגּוֹיִם וְהַלְשָׁנוֹת וּבָאוּ וַיֵּרְאוּ אֶת-כְּבוֹדִי<sup>1</sup> (15-19)
2. B<sup>1</sup> וְהֵבִיאוּ אֶת-כָּל-אֲחֵיכֶם מִכָּל-הַגּוֹיִם<sup>1</sup> (20-21)
3. C: כִּי כָאֲשֶׁר הַשָּׁמַיִם הִחְדָּשִׁים וְהָאָרֶץ הַחֲדָשָׁה אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי עֹשֶׂה (22a)
4. B<sup>2</sup>: עֲמִידִים לִפְנֵי נְאֻם-יְהוָה כִּן יַעֲמִד זְרַעְכֶם וְשִׁמְכֶם<sup>2</sup> (22b)
5. A<sup>2</sup> וְבָאוּ כָל-בָּשָׂר לְהִשְׁתַּחֲוֹת לִפְנֵי יְהוָה (23-24)

The A sections parallel each other. They will go out and see in verse 24 matches they will come and see in v.18. The double reference to nations in v.19 parallels double reference to all mankind or all fresh in vv23-24. The B section has a topical inclusion: “your brothers” in verse 20a matches “your descendants and seed” in verse 22b. The term אֲחֵיכֶם "your brother" and זְרַעְכֶם וְשִׁמְכֶם “you seed and your name” seems to refer to progeny in this context.<sup>127</sup> So, the nations of the world will bring your kin from their diaspora as an “offering” מִנְחָה to the Lord, in the same manner Israel offer sacrifices to the Lord in the temple.<sup>128</sup>

<sup>127</sup> See Isaiah 48:19; 56; 5; 2 Samuel 14:7; Isaiah 14:22. Note the semantic and etymological cognate in Akkadian *Sumu* (CAD S/3:295-96, which often appears together with *Zeru* “seed” (CAD Z: 94), in the same context as in this verse. See S.D. Luzzatto, *Isaiah* (Jerusalem: Hebrew, 1967), 56.

<sup>128</sup> For מִנְחָה (“offering, tribute”), see 1 Kings 5; 1 and 2 Chronicles 26:8. Compare also the Ugaritic etymological and semantic cognate in CAT 1.2.I:37-38: “He will bring you (yam) an offering (mnhyk)”; Akkadian *manahutu* (CAD M/1:206). “the description of offering tribute was most likely influenced by the Mesopotamian royal inscriptions, where the very same animals and vehicles are mentioned in the exact same order as here: *narkabatu* (“chariots”), *sumbati* (“drays, carts, wagons”), *sisu* (“horses”), *pare* (“mule”), *gammali* (“dromedaries”). See Paul, *Divri Shalom*, 17-18; Compare Sumerian hymn to Enli, god of Nippur: “All lands bow before it [Nippur] ... All the lords and princes bring here pure oblations, and offer you sacrifices and prayer” and the hymn to Ningursu of Lagash: “At its name [Lagash] foreigners gather from all corners of the sky. The people of Magan and Meluhha

The peak of the structure (C) involves God’s ability to create new things<sup>129</sup>: “new heaven and new earth.” Isaiah encapsulates this creation motif in Isaiah 65:17-18 thereby advocating eradication of the “former” ruin/calamity. The reference to the verb עָשָׂה (doing/making) of “the new heaven and the new earth” in Isaiah 66:22 operates in the context of restoration and judgment (cf. vv.12-14, 18-23, 14c-17, 24). The tem לִפְנֵי (literally “before me”) expresses God’s personal view concerning creation.<sup>130</sup> It, therefore, appears that the doing/making of “the new heaven and the new earth” and the preservation of the “seed” of Israel will happen by the infinite will of God.

#### **Genre of Isaiah 66:15-24**

The genre of Isaiah 66:15-24 is prophecy written in poetic and prose forms. The poetic part (Isa 66:15-17; 22-24 NAS) describes the judgment of the rebellion Jews, the future blessed condition of the faithful remnant in contrast with the miserable condition and doom of the apostate. The prose part (Isa 66:18-21 NAS) celebrates the gathering of all nations and “your brothers” to see the glory of God in Jerusalem, and the recommencement of worship on the New Moon and Sabbaths.

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come there from their distant lands, bringing trees for the building of the temple of Ningursu”; See Weinfeld, *From Joshua to Joshua*, 124, 129.

<sup>129</sup>There are series of contracts that describes this new creation of God, joy instead of crying, longevity, absence of premature death, the ability to build and plant undisturbed, the prosperity of life, a relation with God and one another (Isaiah 34-66, 35:4: a new cosmos, v17, a new nation.18, a new humanity (20), a new lifestyle (21-22), a new relationship with God (223-24), and a new environment (25)

<sup>130</sup> This is perceptual use of לִפְנֵי that expresses someone’s personal view, or introduces events or situation that comes to one’s attention. See Arnord and Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 116.

## Linguistic Analysis of Isaiah 66:22

As has been indicated earlier, Jerusalem will enjoy undisturbed peace and comfort from God (Isa 66:12-14a). In verse 12, Yahweh will extend peace to her, the word “her” has its antecedent to Jerusalem (Isa 66:10).<sup>131</sup> The reason for Jerusalem’s jubilation is that the period of mourning has ended (Isa 60:20b; cf. 65:18-19). Whereas in verse 14a, God shows His act of redemption to His servants, in verse 14b God’s fury is turned against his enemies. Thus Yahweh’s hand is to save His servants and His wrath, is to punish his enemies.<sup>132</sup>

The switch in verse 14b is elaborated in verse 15. Yahweh is coming with weapons of destruction: fire, whirlwind, and sword. The word אש “fire” in verse 15 is a substantive noun which appears at the start and end of the verse thereby creating literary inclusio. This makes certain the judgment on the hostiles of God. This assertion is supported by the introduction of causal<sup>133</sup> link כִּי “for” in verses 15-16. The logical ground for this statement in verses 15-16 is given in verses 17-18a וּמַהֲשִׁבְתֵּיהֶם מִעֲשֵׂיהֶם “their deeds and imaginations” are evil.

The substantive phrase כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם הַלְשׁוֹנוֹת “from all nations and tongues” in v. 18a indicates a change of personalities in verses 18b, from apostates to the loyal people in the scattered nations. This assertion is supported by the verb קָבַץ in verse 18, which usually refers to the reassembling of the Israelites in the Diaspora<sup>134</sup> (cf 11:11-12,16; 27:13; 49:22; 62:10; 66:20). Likewise פְּלִיטִים in Isaiah 66:19 designates a

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<sup>131</sup>The prophet addresses Jerusalem well-wishers in an emphatic triad of imperatives: “Rejoice! Be glad! Joint in her jubilation!” where God ask those who love and mourn Jerusalem are told to rejoice with her.

<sup>132</sup> Watts, “Isaiah,” 365.

<sup>133</sup>Choi and Arnord, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew syntax*, 105.

<sup>134</sup> Paul, *Isaiah 40-66 ; Translation and Commentary*, 623-625. The first exodus is from Egypt and others are from all nations including Assyria and Babylon.

“fugitive survivor or escape one” from the battlefield. It sometimes functions as a source of information regarding developments in the war <sup>135</sup> (cf. Gen 14:13 Ezek. 33:21 compare with Isa 45:20). Both קִבְּצָא and פְּלִיטִים are giving clue to suggest that people from “all nations and tongue” are Jews who have survived the slaughter in Jerusalem. In other words, v.18a syntactically matches with v.20a, but differs marginally in semantic and purpose.

The clause וְשָׂמָא בְּהֵם אֹת “and I will set in them a sign” (lit.) in verse 19 raises two difficulties: “sign” and “them”. The antecedent of the latter (בְּהֵם) is “all nations and tongues”, and this could be either Jews or the Gentiles. The immediate context appears to suggest Gentiles who will come to see the glory of God, however, in v.19b “those who survive” who are sent out to proclaim the glory of God seem to be the Jews and the larger context of the book of Isaiah seems to favor Jews. The Gentiles are addressed in second person plural because they are not part of the addressee (v.19), however, in v. 20, “your brother” third person plural is employed to connect with the addressees.

Concerning the “sign,” God set a sign and a wonder in Egypt to demonstrate His power over nature, to bring out His people from slavery (Exod 10:2; Jer 32:20; Psalm 78; 43). In Gospels and Acts sign is used in same sense of miracle (John 20:30; Acts 2:22). The context of the signs and wonders seem to have negative connotations,

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<sup>135</sup> Paul, *Isaiah 40-66 ; Translation and Commentary*, 623-625.

even commentators are divided.<sup>136</sup> However, Looking at this clause in line with the semantic parallel in Akkadian “to set a sign” denotes ownership.<sup>137</sup>

In Isaiah 37:30-32, God gives a sign of deliverance to Hezekiah at the time of Assyrian threat. The sign is “you will eat this year what grows of itself, in the second year what springs from the same, and in the third year, sow, reap, plant vineyard and eat their fruit.”

This statement contains both “sign” אֹת and “escape” פְּלִיטָה. The “sign” in this context is agriculture or food. God assured Hezekiah that his people will not starve and by the third year they will be able to sow, reap, plant vineyards and eat their fruit. This provision is reiterated in Isaiah 65:21 for the blissful condition for servants of God. Likewise, in Isaiah 37: 31 פְּלִיטַת בֵּית־יְהוּדָה “the escaped of the house of Judah” are from Judah, and פְּלִיטַת מְהַר צִיּוֹן “and the escaped from Mount Zion” in verse 32 are from Zion, suggests that the escaped ones in Isaiah 66:19 may be regarded as Judeans. The Judeans who were escaped “will bring all your brothers from all the nations, to my holy mountain in Jerusalem as an offering to the LORD (v. 20).”

The terms אֶחָיוֹתָם “your brothers” in v.20 gives an explanation to the people gathered at Jerusalem and מִנְחָהוּ “offering or tribute” re-affirmed sacrificial system of worship engages in temple of God. The references to אֶחָיוֹתָם in Isaiah refers to people of the same nationality, hence the likelihood is that Israelites are denoted by Isaiah 66:20.<sup>138</sup> Thus some of these native Jews (expatriates) will be assigned to function as

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<sup>136</sup> In Ezek 9:4, 6 a mark is given on the forehead of the individual safeguarded by the Lord. According to 1QIsa and the LXX, it reads in plural form אִתּוֹת (signs) unlike singular (sign) אִתּוֹת in MT. But most commentators agree that the sign is not specified. Suggestions include: (1) the sending of messengers (2) Survivors among the nations or among the Jews e.g. Watts, *WBC* 365; (3) an increase of survivors cf. Isaiah 66:7 -9; (4) the sign refers to the cross of Christ. See Alec Motyer, *The prophecy of Isaiah: An Introduction & Commentary*, 541.

<sup>137</sup> Paul, *Isaiah 40-66 ; Translation and Commentary*, 626.

<sup>138</sup> Anne E., “The Nature of the New Heavens and New Earth in Isaiah 66:22,” 23–26.

priests and Levites. This allows all humanity to come to Jerusalem to worship on Sabbaths and New Moons (vv.20-21). The noun phrase, על הַר קְדִישֵׁי יְרוּשָׁלַם, “to Jerusalem, My holy mountain” in v.20, points to Jerusalem as the locus and focus of all this human tributes and offerings. Verse 20 identifies “your brothers” as native Jews and v.21 select some of the native Jews to become priest and Levites in order to start worship in v.23.

In Isaiah 66:22, the construction כִּי כְאֲשֶׁר occurs (3) three times in Isaiah (Isa 26:9; 55:10; 66:22) and (80) eighty more in OT. It is worthy to note that in all these passages two identifiable items are compared. In other words, two things are weighed in balance. For example, the discipline of man is compared to the discipline of God (Deut 8:5) and the death punishment of a man who rape a girl pledged to be married is compared to someone who engages in murder of his neighbor (Deut 22:26). The closeness of God with Moses and Joshua are assessed (Jos 3:7). Bounding a belt around a man’s waist is compared to how God is bound to both Israel and Judah (Jer 13:11).

Similarly, Obadiah compares judgment of “you” to all the nations and Edom (Obad 1:16). Isaiah compares soul yearning for God to the coming of the judgment of God to sinners who engrossed with unrighteousness (Isa 26:9). Rains that come from heavens to water the earth to give fruit and bread is evaluated by the scale of the work of God’s word which accomplishes its intended purpose. In some cases, it affirms the eternity of God (1Kings1: 29-30).

In Isaiah 66:22, כִּי כְאֲשֶׁר clause introduces God’s creative activity in the context of the future restoration of Judah. The idea of localization seems to be marked

especially by the use כְּאַשֶׁר<sup>139</sup>. The participle עֹמְדִים “standing/enduring” and imperfect יַעֲמֹד “shall stand/endure in v.22 may emphasize permanency of the promise of God. The particle כִּי which starts v.22a links the continuum functioning of the priest and Levites in v.21.<sup>140</sup> The asseverative use of כִּי may be rendered as “surely, indeed, truly.”<sup>141</sup> The particle כִּי also introduces v.22 as evidential<sup>142</sup> and casual<sup>143</sup> for v. 21. The phrase כְּאַשֶׁר clarifies the place of worship in v.23 and serves as essence<sup>144</sup> to “your descendant and your name in v.22b.

From the usages of כְּאַשֶׁר and, כִּי, the function of כִּי כְּאַשֶׁר in Isaiah 66:22 is to introduce the activities in v. 21 because God is about to make “ the new heavens and the new earth” mentioned in Isaiah 65:17 and also compares the longevity of the “new heavens and the new earth” to “your name and your descendants”. This “your name and your descendants” (the people of Israel) will endure as long as “the new heavens and the new earth” endures.<sup>145</sup> In other words, Isaiah 66:22b is subordinated parallel to the subordinated clause of v.21, which in turn are subordinated to independent clause of v.17a.<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>139</sup>The word כִּי is the combination of preposition כִּי and relative particle אֲשֶׁר. The uses of כִּי in this context are spatial. See Choi and Arnord, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew syntax*, 105.

<sup>140</sup>This כִּי functions as conjunction particle thereby linking v21 and 22.

<sup>141</sup>See Choi and Arnord, *A guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 153.

<sup>142</sup>Ibid., 149-153.

<sup>143</sup>Ibid., 149.

<sup>144</sup>כִּי in this כְּאַשֶׁר combination function as essence. See, Jouon and Muraoka, *Emphatic Words and Structure in Biblical Hebrew*, 486-487; Choi and Arnord, *A guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* 106.

<sup>145</sup>For the syntactical construction כִּי ... כְּאַשֶׁר, see Isa 52:14-15; 55:10-11; 65:8 and 54:9.

<sup>146</sup>Waltke and O'Connor, 635.

The adverb כִּן that introduces the clause in v.22b is typically used in the apodosis of comparison<sup>147</sup> to v.22a which stands to point out that the focus of 66:22 lies in the apodosis of comparison, specifically, the continuity of the covenantal promises, not the newness of the creation.<sup>148</sup> Isaiah 66:23a is subordinated to v.23b and seems to provide fact and avenue upon which the statements in v. 23b and v.24 will be realized. The particle ו in v.23 functions as conjunctive<sup>149</sup> for v. 22b, thereby describing the two concepts in both verses. This alludes that כִּן in v. 22b is strong evidence for Sabbaths and New Moon worship in v.23.

The identity of heaven and earth is marked by ה in Isaiah 66:22.<sup>150</sup> This definiteness of heaven and earth in Isaiah 66:22 presupposes that Isaiah, the prophet and his audience know the phrase already in Isaiah 65:17. The anaphoric nuances of ה support this.<sup>151</sup> Even the Hebrew construction per se testifies that Isaiah 66:22 “the new heaven and the new earth” is a repetition of Isaiah 65:17.

The particle לְפָנַי “before me” in v. 22 has locative sense.<sup>152</sup> The function of לְפָנַי in Isaiah 66:22b seems to place more emphasis upon the location of the Sabbaths and New Moon worship (v.23) and the work of priests and Levites (v.21). It appears the

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<sup>147</sup> Bill T. Arnold and John H. Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 136.

<sup>148</sup> Bediako, “Isaiah’s New Heavens and New Earth (Isa. 65:17; 66:22),” 18.

<sup>149</sup> Choi and Arnold write, ו is use to describe two or more interrelated concepts or situations that may otherwise not related See Choi and Arnold, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 146.

<sup>150</sup> John A. Cook, *Biblical Hebrew: A Student Grammar* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009).

<sup>151</sup> “Anaphoric use of the article is based on the previous mention of the thing referred to. It is (also) possible for the definiteness to be established in the same clause, as the reference, and such use is called cataphoric”. See Waltke and O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 247.

<sup>152</sup> Arnold and Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 115. The construct לְפָנַי “though translated ‘before’, the particle can place emphasis not on the location of its object but on the fact that the object has been placed at one’s disposal, or possession”.

location points back to the restored Jerusalem and Judah (cf. Isa 65:18), where people will have the opportunity to come before Yahweh. In Isaiah 65:18 the new community will be the created Jerusalem which, according to Isaiah 62:2 will also "be called by a new name."

In verse 22 זרעכם "your descendent" stands in apposition<sup>153</sup> to ושמכם "your name" with the same syntactical function. This noun phrase in v.22b lexically parallels "your brothers" in v.20, at the same time juxtaposes "new heaven and new earth" in the context of durability in Isaiah 66:22. That זרעכם ושמכם "Your descendent and your name" in v.22b have syntactical parallels function with "החדשים והארץ" "the new heaven and the new earth" which in turn are subject to the verb עמד "stand/endure."

And "your descendant" literally denotes "seed or offspring." Isaiah uses this phrase for three categories, namely (1) the seed of the Patriarchs: Abraham in Isaiah 41:8; Jacob in Isaiah 44:3; 45:19 and Israel in Isaiah 43:5; 45:25; 48:18-19 ; (2) the seed mentioned in connection with the new community: Isaiah 6:13; 59:21: 61:9: 65:9, 23 ; (3) the seed of the suffering servant in Isaiah 53:10.<sup>154</sup> It is noteworthy that all passages which mentioned "seed" refer to people from Israel. So, Isaiah 66:23 re-echoes Isaiah 66:20 "all of your kindred" and establishes a particular kind of people that returned from all nations-(Israelites) to occupy Jerusalem.

In sum, the creation of "new heaven and new earth" in Isaiah 66:22 lies in the apodosis of a comparison, specifically, the continuousness of the covenantal promises. In other words, it is an anaphoric nuance in Isaiah 65:17, that is, Isaiah

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<sup>153</sup>Walte and O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew syntax*, 226-228 "Your descendant" in v.22a functions as apposition species to "your name". It connects to a particular class to which the name belongs. In this context, it denotes progeny, and it applies to only the people of Israel.

<sup>154</sup> Gardner, "The Nature of the New Heavens and New Earth in Isaiah 66:22" 21-26.

66:22 “the new heaven and the new earth” is a repetition of Isaiah 65:17 which is in the context of the resettlement of Judah in the post exilic sense of eschatology.

### Semantic Analysis

This portion of the study seeks to explain some words that have bearing to the meaning of the passage in view. The words are חֲדָשׁ “new moon”, שַׁבָּת “Sabbaths,” and אֵשׁ “fire.”

#### חֲדָשׁ

The word חֲדָשׁ occurs two hundred and eighty-three (283) times in OT and six times (6) in Isaiah (Isa 1:13,14; 41:15; 42:10; 62:2; 66:23).<sup>155</sup> It has two usages, namely verb and adjective. As verb, it denotes “make new, restore or renew” in Piel stem, but Hitphael stem renders it “renew.” For adjectival sense, it interprets as month. It is used in conjunction with numbering all twelve months (cf. 1 Chron. 27:2-15).<sup>156</sup> Another meaning of חֲדָשׁ is New Moon. With regard to the new moon, it occurs 22 times in the OT and is usually linked with other days of worship. It is named in conjunction with the Sabbaths four (4) times (Num 28:11-15; Ezek 45:17; Hos 2:11.13; 1 Mac 10:34; *Jub* 1:14), feast of Passover and Weeks (Num 28:16-31), and generic reference to feasts and appointed feasts (Ezek 45:17; Hos 2:11; 1 Mac 10:34).<sup>157</sup>

New Moon(s) occurs 8 times in three-name sequences; normally Sabbath comes first and followed by a reference to unspecified feasts. The New Moon is one

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<sup>155</sup> Samir B. Massouh, “חֲדָשׁ,” *NDOTTE*, 38.

<sup>156</sup>For example, the second month (1 Kgs 6:1), the eighth month (1 Kgs 6:38), the seventh month (1Kgs 8:2). In these passages the word חֲדָשׁ and יָרֵךְ are used in an interchangeable manner, (1kgs 6:38; 8:2).

<sup>157</sup> Hendrik L. Bosman, *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, ed. Willem A. VanGemeren (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1997), 1020–121.

of the religious festivals that has designated month for celebration. The rituals include, burnt offerings to God (Num28:11), trumpet blowing and sacrifices are detailed in numerous context (Lev 23:24; Num 10:10; 28:11-15; 29:1-6; Ps 81:3-4; Ezek 46:6). In Isaiah 1:13, Isaiah condemns the people's abuse of religious assemblies, like New Moons, Sabbaths, and convocations. It is in Jeremiah corpus that שִׁחַב is translated "as a female animal's "heat" in metaphorical sense to describe Israel's craving for Baals."<sup>158</sup>

The New Moon is a monthly festival that was established early in Israel's family life. It was a monthly day celebration in pre-exilic Israel, wherein sacrifices were brought to the temple or sanctuary.<sup>159</sup>

The New Moon became popular after the exile (1 Chron 23:31; 2 Chron 2:3-4; 8:13) because of its importance as enshrined in Leviticus 23:24-25.<sup>160</sup> The Mishnah suggests that at the beginning of every month special services were held in the synagogue. Interestingly, Josephus, Judith (8:6) and 1 Macc (10:34) integrated New Moon festivals in their lists of Jewish feasts.<sup>161</sup> It appears the commemoration of the festival of New Moon which afterwards linked to the eschatological renewal of the covenant by God is very important.

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<sup>158</sup>See, Jer. 3:24, and also Hartley, "Leviticus", *WBC*, 1992, 376-383; Merrill, "Deuteronomy", *NAC*, 251-256; Wenham, "Leviticus", *NICOT*, 300-307.

<sup>159</sup> See H. J. Kraus, *worship in Israel*, 1966, 79-80; H. A. McKay, "New Moon or Sabbath," in *Sabbath in Jewish and Christian Traditions*, ed. T. Eskenazi, 1991, 12-27.

<sup>160</sup>"Frequent reference in 1 and 2 Chronicles, create the impression that New Moon festival gain popularity after the exile" (1 Chron 23:31; 2 Chron 2:3-4; 8:13; Ezra 3:5; Neh 10:33-34). Again, "It seems this impression is enhance by the New Moon's importance in Leviticus 23:24-25, but caution must be exercise to accept a new Moon festival as the forerunner of the New Year festival."

<sup>161</sup> A. Albert, *A History of Israelite Religion in the Old Testament Period*, 1994, 190; T. C. G. Thorton, "Jewish New Moon Festivals: Galatians and Colossians 2:16," *Journal for the study of the Old Testament* 40 (1989): 97-100.

Isaiah uses שָׁבֵת for two special purposes. One as an adjective to qualify an object (41:15; 42:10 62:2) and as noun for religious festivals (Isa 1:13, 14; 66:23), which normally translated as “new moon.” In such situation, it denotes day, time, of new moon, month or as religious festival.<sup>162</sup>

In Isaiah 66:23, שָׁבֵת is used with combination of Sabbaths in the context of worship. This is a religious festival wherein pilgrimage will troupe in Jerusalem to worship God (cf.Num28:11-15 NIV). Ridder bos believes that every Sabbath and every New Moon will be the regular time for worship for “all flesh,”<sup>163</sup>

### “Sabbath” שָׁבֵת

The word שָׁבֵת has dual usages: verb and noun. When is used as verb, it translates as “cease”, “desist” or “rest.” It functions in Qal, Niphal and Hiphil stems. The noun form is translated Sabbath, or day of rest of heart and cessation.<sup>164</sup> Usually, שָׁבֵת is used 104 times in the OT; the books with the highest frequency are those where priests play major role.<sup>165</sup> The derivation of שְׁבִיבָה means “restfulness,” which designates the weekly Sabbath (Exod 16:23; 31:15; 35:2; Lev 23:3 NSRV), the Day of Atonement (Lev 16:31; 23:32 NRSV), the sabbatical year (Lev 25:4-5 NRSV), and the first and eighth day of the feast of Succoth (Lev 23:39 NRSV)<sup>166</sup>

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<sup>162</sup>Brown, BDB, s.v. “sabbath.”

<sup>163</sup> Jan Ridder bos, “Isaiah,” in *Bible Study Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1985), 578–580; Geoffrey W. Grogan, *Zondervan NIV Bible Commentary*, ed. L Kenneth and John R. Kohlenberger III, Rev., vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994), 432.

<sup>164</sup> Brown, BDB, s.v. “sabbath.”

<sup>165</sup> Leviticus 24 x; Ezekiel 15x; Exodus 14x; Nehemiah 14x; 1-2 Chronicles 8x; Isaiah 7x; Jer 7x; 2 kgs 5x; Num 3x; Deut 3x. It is used once each in Ps, Lam. Hos, and Amos. See, Hendrik L. Bosman, “שְׁבִיבָה,” *NDOTTE*, 1162.

<sup>166</sup>See, Hendrik L. Bosman, “שְׁבִיבָה,” *NDOTTE*, 1162.

Isaiah uses שָׁבַת in the context of worship (Isa 56:2, 4, 6; 58:13; 66:23), including the celebrations of feast as relate to Israel traditional mode of worship. The collocation of these two festivals appear in OT (Num 28:9-15; 2 Kgs 4:23; Isa 1:13, 14; Hos 2:11; Amos 8:5; Ezek 46:3), and in these references the celebration of religious festival is in view, not necessary weekly Sabbath (Gen 2:1-3) worship that commemorate the creation of heaven and earth.<sup>167</sup> Paul observes that “on the basis of Isaiah 66:23, this chapter was chosen as the prophetic reading in synagogues on days when the New Moon and Sabbath coincide.”<sup>168</sup>

### **כָּל־בָּשָׂר “All flesh”**

The phraseology כָּל־בָּשָׂר “all flesh” appears twenty-six times (26) in OT and several times in Isaiah, mostly translated as “all flesh” or “all mankind.” “All flesh” will see the glory of God (Isa 40:5), and to know God as savior and redeemer and LORD (Isa 49:26), because there is judgment on all men (Isa 66:16). For that matter, it is appropriate that “All men” bow down to worship God (Isa 66:23).

Isaiah uses this phrase to designate these groups of people; Gentiles, or Jews or both. In the larger context every man is favored whereas the immediate context focuses on Jews. The earlier discussion on the “your descendants and your seed” concludes that the seed and descendants are the same people of Israel. In Isaiah 1-20, those described as “your seed,” sharing in common your name, are now all mankind or all flesh.

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<sup>167</sup>In 2kings 4:23, “both new moon and Sabbaths are holy days for offering and solemn assemblies. It is customary for people to assemble for worship, or religious instructions and edification.” Isaiah 1:13, 14 God hates the meaningless new moon, Sabbaths, and other convocation of the Jews. In Hos 2:11, God announces His intention to stop yearly festivals, New moon and Sabbath celebrations. In Amos 8:5 the dishonest Jews wish the end of the new moon and Sabbath festivals so that they can cheat their customers in market. Ezek 46:3 affirms that worship should be done on both Sabbath and new moon.

<sup>168</sup> Paul, *Isaiah 40-66 ; Translation and Commentary*, 631.

## שֶׁר “fire”

According to Hamp, שֶׁר occurs 380 times in the OT.<sup>169</sup> Normally the gender is feminine but the substantive lacks a verbal cognate in the OT, notwithstanding, it occurs in all the Semitic languages apart from Arabic.<sup>170</sup> It is translated as “fire “or “shining brightness” and it has varieties of usages: “lighting, the sun and trop of anger.”<sup>171</sup> The masculine form שֶׁרֶשׁ describes an offering made by fire.<sup>172</sup>

There are several manifestations involve fire through which Yahweh makes His presence known. Therefore, in theocentric faith, fire plays active role concerning the appearances and actions of Yahweh. Some poetic passages in the Psalms indicate that Yahweh rides on the storm-clouds.<sup>173</sup> God makes His presence felt during His covenant with Abraham by the expression “smoking fire pot” and “flaming torch.”<sup>174</sup> God appears to Moses in a flame of fire in the bush (Exod 3:2 NKJV). During the exodus, the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night are signs of the divine presence and leadership<sup>175</sup> and figurative<sup>176</sup> to the conquest of Canaan.

The accompanying natural phenomenon are claps of thunder and flashes of lighting, dark clouds and trumpet blasts. According to Yahwistic tradition (Exod

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<sup>169</sup>Hamp, “שֶׁר,” *TDOT*, 1: 418-428.

<sup>170</sup>*Ibid.*, 1: 418-428.

<sup>171</sup>Davidson, *AHCL*, s.v. “שֶׁר.”

<sup>172</sup>*Ibid.*, *AHCL*, s.v. “שֶׁרֶשׁ.”

<sup>173</sup> “Fire from heaven is sent out as an arrow by God Himself (Ps 18:15, 14, 29:7; 144:6). These poetic passages in Psalms have in mind a kind of theophany, in which Yahweh rides on the storm -cloud. He makes fire and flames his ministers (Ps 104:4; 148:8)”.

<sup>174</sup> In the story of the God’s covenant with Abraham, God uses fire to demonstrate His supreme power (Gen 15:17).

<sup>175</sup> It is true that the ancient narrators could understood the import of God’s leadership in the literal sense. See, Exodus 13:21; 14:24; Numbers 9:15; 14:14; Deut 1:33; Ps 78:14.

<sup>176</sup> Hamp, “שֶׁר,” *TDOT*, 1: 426.

19:18), Yahweh descends on the mountain in fire, accompanied by smoke (Deut 4:12, 15, 33, 36; 5:42-26; 10:4; Exo 20:18).

Lighting and fire are divine instruments of judgment. The intimacy between Yahweh's anger and fire is very strong. For example; God sends thunder, lighting, and hail as plagues upon Pharaoh and Egypt (Exo 9:23 NKJV). To consume the sacrifices, (Jugs 6:21; Lev 9:24; 1 Kgs 18:38; 2 Chron 7:1 NKJV), God expressly sends fire (Num 11:1-3; 16:35; Lev 10:2; Lam 1:13NKJV). In Genesis accounts God sends or rains brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 19:24).<sup>177</sup>

The motif of fire has its effect on the symbolic language of the prophet Isaiah. In a figurative sense Yahweh will be a wall of fire around Jerusalem and the glory within her.<sup>178</sup> Contrary to the judgment associated with theophany, Isaiah characterizes Yahweh as light of Israel, which evidently becomes a fire and a flame against His enemies (Isa 4:5; 58:8;10:17; 9:1,2; 6:2; cf. Zech 2:9, 5 NAS). Isaiah portrays Yahweh as positive, protective, and bright.<sup>179</sup> However, Isaiah eschatological fire in Isaiah 66:24 "their worm shall not die their fire shall not be quenched" is a parallel of the murderous fire of Topheth in the Valley of Hinnom<sup>180</sup> which lies southern of Jerusalem.

In sum, the words discussed in Isaiah 66:22 have numerous frequencies of the appearances in the OT and Isaiah; indicate wide range of meaning and usages. New moon and Sabbath in Isaiah 66:23 are cast in the festival feast in the context of

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<sup>177</sup> It appears the concept of the holy war is embedded within these passages (Amos 1:4, 7, 10, 12, 14, ; 2:2, 5; Jer 17:27; 49:27; Hos 8:14). Similarly, Ezek 38:22; 39:6 with a slight textual emendation of Amos 7:4

<sup>178</sup> Hamp, "שֵׁן" *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament (TDOT)*, 427.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid, 1: 427.

<sup>180</sup> The concept of the eschatological destruction of the enemies of God either on earth or in the fire of Hell is late and not typical for the OT.

worship in Jerusalem. All flesh/all mankind is rendered on three possible grounds either for Gentiles or Jews or both. The studies puts forward that “your seed, your name and your descendants, constitute the same people of Jew descent who were in the all the nation but brought to Jerusalem. Some were selected to function as priest and Levites.

Fire is used either as metaphor or literal. The latter authenticates the imminent judgment of God, thus, it serves as divine instrument of judgment (Sodom and Gomorrah). The former symbolizes Yahweh’s protection, leadership and divine presence. Isaiah uses fire to announce Yahweh’s coming judgment and the willingness of infinite power to save.

### **The Postexilic Eschatology of Isaiah 65-66**

There are two main viewpoints as far as eschatology of Isaiah 65-66 are concerned: apocalyptic and postexilic. The former details the passage into the future at the close of millennium.<sup>181</sup> The latter considers the passages to be fulfilled after the return from the Babylonian captivity, so the “creation of new heavens and new earth” should be equated with the postexilic restoration of Judah. This study seems to lean towards post exilic perspective due to the following convictions.

First, the structure and the literary context of Isaiah 65-66 support postexilic, as discussed above. Second, the gathering motif of God’s people from captivity in all nations and their restoration to the covenant land to plant and rebuild indicate clearly the postexilic idea not the condition of eternal state (Isa 67:21-23 NRSV).<sup>182</sup> Third,

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<sup>181</sup> Evangelical’s interpretations agreed on God’s kingdom coming through Jesus Christ at post Millennium. See Bryan E. Beyer, *Encountering the book of Isaiah*, 237. See also Young, *The book of Isaiah*, 514; Paul, *Isaiah 40-66*, 603; Alec Motyer, *The prophecy of Isaiah*, 540; “Isaiah,” *SDABC*, 332.

<sup>182</sup> Yahweh gathering His people (Isa 65:9,10; 66:18; cf. 56:8-9; 57:14), restoration (Isa 65:17-25; 66:19-20; cf. 56:8-9; 57:14; 58:12, 14; 61:4; 62:4, 10, 12; 65:17-25; 66:18-20).

blissful conditions cherishes in Isaiah 65:19-25 are more of this life rather than eternal state of immortality.

For instance, while in Isaiah 65: 20, death is present in the new heavens and new earth, in Revelation 21:4, there is no more death in the heaven and earth. Isaiah 65:23 marriages and birth of children are in the “new heaven and new earth,” in Luke 20:35 there will be neither marriage nor are given in marriage. Similarly, Isaiah 66:23, 24 worshipers on the way to Jerusalem view the carcasses of those who have transgressed against God. The place of torment is the valley of Ben Hinnom, or Gehenna (cf. Jer 7:32-34), which lies south of Jerusalem.<sup>183</sup> This is purely description of activity in the restored Jerusalem not eternal state affairs. Fourth, When God announces to create “new heavens and new earth” in Isaiah 65:17, He limits this creation to creation of “Jerusalem and her people” in Isaiah 65:18. This makes the creation of “new heaven and new earth” parallels to the creation of “Jerusalem and her people.” This presupposes that literal, cosmological creation on a universal scale is not in view. The rebuilding of Jerusalem is the focal point of God’s activity.<sup>184</sup>

Fifth, the Hebrew constructions כִּי־הָיָה in Isaiah 65:17-18 and אֲנִי seems to indicate that God’s creation of “new heaven and new earth” should be taken in the immediate, not remote or future. Six, Isaiah 66:19, 20 features God’s servant undertaking evangelistic activity to proclaim the glory of God in order to bring back their “brothers.” Contrary, such evangelistic mission would not be necessary if a cosmological recreation were meant, even in Revelation 21:4, “there will be no more death, mourning, crying, and pains” because sin and sinners too are no more. Seven,

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<sup>183</sup> Young, *The Book of Isaiah*, 537.

<sup>184</sup> Isa 65:18 cf, 44:23-45:25; 54:11; 62: 10; 65:18-25.

the restoration of the people of Judah is cast in several metaphors (Isa 42:10-16; 48:6-7; 51:16), so is Isaiah 65:17; 66:22.

Eight, if Ezekiel's prophecy of the future unification of the two kingdoms (Ezek 37:15-28) and the vision of the temple (Ezek 40-48) are not detailed to remote future –an apocalyptic sense, than Isaiah 65-66 should not be construed apocalyptic. Nine, there is continuity of functions of priest, and Levites at the restored Jerusalem (Isa 66:21) whereas in Hebrew 8-9 Christ is the high priest and sacrifices are no more.

Finally, in Isaiah 66:23 Religious festivals such as New Moon, Sabbath and Passover are avenues to worship God; conversely Revelation 22:5 indicates that in “the new heaven and new earth” “there is no night,” which concludes that there will be no day, month, year or season to determine a New Moon or Sabbath day. John speaks this “And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it ... And the gates of it shall not shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there” Revelation 21:22-23.

The discussions suffice to admit that Isaiah 65-66 is postexilic eschatology which expresses the restoration of Judah to the covenanted land after the captivity.

### **Synthesis of the Analysis**

The declaration of “new heavens and new earth” in Isaiah 65:17 and Isaiah 66:22 formed the basis of this study. In the cause of exploration of the texts, both OT and NT references were considered.

The structure of Isaiah 65 and 66 reveal thematic parallelism that focuses on the creation of “new heavens and a new earth” which is centered in Isaiah 65; 16c, 17a, and 18a. It is the reversal of the “former things.” The negative notations נִלְוֶה

features in Isaiah 65:20-25 give explicit indication of the reversal of the former trouble, thereby highlighting peaceful life.

The text and translations, coupled with literary and linguistic analyses portray salvation and restoration of Judah as the creation of “new heavens and new earth.” Further the creation of “Jerusalem and her people” in Isaiah 65:18 parallels semantically with the creation of “new heavens and a new earth” in Isaiah 65:17; 66:22. The two imperative verbs “to rejoice and to delight” in Isaiah 65:18, make Jerusalem epitome of joy, so that the “former trouble” will be no more. The assertion that “former trouble” will be over is encapsulated in Isaiah 65:19-25.

The issue of “former heavens and earth,” “former troubles,” and “former things” seem to suggest “old order of things.” Isaiah contrasts “former things” with the “new things.” The word “former” has several range of meanings (creation work of God, establishment of Judah as a nation and others), but in Isaiah 65:16, 17 the “former” shift from prophecies and creation to “former trouble” and distress of Judah due to their sins. In light of this “former heavens and earth” seems to suggest the pains and sorrows the people of Judah went through during their captivity in Babylon and other nations, which, God promise to take care rather than the literal former universe that will pass away at the advent of Christ.

Regarding the adjective “new” that describes heavens and earth has several meanings. “New” and “old” are interconnected and contrary in OT and Isaiah. The “old” constitutes the event of Israel’s political downfall, destruction of Jerusalem and the temple and the traumatic experiences of the exile. These conditions represent the “past trouble” or “former troubles” or “former things.” The “new” on the one hand, concentrates on the appearance and activities of Cyrus Persian king, down fall of Babylon, the new movement from exile (antitype of the first exodus), the restoration

of paradisiacal conditions. These constitute the creation of “new heavens and new earth.”

The heavens and earth merism emerges from the studies. Heaven and earth have wide range of meanings and usages such as creation of the whole world, God’s power to create and save His people. The pair may be used figuratively and idiomatic expression to represent something else. It appears Isaiah uses this pair in the context of exile, where God promise to bring back Judah to their own land so that they can live as a nation. In such cases, the focus is on restoration of Judah and Israel, so, is Isaiah 65:17; 66:22. It seems prophet Isaiah uses “new heavens and new earth” as a metaphor. Thus, the creation of “new heavens and new earth” should be taken figurative sense rather than literal creation sense.

Theologically, the land that God gives to Israel as inheritance underscores the status of Israel as “first born,” so if the land is taken away, it symbolizes the broken relationship between God and Israel. Therefore, the prophets feature the visions of restoration to the land in the context of obedience and renewed covenant.

The creations words studied do not always connote literal creation sense of ex-nihilo (Gen 1) even instructive is God’s creation. This seems to suggest historical-redemptive-dimension of creation. In this sense God’s redemption and historical acts in and through His people especially Judah and Jerusalem is a form of creation. Isaiah confirms this assertion in Isaiah 65:17, 18 that the creation of “new heavens and new earth” juxtaposes the creation of Jerusalem and her people.

Similarly, Isaiah 66:7-14 parallels Isaiah 66:20-22 with regard to repopulation of Jerusalem. These passages underscore the fact that repopulation is cast in the metaphor as mother who deliver painless children, that expression shows that the children from painless mother will constitute the occupants in Jerusalem (Isa 66:7-

14). The motif of gathering seems to suggest two groups: the Gentile who will come and see the glory of God from all nations and tongue and the survival Jew who will send out to proclaim the glory of God and also bring their brothers back to Jerusalem. Some of them will be assigned as priest and Levites to perform duties in New Moon and Sabbath worship. This coming together of the Israelites from all nations probably indicates post exilic restoration of Judah, so that God's people will inherit the covenantal land.

According to Isaiah 66:22, the occupants are "your descendants" and "your name." "Your descendants and your name" function as apposition of species which denotes a particular class of the seed or descendant. The seed is categorized into three, namely the seed of the Patriarch, the seed of the suffering servant and the seed of mentioned in connection with the new community. All these references appear to apply to people from Israel.

The issue of New Moon and Sabbath is clear as far as the context is concerned. Although, Sabbath designates the weekly Sabbath, the Day of Atonement, sabbatical Year, the rest of commemorated by trumpets and the first and eight day of feast of Succoth, Isaiah uses Sabbath in the context of worship including celebration of feast related to tradition Jews. The collocation of New Moon and Sabbath occurs in the context of religious festival not weekly Sabbath. Even Isaiah 66:23 is read in the synagogue when both festivals coincided.

To conclude, creating of "new heavens and new earth" in Isaiah 65:17 juxtaposes the creating of "Jerusalem and her people" in Isaiah 65:18, and should be understood as a metaphorical expression of the future deliverance and restoration of Judah after captivity. The making of "new heavens and new earth" in Isaiah 66:22 appears as an anaphoric nuance of Isaiah 65:17. It lies in the apodosis of a

comparison, unambiguously, the continuity of the covenantal promises, in the context of postexilic restoration of Judah.

### **Isaiah and New Testament Concept of “New Heavens and New Earth”**

The phrase “new heaven and new earth” explicitly appears twice in the New Testament, in 2 Peter 3:13 and Revelation 21:1-4.

#### **2 Peter 3:13 “New Heaven and New Earth”**

The Greek reading of 2 Peter 3:13 is as follows:

Καινοὺς δὲ οὐρανοὺς καὶ γῆν καινὴν κατὰ τὸ ἐπάγγελμα τοῦ προσδοκῶμεν, ἐν οἷς δικαιοσύνη κατοικεῖ. (2Pet 3:13 BYZ)

A literal, word-order translation would be as follows:

“And [but] a new heavens and a new earth, according to His promise, we are looking forward to, in which righteousness dwells.”

οἷς which is the masculine, plural relative pronoun has its antecedent with both masculine noun οὐρανοὺς “heaven” and feminine noun γῆν “earth.”<sup>185</sup> Syntactically they are joined as one idea. The grammars seem to indicate that dual referents of different genders are controlled by the first noun of the grouping.<sup>186</sup> The adjective Καινοὺς<sup>187</sup> which qualifies both οὐρανοὺς “heavens and γῆν “earth” in 2 Peter 3:13 is

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<sup>185</sup> William D. Mounce, *Basics of Biblical Greek Grammar* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 113–117; Daniel B. Wallace, *The Basics of New Testament Syntax* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2000), 129–139.

<sup>186</sup> David A. Grassley, “New Heavens and New Earth,” *Epiphany* 10 (2004): 154.

<sup>187</sup> Even though the form of the adjective changes due to gender sensitivity, so οὐρανοὺς which is masculine noun is qualified by masculine adjective form Καινοὺς, whereas, γῆν a feminine noun is qualified by feminine form καινὴν. See William D. Mounce, *Basics of Biblical Greek Grammar*, 64–69.

commonly translated “new.” It is used 42 times in the New Testament and, in each case; it is connected with the work of Christ.<sup>188</sup>

The chiasmic structure of 2 Peter 3:13 with regard to positions of Καινοὺς on οὐρανοὺς and γῆν:

Καινοὺς δὲ οὐρανοὺς “New heavens and (but)

καὶ γῆν καινὴν “and a earth” new

The chiasmic structure demonstrably draws “heaven and earth” together as one unit of thought.

Καινοὺς normally denotes a kind of newness and not degree of newness. It seems that καινοὺς in this text means “new” in the sense that what is old has become obsolete, and should be replaced by what is new. In this condition the new becomes superior in kind to the old.<sup>189</sup>

Richard C. Trench explains that “*Neos* refers to something new in time, to something that recently has come into existence. ... *Kainos* refers to something new in quality and is contrasted with that which has seen service—the outworn, the exhausted, or that which is marred through age. ... The *kainon mnemeion* in which Joseph of Arimathea laid the body of Jesus (Matt. 27:60; John 19:41) was not a tomb that recently had been hewn from rock but one that never had been used at all, one where no dead person had lain to make the place ceremonially unclean (Matt. 23:27; Num. 11:16; Ezek. 39:12, 16). This tomb might have been created a hundred years before and therefore not be *neon*, but if it had never been used before, it would still be *kainon*. ... The *kainon* is the *heteron*, the qualitatively other; the *neon* is the *allo*, the numerically distinct.”<sup>190</sup>

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<sup>188</sup>In reference to καινος in the NT, see Luke 22:20 “new (καινος) covenant ...; John 13:34 “new (καινος) commandment ...; 2 Cor.5:17 “new (καινος) creature..; Gal. 6:15 “new (καινος) ...; Heb. 8:8 “new (καινος).

<sup>189</sup> Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, ed. F. Wilbur Gingrich and Frederick W. Danker, trans. William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, Revised., vol. 2 (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 394.

<sup>190</sup> Richard Chenevix Trench, ed. Robert G. Hoerber, *Synonyms of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1989), 233-234.

Kittel indicates that two most common words for “new” since the classical period are νεος and καινος. The former signifies what was not there before, what has only just arisen or appeared. The latter deals with what is new and distinctive, as compared with other things. νεος is new in time or origin, but καινος is what is new in nature, different from the usual, impressive, better than the old, superior in value or attraction.<sup>191</sup> Theologically, καινος “new” is a leading teleological term in apocalyptic promise: “a new heaven and a new earth,” Revelation 21:1, 2 Peter 3:13. It appears 2 Peter 3:13 is in the immediate context of apocalyptic destruction of heaven and earth.

The context of the passage deals with the subject of judgment day.<sup>192</sup> If this observation is true, then, 2 Peter 3: 10-12, describes the judgment day of the Lord in the language, which, is not figurative, but a literal narrative which is primarily didactic. Mueller concurs with Koehler concerning 2 Peter 3:10 that “the first world perished in water; this world will perish in fire.”<sup>193</sup> The theme of 2 Peter is pastoral, which Peter exhorts his readers to continue growing in grace and in spiritual knowledge, so that God’s purpose for their calling and election will be fulfilled.<sup>194</sup> In 2 Peter 1, he encourages his readers to remember his own eyewitness experience with Jesus and the word of the prophets. He counsels against the teaching and practices of false prophets and false teachers, because those who deny the sovereignty of the Lord bring swift destruction on themselves.

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<sup>191</sup> Johannes Behm, “Νεος / Καινος,” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, (TDNT), ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, trans. Geoffrey W., vol. 3 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1965), 447.

<sup>192</sup> Grassley, “New Heavens and New Earth”; Mueller, *Christian Dogmatics*, 633; Edward Koehler, *A Summary of Christian Doctrine* (St. Louis: Concordia House, 1952), 309.

<sup>193</sup> Milton S. Terry, *Biblical Hermeneutics: A Treatise on the Interpretation of the Old and New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1974), 489; Koehler, *A Summary of Christian Doctrine*, 309.

<sup>194</sup> “2 Peter 3” *SDABC*, 7:593-619.

For the righteous person, the Lord knows how to rescue them from trials and hold the unrighteous for the judgment day (2 Peter 2:1, 6, 9). The third chapter is a “reminder to stimulate his readers to wholesome thinking (2 Peter 3:1)”, so, he discusses the scoffers’ rejection of the promise of Christ’s return which in itself affirms the certainty of the second coming and an exhortation to be ready for that great event (vv1-9). In verse 10, he describes the coming of “the day of the lord” as thief and what will happen in that day, and concludes that “fire will destroy the earth and everything,” consequently, holy and godly lives should be the focus (11-12).

In verse 13-15 the promise of “new heaven and new earth” reverberated. “His promise” emphasizes the trustworthiness of Jesus promise in John 14:1-3. This promise is confirmed by Rev 21:1, home of righteous after fire literal destruction. Peter concludes by stressing grace and knowledge as antidote to the false teachers (17-18).

The clause ὁ τότε κόσμος “the then world” in v.6 parallels with v. 7 οἱ δὲ νῦν οὐρανοὶ καὶ ἡ γῆ “the now heaven and earth.” It seems that ὁ τότε κόσμος “the then world” which was destroyed by water, then the οἱ δὲ νῦν οὐρανοὶ καὶ ἡ γῆ “now heaven and earth” will also be destroyed by fire. Clearly, what happened to the old (τοτε) world is about to happen to the present (νυν) 'heavens and earth,' namely, destruction. In v.6, Peter uses κοσμος whereas in v. 7 ἡγη is used in reference to the whole present world.

From the text and immediate context, Peter writes in the apocalyptic mind assuring his readers the imminence destruction of the present world. For that matter, the readers should prepare for “new heaven and new earth” which is devoid of sin.<sup>195</sup>

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<sup>195</sup> Joh Huther, *Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the General Epistles of James, Peter, John, and Jude*, trans. Paton J. Gloag (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1983), 431.

The language and context seem to suggest a literal, material new world upon which the saints dwell. It probably assumes the restoration of the Paradise lost after the sin.

### **Revelation 21:1: “New Heaven and New Earth”**

The Greek read is as follows: Καὶ εἶδον οὐρανὸν καὶ νὸν καὶ γῆν καινὴν· ὁ γὰρ πρῶτος οὐρανὸς καὶ ἡ πρώτη γῆ ἀπῆλθον, καὶ ἡ θάλασσα οὐκ ἔστιν ἔτι  
(Rev 21:1 BYZ)

Translation: Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more (Rev 21:1 NRS).

In Revelation 20, John concludes the execution of judgment of Satan and the wicked that started in Revelation 17. In Revelation 21, the scene shifted from judgment to a vision of “the new heaven and new earth,” and its capital, the New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven. Revelation 21:1-8 mentions the overview of the new earth and Revelation 21:9-22:5 describes the New Jerusalem.<sup>196</sup>

The structure of Rev 21: 1 is as follows:

Καὶ εἶδον οὐρανὸν καινὸν καὶ γῆν καινὴν· ὁ γὰρ “

And I saw a heaven new and new and earth new

πρῶτος οὐρανὸς καὶ ἡ πρώτη γῆ ἀπῆλθον,

first heaven and first earth is departed

καὶ ἡ θάλασσα οὐκ ἔστιν ἔτι. And the sea is no longer

The adjective καινός is used two times (2) in v.1 and four times (4) in vv.1-5 that denotes something fundamentally new.<sup>197</sup> The creation is not a simple

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<sup>196</sup> Stefanovic, *Revelation of Jesus Christ: Commentary on the Book of Revelation*, 586.

<sup>197</sup> Ibid., 586.

improvement<sup>198</sup> but rather complete transformation of all things.<sup>199</sup> God first created the heavens and earth (Gen1:1), for human beings to dwell, but sin has marred the earth, making it a place of rebellion against God, subsequently, creation has become subjected to corruption and decay (cf. Rom 8:19-22). God's promise is to create "new heaven and new earth" devoid of sin (cf. John 14:1-4). The seven evils John sees its disappearance are the sea no more, death, mourning, weeping, pain (v.4), curse (22:30) and night (22:5).<sup>200</sup>

The first thing John observes on the new earth is that the sea is no longer there. In the Jewish mind, no more sea means the end of forces hostile to God and humanity. John affirms that here, all fears and threats are removed. It seems the statement reflect John's experience on Patmos. Therefore, sea has become the metaphoric place of disturbed and stormy social and political conditions out of which tyrannies commonly arise. The absent of sea on the new earth connotes absent of evil that causes suffering and pains.<sup>201</sup>

Syntactically οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν καὶ γῆν καινὴν (new heaven and new earth) is parallel antithetic to πρῶτος οὐρανὸς καὶ ἡ πρώτη γῆ (first/former heaven and former earth). It seems to suggest that the "new heaven and new earth" is totally different from the former heaven and earth wherein sin, pain and death infested. The two indicative active aorist verbs εἶδον (I saw) and ἀπῆλθον (it departed) give further evidence that the terribly marred world (first) by sin could not be allowed to continue

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<sup>198</sup> Roberto Badenas, "New Jerusalem-The Holy City," *Symposium on Revelation Book 2* (2000): 243–271.

<sup>199</sup> Leon Morris, *Revelation* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2009), 232–233.

<sup>200</sup> Ranko Stefanovic, *Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 588.

<sup>201</sup> Stefanovic, *Revelation of Jesus Christ: Commentary on the Book of Revelation*, 588.

throughout eternity, but “new” world of righteousness. The destination of Ἱερουσαλὴμ καινὴν (Rev 21:2 BYZ) “new Jerusalem” in Revelation 21:2 suggest the replacement of the “old” Jerusalem.

Stefanovic posits that “the hope and dream for the new Jerusalem never died among the Jewish people, even during the intertestamental Period in relation to the Messianic Age.<sup>202</sup> 2 Baruch refers to New Jerusalem as “renewed in glory, and that it will be perfected into eternity.”<sup>203</sup> The second –century B.C. book of Jubilee note “the day of the new creation when the heaven and earth and all of their creatures shall be renewed according to the powers of heaven and according to the whole nature of earth, until the sanctuary of the Lord is created in Jerusalem upon Mount Zion.”<sup>204</sup>

The phrase “new earth” is first used in 1 Enoch 71:15, dated in the second or first century B.C.<sup>205</sup> This phrase is commonly called “*olam ha-ba* meaning “world to come.”<sup>206</sup> The *olam ha-ba* follows the age of the Messiah and begins with the last judgment. In the Babylonian Talmud, a third –century B.C. Rabbi describes the *olam ha-ba* in this way “in the future world there is neither eating nor drinking nor propagation nor business nor jealousy nor hatred nor competition, but the righteous sit with their crowns on their heads feasting on the brightness of the divine presence.”<sup>207</sup>

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<sup>202</sup>Stefanovic, *Revelation of Jesus Christ: Commentary on the Book of Revelation*, 587.

<sup>203</sup>Ibid., 587.

<sup>204</sup>Ibid., 587.

<sup>205</sup> Babylonian Talmud Berakoth, “Judaism,” in *Handbook of Seventh-Day Adventist Theology*, ed. Raoul Dederen (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 2000), 960. 2 Baruch 32:6; 57:2;4 Ezra 8:52.

<sup>206</sup>Ibid., 960.

<sup>207</sup>Ibid., 960.

Indisputably, the NT designates God's people, since the time of Abraham with their yearning and dream for the heavenly city (Heb 11:10, 16; 12:22; 13:14). Hence Revelation presents the New Jerusalem couple with "new heaven and new earth" as the fulfillment of all dreams, hopes, and longings of God's people throughout history. It is clear that the delineation of the New Jerusalem appeared not only to the Jewish dream but also to Greco-Roman hopes for "the ideal city."<sup>208</sup>

In sum, the use of *καίνο* to qualify , heaven, earth and Jerusalem probably emphasizes re-creation, a forming anew of the existing elements, a new in quality, and different, but not necessary a creation *ex nihilo* (Gen 1:1).<sup>209</sup> Again, the deliberate absent of sea, which is a metaphor of sin, pain and death, shows quality life on the new heavens and new earth. God himself will dwell among His people, no more death, or pains or crying (v.3, 4). The water of life flows, and each side stands tree of life (Rev 22:1-3). No longer will there be any curse (v.4), night or day (v.5) and God Himself will provide for the light (v.5).

Both 2 Peter 3:13 and Revelation 21:1 is located in the context of Christ's judgment and reward. The "new heavens and new earth" are reward given to saints of Christ after Satan and his accomplices are destroyed by fire.

The Greek verb *προσδοκαω* appears three times in verses 12-14, always implying eager anticipation of believers for Christ's *παρουσια* (cf. Matt 24:42, 44).<sup>210</sup> It seems that both John and Peter speak of literal "new heaven and new earth" from the hands of God. The word "create" is disintegrated from the clause "new heavens

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<sup>208</sup> Schussler Fiorenza Elisabeth, *Revelation: Vision of a Lust World. Proclamation Commentaries* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1991), 113; David E. Aune, "Revelation 17-22," in *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 52 (Waco, TX: Thomas Nelson, 1998), 1191–1194.

<sup>209</sup> "New," *SDABC*, 7:889.

<sup>210</sup> "New," *SDABC*, 7:616.

and new earth,” as far as NT passages are concerned (2 Pet 3; 13, Rev 21) unlike Isa 65:17; 66:22. It seems to suggest antithetical level of understanding the passages. Notwithstanding, Christians are looking forward for the blessed hope of “new heaven and new earth.”

### **Relationship between Isaiah 65:17; 66:22 and 2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1**

The relationship between OT and NT is one of promise to fulfillment.<sup>211</sup> Likewise the relationship between Isaiah 65:17; 66:22 and 2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1 is on the premises of “new heavens and new earth” promise. Princeton views this promise as eternal and irrevocable given to Abraham and unfolded throughout the history of Israel and it will mainly fulfill in Christ Jesus.<sup>212</sup> The promise which the Apostles speak parallels semantically with Isaiah 65:17 and 66:22 but differs syntactically.

The similarities between Isaiah 65:17; 66:22 and 2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1 are, God promises to settle Judah and Israel in their own covenantal land. Then Jerusalem shall be rejoiced and delighted (Isa 65:18). In Revelation 21; and 2 Peter 3:13 God promises to settle His faithful people (believers) in new environment (Rev 21:1). Secondly, both Isaiah 65:17-18 and 66:22 relate to 2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1 in the reversal order of new things. Isaiah emphasizes reversal of “former troubles” which is outlined in Isaiah 65:19-25, and the content of Revelator 21 and 22 reverse the Genesis curses.

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<sup>211</sup> Gordon R. Lewis and Bruce Demaret, *Integrative Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996), 318–320.

<sup>212</sup> Matthew, *Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the Whole Bible*, 5:390–392.

For example, Genesis speaks about multiplicity of pains (Gen 3:16-19), while Revelation says there is no more pains (Rev 21:4). Genesis pronounces curse on the ground for the sake of man (Gen 3:17) but Revelation indicates there is no more curse (Rev 21:4). Man is banished from Garden of Eden and from the presence of God in Gen 3:23 (NRSV), but the faithful ones will see God's face (Rev 22:4). Revelation assures renewed life "one who seated on the throne said, See I am making all things new. Also, he said, write this, for these words are trustworthy and true" (Rev 21:5 NRSV).

Thirdly, they will have a new enjoyment of comfort from God and the fruit of their labor will not be taken away by the strangers (Isa 66:22, 23 NRSV), that their work will be transferred to new generation to inherit the land (Isa 66:23 NRSV). There shall be good communication between God and them, and peaceful co-existence among creature and man (Isa 66:25,24NRSV). Both Peter and John agree on this.

Fourthly, both Isaiah and NT texts emphasize Jerusalem as the focus and central point. Even, Revelation indicates that Jerusalem is the new capital for new heaven and new earth.

The contrast between Isaiah 65:17-18; 66:22 and 2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1 are: in Isaiah 65:17; 66:22 God promises to create "new heavens and new earth," while in Revelation 21: 1 God brings "new heavens and new earth" down from heaven. The verb "create" is not part of the statement in Revelation. It probably gives different meaning concerning the statement. Secondly, while Isaiah 65:17; 66:22 portrays the restoration of Judah after captivity (temporal), Revelation 21:1 speaks of permanent life of believers with God through eternity.

Thirdly, there are destruction of the wicked men, sins, Satan and the angelic host in 2 Peter 3:13 Revelation 19,20 by fire, Isaiah does not mention the destruction

of Satan and wicked angelic world. Whereas NT texts foresee the end of sin and its related consequences, especially death, Isaiah is silent about the end of sin. Fourthly, while the context of Isaiah “new heaven and new earth” is understood as metaphor and hyperbole, NT texts of “new heavens and new earth” is literal, new material world upon which saints will dwell.

Fifthly, people involved in this promise are contrary and correlated. While Isaiah envisages Jews in the exile, NT texts encompass all believers in all nations. Sixth, whereas the fulfillment of the promise in Isaiah will come through human hands, NT texts indicate that the fulfillment will come through Christ Jesus.<sup>213</sup>

Prophetic promise of creation of “new heaven and new earth” in Isaiah 65: 17; 66:22 has progressed into soteriological ideas in 2 Peter 3:13 and Revelation 21:1.

### **Theological Implication**

Isaiah portrays God making “new heaven and new earth (Isa65:17-25).” This message of hope has run through OT and NT, especially in NT it has developed to soteriology. Isaiah’s prophetic oracle has relationship with Christians’ future hope. The Gospel recapitulates Isaiah’s words and establishes the total reclamation of the entire world (Rev 21:1; 2 Pet 3:10-13). Actually, the content of Christians hope is the “new heaven and the new earth” spoken by Apostles Peter and John, “according to His promise, we look for new heaven and new earth in which righteousness dwells” (2 Pet. 3:13 NAS).

In fact, the NT designates God’s people, since the time of Abraham with their yearning and dream for the heavenly city (Heb11:10, 16; 12:22; 13:14). Hence Revelation sheds fruitful light in Isaiah’s “new heavens and new earth” and also

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<sup>213</sup> Traub, “Οὐρανοϛ,” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1967), 497–540.

fulfils its apocalyptic interpretation. NT presents the New Jerusalem couple with “new heaven and new earth” as the fulfillment of all dreams, hopes, and longings of God’s people throughout history. It appears that both Jews and Gentiles are waiting and hoping for the ideal city of God. According to Roberto Badenas, “the new Jerusalem becomes to the new heaven and the new earth what the old Jerusalem never succeeded to be to Israel and the world.”<sup>214</sup>

The holy city, the New Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God (Rev 21:1), indicates that this is not the rebuilt old Jerusalem in Palestine, but the city prepared by Christ in the heavenly places (John 14:1-3 NAS), and actualized on the earth at the end of the millennium (cf. Rev 20:9). Thus the architect and builder of this city is God Himself (Heb 11:10; cf 12:22). The New Jerusalem in all its glory signifies the final realization of God’s promises and the fulfillment of all human dreams for safety and protection. This New Jerusalem belongs to Christ. It is populated by God’s faithful people who are finally at home.

Christians should know that the present troubles will be forgotten (Rev 21:4, cf. Isa 65:16-17) in the kingdom of Christ to the glory of God. This is sure promises of God. “This is a significant promise for a world like our own characterized by grief, premature death, frustration in work, and broken relationship between humanity and God.”<sup>215</sup>

As Isaiah’s teaching inspires hope to his people to depend on God for their restoration, and that it will certainly come, so should Christians. Because God’s act of

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<sup>214</sup> Badenas, “New Jerusalem-The Holy City,” 252.

<sup>215</sup> John Goldingay, “The Message of Isaiah 40-55: A Literary-Theological Commentary,” *Google Books*, accessed August 1, 2015, [https://books.google.co.ke/books?id=KL\\_JPUaUensC&printsec=frontcover&dq=Isaiah&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0CDIQ6wEwBDgoahUKEwjws8SlrYjHAhVGwBQKHX9hCDs#v=onepage&q=Isaiah&f=false](https://books.google.co.ke/books?id=KL_JPUaUensC&printsec=frontcover&dq=Isaiah&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0CDIQ6wEwBDgoahUKEwjws8SlrYjHAhVGwBQKHX9hCDs#v=onepage&q=Isaiah&f=false).

salvation, promises in Isaiah have found their fullness and actualization in Christ.<sup>216</sup>

Not only should the hope of “new heaven and new earth” motivate for evangelism and individual preparedness to be right with God, there should also be desire to apply the principles of Christ’s kingdom to make difference in the world today. True hope offers consolation in the suffering, and protects against violence and oppression, fights for peace and preserves the environment. A Christian task is to wait and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. In conclusion, Franz Pieper says:

Just as the doctrine of eternal damnation is to be a deterrent against unbelief and canal security lest man perish, so the doctrine of eternal life is to be an incentive to men to believe in the Gospel and persevere in faith that they may obtain eternal life. A Christian life uncharted and unmotivated by the sure hope of eternal life is inconceivable. So, keep up Christian morale, follow directions of Christ and fix eyes on the eternal blessedness.<sup>217</sup>

In sum, the analyses of historical and literal context of Isaiah 65-66, couple with semantic and linguistic features of 65:17; and structural parallelism of 16-19b, may concluded that the creation of “new heavens and a new earth” (Isa 65:17), parallels the creation of “Jerusalem and her people” which fall naturally to the deliverance and restoration of Judah after Babylonian captivity. The translators of LXX possibly understood the creation of “new heavens and new earth” as the return of the exiles from captivity, and the coming together of the captives from all nations probably indicate post exilic restoration of Judah, so that God’s people will inherit the land. This is expressed in the metaphor as mother giving painless birth to her children (Isa 66:8-9).

The verbs *ברא*, *עשה* and *יער* are figuratively used to indicate the creation or making of Judah, Jerusalem and her people, not primordial creation in Genesis 1 and

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<sup>216</sup> Brevard S. Childs, “Isaiah,” in *OTL* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001) 259-271..

<sup>217</sup> Franz Pieper, *Christian Dogmatic*, vol. 3 (St. Louis: Concordia House, 1953), 542.

2, meanwhile 2 Peter 3:13, Revelation 21:1-5 statements do not have these verbs. The NT texts have apocalyptic sense of creation rather than historical sense of creation. Therefore, Isaiah 65:17 and Isaiah 66:22 should not be read and interpreted in the light of NT texts as 2 Peter and Revelation 21:1-2.

## CHAPTER 5

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

#### Summary

The traditional scholars accept the unity and authorship of Isaiah, the son of Amoz as the only author.<sup>1</sup> However, the critical scholars deny the unity of the book and present double authors (chapters 1-39 and 40-66) and multiple authors (Proto-Isaiah to 1-39, Deuto-Isaiah to 40-55 and 56-66 to Trito-Isaiah) base on their own studies,<sup>2</sup> yet they are unsettled as to the exact number of those writers of the book. Again they could not provide evidential author apart from Isaiah, the son of Amos. The critical scholars argue for three audiences but traditionalists posit for single audience.

The purpose of the book of Isaiah is to exhort the nation to trust only in God.<sup>3</sup> Yahweh can be trusted. Let Israel put their trust in the Lord and not in alliances, nor in ceremonies, nor in their own religiousness.<sup>4</sup> God has chosen them and their true strength is in "quietness and trust" in the LORD.

The structure of the book of Isaiah is an unending debate due to lack of a scholarly consensus, however, Gileadi seems to be right when he writes that the book is divided into two: Isaiah 1-33 and Isaiah 34-66. Gileadi's argument leans on the

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<sup>1</sup>See discussions on the authorship

<sup>2</sup>See chapter 3 in this work for detail discussion of the multiple authors

<sup>3</sup> Young, *An Introduction to Old Testament*, 208.

<sup>4</sup> Dumbrell, "The Purpose of the Book of Isaiah" *Tyndale Bulletin* 36.

premises that, within these chapters are pair of sections for each major theme that contains parallel elements.

There are two main viewpoints as far as eschatology of Isaiah 65-66 are concerned: apocalyptic and postexilic. The former details the passage into the future at the close of millennium.<sup>5</sup>The latter consider the passages to be fulfilled after the return from the Babylonian captivity, so the “creation of new heavens and new earth” should be equated with the postexilic restoration of Judah. This study seems to lean towards post exilic perspective due to the above discussed convictions.

Similarly the views of “new heaven and new earth” are debated on two grounds: literal and metaphor. Whereas literal looks for future day of the Lord Jesus for new heavenly mansions, metaphor assigns “new heaven and new earth” to represent post exilic creation order, redemption act of God, faithful pilgrim who worship God and restoration of the church.

The text and translation, coupled with the structures and linguistic analysis portrays salvation and restoration of Judah as the creation of “new heaven and new earth” in Isaiah 65:17. In verse 18 the creation of “Jerusalem and her people” and creation of “new heavens and a new earth” in v.17 have the same meaning. It metaphorically portrays the redemption of Judah from captivity. The two imperative verbs “to rejoice and to delight” make Jerusalem epitome of joy, so that the former trouble of ruin and captivity will be no more.

These words הַרְאֵשׁוֹנוֹת, הַרְאֵשׁוֹנוֹת, הַרְאֵשׁוֹנוֹת, הַרְאֵשׁוֹנוֹת “Former,” “new,” “heaven” and earth” have wide range of meanings. But in Isaiah “former or old” and “new” are interconnected and contrary in Isaiah. The former constituted Israel’s ruin, destruction

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<sup>5</sup>“Isaiah”, *SDABC*, 332.

of Jerusalem and temple and bitter experiences in captivity whereas “new” are liberation from captivity by Cyrus, new movement from exile and restoration of Judah and Jerusalem. Collocation of heaven and earth is used figuratively rather than literal to indicate the restoration of Jerusalem. Again, in most cases, the heaven/earth appears in the context of restoration of Israel and Judah, and so, is Isaiah 65:17 cf. 66:22. It appears “new heavens and new earth” in Isaiah 65:17 should be taken figuratively rather than cosmological creation sense.

The usages of ברא, יער, and עשה in Isaiah clearly indicate that the verbs do not always connote literal creation sense like Gen 1 and 2. Likewise, ברא in 65:17, 18 and עשה in 66:22, seems to suggest historical-redemptive-dimension of creation. Thus, the usage of ברא in Isaiah 65:18 and עשה in 66:22 should be taken figuratively.

The text and translation, structure and linguistic analyses of Isaiah 66:22 “the new heaven and the new earth” appear to indicate a repetition of Isaiah 65:17 which is in the context of the resettlement of Judah in the post exilic sense of eschatology. New Moon and Sabbath in Isaiah 66:23 are cast in the festival feast in the context of worship in Jerusalem. The pair points to religious festival of Israelites in the context of worship, even when the celebration of New Moon coincided with Sabbath Isaiah 66:23 were read in the synagogue.

All flesh/all mankind is rendered on three possible grounds either for Gentiles or Jews or both. This study puts forward that “your seed, your name and your descendants,” constitute the same people of Jew descent who were in the entire nation but brought to Jerusalem. Some were selected to function as priest and Levites.

Fire is used either as metaphor or literal in the book of Isaiah. The latter authenticates the imminent judgment of God, thus, it serves as divine instrument of judgment. The former symbolizes Yahweh protection, leadership and divine presence.

Isaiah uses fire to announce Yahweh coming judgment and the willingness of infinite power to save.

With regard to selected NT texts 2 Peter 3:13 and Revelation 21:1 are located in the context of Christ's judgment and reward. The "new heavens and new earth" are rewards given to saints of Christ after Satan and his accomplices are destroyed by fire. It seems that both John and Peter speak of literal "new heaven and new earth" from the hands of God.

### **Conclusion**

It seems, therefore, to submit that, Isaiah 65:17 -18 is figurative expression of future restoration of people of Judah after captivity and the making of "new heaven and new earth" in Isaiah 66:22 is anaphoric of Isaiah 65:17. It lays in the apodosis of a comparison of the continuity of the covenant promise, in the context of postexilic restoration of Judah not necessary the life of the church of God in the church militant or triumphant.

There are several conclusions derived from this study:

1. Isaiah 65-66 is postexilic because these chapters demonstrate future restoration of Judah and her people after the Babylon exile.
2. The creation idea is understood in figurative sense directly to the deliverance of Judah from captivity. The creation of "new heavens and new earth" in Isaiah 65:17 is equal to the creation of "Jerusalem and her people in Isaiah 65:18 which reechoes in Isaiah 66:22".
3. The verbs used in Isaiah 65:17-18 ברא and עשה in Isaiah 66:22 do not always refer to literal, cosmological creation. It may be historical-redemptive or eschatological creation. Here these words are used in the historical sense of creation. Thus, the creation of Judah and her people is in view.

4. The heaven and earth merism in Isaiah assume a figurative sense especially in connection with the future deliverance of Judah from captivity, the “former” is understood as “troubles” Judah encountered, but not present heaven and earth<sup>6</sup>.
5. The creation of “new heavens and new earth” in Isaiah 65:17 is semantically and structurally correspondent to the creation of “Jerusalem and her people in verse 18. In this case the making/doing of “new heaven and new earth” in Isaiah 66:22 resonances Isa 65:17.
6. The “former heaven and the former earth”, “former trouble”, “former things”, and “old order” comparing with “new things” reveals that former issues deal with Israel political downfall, destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, and unpleasant and painful experiences when they were in exile.
7. The “new thing” constitutes the appearance of Cyrus, the collapse of Babylon, the new exodus from exile, restoration of Judah to their covenant land to resume worship and live as independent nation.
8. Theologically, the land God gives to Israel as an inheritance underlines the status of Israel as “first born”, whenever the land is taken away, it symbolizes the broken covenant relationship between God and Israel . Hence, the prophets speak of restoration to the land in the context of obedience and renewed covenant.
9. “Your descendant”, “your seed” and “your brothers” parallel syntactically and connote progeny which applied to only the people of Israel. “Your seed” are categorized in three groups: The seed of the patriarch, the seed mentioned in connection with the new community and the seed of the suffering servant. All the passages that mentioned “seed” refer to people from Israel
10. The collocation of Sabbath and New Moon is in the context of religious festivals not weekly Sabbath worship and the condition of new heaven and new earth in Isaiah 65:19-25 portrays postexilic life rather than eternal state.
11. The NT passages of “new heavens and new earth” (2 Pet 3:13, Rev 21:1-5) have apocalyptic meaning rather than historical sense of creation. This suggests that the “new heaven and new earth” is not to be construed as symbolic but literal. The context of these passages is judgment of Satan and evil, and reward to Christ’s faithful followers after Satan and his related vices are destroyed by fire (Rev 20; 2 Pet 3:10-14). The “new heavens and new earth” serves as reward to the saints of God. The quality of life in the “New Jerusalem” described in Rev 21-22 is totally different from the conditions outlined in Isa 65:20-25. Here Satan, his angelic hosts and sin would be no more, crying, pain, and death are out of the equation, God will dwell among His people as it was in Garden of Eden (Genesis 1& 2) before the Fall.

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<sup>6</sup>See Young, *The Book of Isaiah*, 3:514; Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 40-66*, 656-657.

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