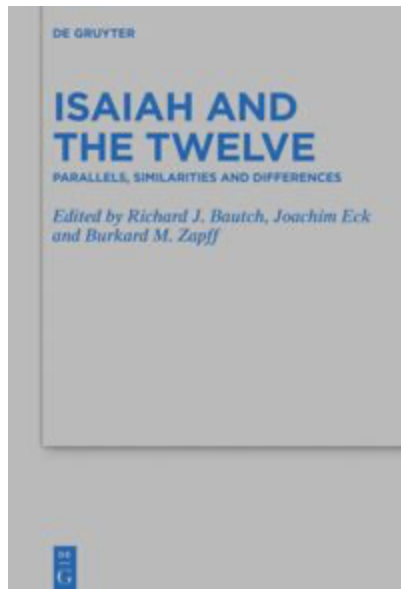


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Richard Bautch, Joachim Eck, and Burkard M. Zapff, eds.

Isaiah and the Twelve: Parallels, Similarities and Differences

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Barry A. Jones

Campbell University Divinity School

Scholars have long noted affinities in language, tradition, and theme between the book of Isaiah and the writings within the Book of the Twelve. Both begin with oracles attributed to eighth-century prophets and end with texts addressing conditions in postexilic Jerusalem. In addition, Isa 2 and Mic 4 share a common oracle, while Isa 66 and Zech 14 share similar themes in similar placements within their respective books. O. H. Steck (*Der Abschluss der Prophetie im Alten Testament*, 1991) and E. Bosshard-Nepustil (*Rezeptionen von Jesaja 1–39 im Zwölfprophetenbuch*, 1997) proposed that the traditions of Isaiah and the Twelve consciously shaped their overall structure and content in relation to one another. This collection of essays is the result of an international conference in 2018 sponsored by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft to examine more closely the relationships between Isaiah and the Twelve.

Eleven essays are organized in three sections: (1) “Analyses concerning the Relationships between the Book of Isaiah and Books Associated with Pre-exilic Prophets”; (2) “Analyses concerning the Relationships between Later Layers of Isaiah and Later Layers of the Book of the Twelve”; and (3) “Thematic Threads in the Book of Isaiah and the Book of the Twelve.” An address on the relationship between critical exegesis of prophetic literature and Christian theology and a summative essay conclude the volume.

In “Hosea and Isaiah: Aspects of Convergence and Difference,” Franz Sedlmeier investigates Bosshard-Nepustil’s claim for redactional shaping of Hosea as part of a larger shaping of the

Twelve in parallel with Isaiah. While he sees no evidence of a historical connection between the two prophets, he does argue for similar, though independent, shifts in prophetic self-understanding from prophecies of national salvation to prophecies of divine judgment. He identifies redactional material in Hosea that aims to connect it with Amos, Micah, and Zephaniah, on the one hand, and an emerging form of Isaiah, on the other. The relationship of this redaction to Hosea's placement in the Twelve remains an open question.

Uwe Becker's "Socialkritik in Jes 1–39 und im Amos-Buch" addresses a long-standing question of whether accusations of social injustice in Isaiah were influenced by the preaching of Amos. Since recent literary analysis denies that the texts related to social criticism can be traced to either historical prophet, the answer is partly a negative one. Nevertheless, the same analysis traces the presence of social critique in Isa 1–39 to the influence of the redactors of the book of Amos, albeit at a later period than that of either prophet. Such influence between the emerging book of Amos and the eventual book of Isaiah gives an affirmative answer to the question of influence between the shaping of Isaiah and at least one writing with the Twelve. The question of why later traditions of social critique in the books of Isaiah and Amos exclude the possibility of such critique in the prophets' proclamations is not addressed.

James Nogalski explores "The Role of Lady Zion in the Concluding Section of Zephaniah and Isaiah 40–66," with specific reference to Zeph 3:11–20 and Isa 49–55 and 56–66. These texts do share similar uses of Lady Zion traditions, and Nogalski argues that it is reasonable that the compilers of Isaiah and the Twelve were aware of the contents of each scroll in the fairly circumscribed world of literati in Persian-period Jerusalem. He also emphasizes important differences in the portrayal of Lady Zion in the two contexts. His essay is an example of a nuanced approach that neither discounts connections between Isaiah and the Twelve nor overinterprets them.

Burkard M. Zapff addresses, in "Second Isaiah and the Twelve," the significance of the relative absence of connections between the Twelve and Second Isaiah. He points out that, even in texts where the influence of Second Isaiah can be detected, it has been recontextualized for different theological purposes than its original setting. He concludes that the evidence for redactional shaping of the Twelve in relation to Isaiah, which he finds to be conclusive, points to a time after the exile under new theological circumstances when the highly contextualized message of Second Isaiah was not as directly relevant.

In "Isaiah 10 as an Intertext That Informs a Unified Reading of Zechariah 11," Richard J. Bautch argues that a single intertext from Isaiah may give a sense of coherence to a late text within the Twelve that is otherwise obscure. The "allegory of the shepherd" in Zech 11:4–17 is preceded by an oracle of judgment expressed in the language of fiery destruction of the cedars of Lebanon (11:1–3). The image of the trees of Lebanon as metaphor for failed leaders in Isa 10:33–34 helps to connect Zech 11:1–3 with the shepherd allegory in 11:4–17 as a unified message of judgment against failed

leaders in Persian-period Jerusalem. Bautch notes that Zech 11 also has important intertextual links with Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Therefore, no role for Isaiah distinct from the other major prophets can be established from this case alone.

Todd Hibbard's "Zechariah 14 and the Final Section of Isaiah" examines a text that has received particular attention in relation to the concluding chapters of Isaiah. In ways similar to Nogalski's essay, Hibbert notes both similarities and differences between the two texts. Zephaniah 14 has many shared interests with Isa 56 and 65–66. Each text, however, addresses these interests in highly contextualized ways that make the question of influence or conscious redactional shaping difficult to discern.

In "Isa 24–27 and Zephaniah amid the Terrors and Hopes of the Seventh Century: An Intertextual Analysis," Christopher B. Hays examines evidence of literary connections between Zephaniah and Isa 24–27. He interprets Isa 24–27 as an example of Josianic royal propaganda whose apocalyptic character is the result of having been dehistoricized in later transmission. He cites numerous thematic, lexical, and intertextual relationships that support the thesis that both texts were put into writing by the same circle of scribal tradents active in late seventh-century Jerusalem. The result is a portrayal of Isa 24–27 and Zephaniah as forms of scribal prophecy arising from a time not far removed from the recording of Jeremiah's prophecy in writing as depicted in Jer 36.

Joachim Eck's "The Song of the Unfruitful Vineyard (Isaiah 5:1–7): Its Position in the Book of Isaiah and Its Reception in Late Layers of Isaiah and the Twelve" begins a section devoted to thematic threads in Isaiah and the Twelve. Eck argues that the Song of the Vineyard is a source text for intentional allusions in Isa 7:23–25, 27:2–6, Mic 1:6, and 7:1–20. On the one hand, the essay would fit more appropriately in the section dealing with literary relationships between Isaiah and the Twelve. On the other hand, Eck's discussion of the uses of despoiled vineyard imagery in Isaiah and Micah is illuminating whether one sees them as conscious textual allusions or shared thematic language.

Carol J. Dempsey examines numerous portrayals of divine and human kingship in Isaiah and the Twelve and offers hermeneutical reflections on their contemporary influence in "Divine and Human Kingships in the Books of Isaiah and the Twelve: A Kaleidoscope of Conflicting Yet Unifying Images." On the one hand, images of divine kingship can subvert the claims of human empires to absolute power and promise hope for victims of abusive regimes. On the other hand, portrayals of divine and human kingship that rely on punitive and retributive modes of justice may be used to perpetuate rather than transform oppressive systems. Portrayals of kingship in prophetic literature may inform a search for more liberating expressions of leadership, but the search depends on ideals of leadership that arise from sources beyond the prophetic corpus.

Oracles against the nations were a stock-in-trade of the prophets and therefore provide a useful lens for comparing Isaiah and the Twelve. Archibald L. H. M. van Wieringen's "The Oracles against the Nations in Isaiah, Amos, Zephaniah: A Text-Immanent Reader's Perspective" examines Isa 13–23, Amos 1:3–3:2, and Zeph 2:4–3:20 from a synchronic, reader-oriented perspective. He emphasizes the way that each unit of oracles turns from criticism of the nations to criticism of Judah/Jerusalem/Israel. In both Isaiah and the Twelve, the nations serve as mirrors for prophetic self-criticism.

Scholars who describe the Twelve as a redactional unity as well as those who see it as an anthology of individual books place a major emphasis on the theme of the day of the Lord. Hugh G. M. Williamson's "The Day of the Lord in the Book of Isaiah and the Book of the Twelve" examines the use of the theme in Isaiah diachronically and identifies a three-part development. First, contrary to popular expectation, the day of the Lord was to be a day of judgment against Israel/Judah (Isa 2:12; 22:5). Second, in the exilic period it became a day of salvation from historical oppressors such as Babylon (Isa 13:6–8, 17–22). Third, in postexilic times it became an eschatological day of salvation and judgment on a universal and cosmic scale (Isa 13:9–26; 34:8). Williamson argues for the same chronological development in the Twelve, with Amos and Zephaniah belonging to the first stage, Joel 1–2 the second, and Joel 4, Obad 15, Zech 14:1, and Mal 3:23 the third. These parallels reflect literary development of the books of Isaiah and the Twelve partially through a process of universalizing reapplication of earlier, historical references, a process with hermeneutical implications for contemporary interpreters of the prophets.

Bishop Rudolf Voderholzer's address, "Welches Exegese braucht die Kirche?," connects the questions and results of these essays to the church's task of reading prophetic literature as holy scripture. He argues that the church's tradition of the fourfold sense of scripture—literal, theological, ethical, and anagogical—provides important points of contact and application with the texts discussed in this volume. In a concluding essay, "Converging and Diverging Lines in the Relationships between Isaiah and the Twelve," Joachim Eck underscores the adaptability of the fourfold sense of scripture by noting ways in which the uses of the Zion traditions in Isaiah and the Twelve reflect its four hermeneutical categories.

For this reviewer, the topic of the literary, redactional, and thematic relationships between Isaiah and the Twelve is more intriguing after reading this volume than it was beforehand. This is due to the close observations and nuanced treatment of the issues by the contributors. The volume is thick with observations about the two corpuses that avoid overinterpretation. Every similarity is not judged a citation, nor is every difference seen as a dead end. Ancient scribes labored in obscurity to hand down collections of prophetic oracles they deemed to be sacred. Their names are lost, but traces of their fingerprints remain, thanks to investigations such as those collected in this volume. It is recommended for scholars of Isaiah, the Minor Prophets, and prophetic literature.