

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CREATION IN THE BOOK OF ISAIAH

TERRANCE R. WARDLAW JR.*

Abstract: *In moving beyond the previous fragmentation of the book of Isaiah, canon critics now look to themes spanning the three major sections of Isaiah 1–66. The present investigation examines the theme of creation through these three major sections to its climax in the new creation of chapters 65–66 under the assumption of the unitary authorship by Isaiah of Jerusalem during the Assyrian period. This analysis will demonstrate that Isa 4:2–6, 40–48, and 65–66 hold creation (Gen 1:1–2:3) in tension with exodus and wilderness themes (Exodus 1–18; Numbers 10–21) as types for understanding exile, future return, and the telos of election and redemption. The manner in which Isaiah understands redemption through the lens of creation will be contrasted with more recent discussions in Biblical theology in order to substantiate the argument that Isaiah understood redemption as the process moving toward new creation through the ministry of the ideal Servant.*

Keywords: *creation, Isaiah, canon criticism, redemption, typology*

The contemporary critical consensus regarding the tripartite division and the exilic relecture of Isaiah impacts both the identification of macrostructural features and the interpretation of their microstructural manifestations.¹ With the ascendancy of critical views, scholars focused on Isaiah 1–39, 40–55, or 56–66 as discrete units with their own respective author and historical setting. In conjunction with the application of literary, form, and redaction criticism to genre units within the text of Isaiah, the book was atomized by mainstream scholars until the latter half of the twentieth century.² Then beginning with the application of rhetorical criticism by

* Terrance Wardlaw is a linguist and translator with SIL International. He may be contacted at 5742 20th St., Holdingford, MN 56340, Terry_Wardlaw@sil.org.

¹ For a history of scholarship, see Bernhard Duhm, *Das Buch Jesaja* (HKAT; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1892); S. R. Driver, *An Introduction to the Literature of the OT* (9th ed.; IITL; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1913), 204–46; Otto Eissfeldt, *The OT: An Introduction* (trans. Peter R. Ackroyd; New York: Harper & Row, 1965), 303–46; Erich Zenger et al., *Einleitung in das Alte Testament* (5th ed.; KST; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2004), 427–51; cf. R. K. Harrison, *Introduction to the OT* (Peabody, MA: Prince, 1999 [1969]), 764–800; O. T. Allis, *The Unity of Isaiah: A Study in Prophecy* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1950). Some scholars interpret Ibn Ezra's comments on Isa 40:1 as hinting at multiple authorship (Uriel Simon, "Ibn Ezra between Medievalism and Modernism: The Case of Isaiah XL–LXVI," in *Congress Volume: Salamanca, 1983* [ed. J. A. Emerton; VTSup 36; 1983], 257–71; M. Friedländer, *The Commentary of Ibn Ezra on Isaiah* [London: N. Trübner, 1873], 170–71), though this understanding is not beyond dispute.

² E.g. see Claus Westermann, *Das Buch Jesaja. Kapitel 40–66* (ATD 19; Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1968). For a treatment of creation in Isaiah preceded by an identification of passages authentic to Second Isaiah, see Jacques Vermeylen, "Le Motif de la Création dans le Deutéro-Isaïe," in *La Création dans L'Orient Ancien* (ed. Louis Derousseaux; LD 127; Paris: Cerf, 1987), 183–240.

James Muilenburg, and growing to fruition with the emphasis on final-form reading by canon critics, fresh impulses toward canonical readings resulted as scholars such as Rendtorff, Childs, and Seitz attempted to follow the trajectory of the canonical presentation of Isaiah through all 66 chapters in order to identify the overall discourse aim of the final editor within the context of the canonizing community.³ However, with this renewed interest in Isaiah as a book there has been no treatment of creation as a major theme within its overall discourse structure, except for the assertion that references to creation in “First Isaiah” indicate exilic or postexilic redaction.

In contrast, quibbling over hypothetical sources and redactions remained a foreign concern to pre-critical exegetes. John Calvin and his Reformation progeny assumed the book of Isaiah was a unity deriving from the hand of the eighth-century-BC Isaiah of Jerusalem. Moreover, they assumed the prophets in general derived their doctrine from the Law and declared nothing that is not somehow related to the Law.⁴ The prophets “enter more largely into the illustration of doctrine, and explain more fully what is briefly stated in the Two Tables, and lay down what the Lord chiefly requires from us. Next, the threatenings and promises, which Moses had proclaimed in general terms, are applied by them to their own time and minutely described.”⁵ Thus, the prophets do not intend to add to the Law, but rather to interpret it faithfully. Foremost, Calvin’s reading assumptions regarding the priority of the Mosaic Pentateuch and the literary dependence of the prophets upon

³ James Muilenburg, “Introduction, The Book of Isaiah Chapters 40–66,” in *IB* 5.381–419, 422–773; Roy F. Melugin, *The Formation of Isaiah 40–55* (BZAW 141; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1976); Peter R. Ackroyd, “Isaiah I–XII: Presentation of a Prophet,” *VTSup* 29 (1978): 15–48; J. J. M. Roberts, “Isaiah in OT Theology,” *Int* 36 (1982): 130–43; R. E. Clements, “The Unity of the Book of Isaiah,” *Int* 36 (1982): 117–29; idem, “Beyond Tradition–History: Deutero-Isaianic Development of First Isaiah’s Themes,” *JSOT* 31 (1985): 95–113; idem, “Isaiah: A Book without an Ending?” *JSOT* 97 (2002): 109–26; Rolf Rendtorff, “Zur Komposition des Buches Jesaja,” *VT* 34 (1984): 295–320; idem, “Jesaja 6 im Rahmen der Komposition des Jesajabuches,” in *The Book of Isaiah/Le Livre D’Isaïe: Les Oracles et Leurs Relectures Unité et Complexité de L’Ouvrage* (ed. Jacques Vermeylen; BETL 81; Leuven: Leuven University, 1989), 73–82; Richard J. Clifford, *Fair Spoken and Persuading: An Interpretation of Second Isaiah* (New York: Paulist, 1984); Jacques Vermeylen, “L’Unité du Livre d’Isaïe,” in *The Book of Isaiah* (ed. Vermeylen), 11–53; Marvin A. Sweeney, *Isaiah 1–4 and the Post-Exilic Understanding of the Isaianic Tradition* (BZAW 171; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1988); Christopher R. Seitz, “Isaiah 1–66: Making Sense of the Whole,” in *Reading and Preaching the Book of Isaiah* (ed. Christopher R. Seitz; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988), 105–26; idem, “The Divine Council: Temporal Transition and New Prophecy in the Book of Isaiah,” *JBL* 109 (1990): 229–47; idem, *Zion’s Final Destiny: The Development of the Book of Isaiah: A Reassessment of Isaiah 36–39* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991); idem, *Isaiah 1–39* (Int; Louisville: John Knox, 1993); idem, “How is the Prophet Isaiah Present in the Latter Half of the Book? The Logic of Chapters 40–66 within the Book of Isaiah,” *JBL* 115 (1996): 219–40; Benjamin D. Sommer, *A Prophet Reads Scripture: Allusion in Isaiah 40–66* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998); Brevard Childs, *Isaiah* (OTL; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001). For a redactional analysis of Isaiah as a book, as well as the themes linking various units together, see H. G. M. Williamson, *The Book Called Isaiah: Deutero-Isaiah’s Role in Composition and Redaction* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994). In dissent from these approaches, David Carr argues that all of the contents of Isaiah cannot be reconciled within the present macrostructure (“Reaching for Unity in Isaiah,” *JSOT* 57 [1993]: 61–80).

⁴ E.g. John Calvin, *Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Isaiah* (trans. Rev. William Pringle; Calvin’s Commentaries; 22 vols.; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998 [1550/1850]), 7.xvii.

⁵ *Ibid.*

it in conjunction with more recent defenses of the authorship of the entire book by Isaiah of Jerusalem provide a valid foundation for reading the theme of creation across the critically identified divisions of Isaiah's discourse structure, and this reading strategy also provides grounds for understanding historical reference in Isaiah along more traditional lines as presented within the book.⁶ To this pre-critical and Reformation mode of reading may be added more recent advances in identifying discourse structure and literary features.⁷

In particular, the present investigation concerns itself with creation in the book of Isaiah and the function of this theme in relation to redemption within Isaiah's overall discourse structure. Previous studies focused on creation either in the so-called Isaian Apocalypse, Second Isaiah, or on new creation in Isaiah 65–66. Moreover, form-critical analyses focused on the relation of creation themes to discrete subunits and their individual *Gattungen*. Therefore, modern analyses focused on creation within critically identified exilic or postexilic levels of the text rather than within the linear flow of the text's own narrative world or its wider canonical setting taken at face value in accordance with pre-critical and Reformation exegesis. Therefore, the following reading and analysis will demonstrate that Isa 4:2–6, 40–48, and 65–66 hold creation (Gen 1:1–2:3) in tension with exodus and wilderness themes (Exodus 1–18; Numbers 10–21) as types for understanding exile, the future return, and the *telos* of election and redemption.⁸ Although exodus typology in Isaiah has been widely acknowledged, the significance of creation typology has been diminished with focus placed instead on redemption. This is especially interesting since Isaiah reappropriated creation traditions alongside exodus and wilderness typological complexes, and focused upon the climax of new creation in chapters

⁶ J. A. Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 1993); John Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT; 2 vols.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986, 1998); Gary Smith, *Isaiah* (NAC 15a–b; 2 vols.; Nashville: B&H, 2007, 2009).

⁷ Eep Talstra, *Oude en Nieuwe Lezers: Een inleiding in de methoden van uitleg van het Oude Testament* (Kampen: Kok, 2002); Christof Hardmeier, *Textwelten der Bibel entdecken: Grundlagen und Verfahren einer textpragmatischen Literaturwissenschaft der Bibel* (2 vols.; Textpragmatische Studien zur Literatur- und Kulturgeschichte der Hebräischen Bibel 1; Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2003, 2004); Terrance R. Wardlaw Jr., "Discourse Analysis," in *Words and the Word: Explorations in Biblical Interpretation and Literary Theory* (Nottingham, UK: Apollon, 2008), 266–317.

⁸ Typology is a mode of historical understanding by which historical persons, events, or institutions are understood as anticipating those which follow. The type points toward an even greater fulfillment (*Steigerung*) with the anti-type. See Patrick Fairbairn, *The Typology of Scripture: Viewed in Connexion with the Entire Scheme of the Divine Dispensations* (2nd ed.; Philadelphia: Smith & English, 1854); Leonhard Goppelt, *Typos: The Typological Interpretation of the OT in the New* (trans. Donald H. Madvig; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982) (trans. of *Typos: Die typologische Deutung des Alten Testaments im Neuen* [Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann, 1939]); Bernhard W. Anderson, "Exodus Typology in Second Isaiah," in *Israel's Prophetic Heritage: Essays in Honor of James Muilenburg* (ed. Bernhard W. Anderson and Walter Harrelson; New York: Harper & Brothers, 1962), 178–80; Richard M. Davidson, *Typology in Scripture: A Study of Hermeneutical ΤΥΠΟΣ Structures* (Andrews University Seminary Doctoral Dissertation Series 2; Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1981); Daniel J. Treier, "Typology," in *Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible* (ed. Kevin J. Vanhoozer; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 823. For a more recent discussion of "figuration," see Christopher R. Seitz, *Prophecy and Hermeneutics: Toward a New Introduction to the Prophets* (Studies in Theological Interpretation; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007).

65–66. This focal discourse aim possesses great bearing upon contemporary theological dialogue and ecclesiastical practice, as will be suggested below.

I. PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS OF CREATION IN SECOND AND THIRD ISAIAH

One of the first historical questions to be answered when approaching the issue of creation within the book of Isaiah is the source and background of references to creation. Although some scholars argue that the creation language in Deutero-Isaiah is closely related to Mesopotamian cosmological language, these works fail to identify direct phrasal parallels.⁹ Moreover, they draw conclusions based upon generalizations about Mesopotamian creation texts and the text of Isaiah rather than treating linguistic particulars. In contrast, quite a few studies of creation in Isaiah identify the intertextual relationship of creation in Isaiah to Genesis 1–3 without making a commitment regarding the direction of influence.¹⁰ At the same time, some scholars depart from blanket applications of Wellhausen's synthesis of prophets predating Law and conclude that Priestly traditions antedate prophetic materials in general, as well as Isaian materials in particular.¹¹ For the present study, as stated within the introduction, it will be assumed that the traditions within Genesis 1–3 reside behind Isaiah's creation language (e.g. Isa 41:5), alongside poetic and figurative references to *Chaoskampf* traditions from ancient Israel's historical and cultural environment (e.g. Isa 27:1).¹² In order to satisfy demands for greater methodological rigor in identifying quotation, allusion, and echo, particular verbal and

⁹ Joseph Blenkinsopp, "The Cosmological and Protological Language of Deutero-Isaiah," *CBQ* 73 (2011): 493–510; Bernard F. Batto, *In the Beginning: Essays on Creation Motifs in the Ancient Near East and the Bible* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2013); Christine Mitchell, "A Note on the Creation Formula in Zechariah 12:1–8; Isaiah 42:5–6; and Old Persian Inscriptions," *JBL* 133 (2014): 305–8.

¹⁰ Peter D. Miscall, "Isaiah: New Heavens, New Earth, New Book," in *Reading Between Texts: Intertextuality and the Hebrew Bible* (ed. Danna Nolan Fewell; Literary Currents in Biblical Interpretation; Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1992), 41–56; Richard L. Schultz, "Intertextuality, Canon, and 'Undecidability': Understanding Isaiah's 'New Heavens and New Earth' (Isaiah 65:17–25)," *BBR* 20 (2010): 19–38. One of the shortcomings of these literary readings is their failure to read Isaiah on the plane of history. Divorced from its historical reference, Isaiah loses its authority and significance for the church today.

¹¹ John Day, "Prophecy," in *It is Written: Scripture Citing Scripture* (ed. D. A. Carson and H. G. M. Williamson; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 39–55; Odil Hannes Steck, "Der Neue Himmel und die Neue Erde: Beobachtungen zur Rezeption von Gen 1–3 in Jes 65,16b–25," in *Studies in the Book of Isaiah: Festschrift Willem A. M. Beuken* (ed. J. Van Ruiten and M. Vervenne; BETL 132; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1997), 349–65; Manfred Görg, "Revision von Schöpfung und Geschichte: Auf dem Wege zu einer Strukturbestimmung von Jes 40, 1–8(11)," in *Ich bewirke das Heil und erschaffe das Unheil (Jesaja 45,7): Studien zur Botschaft der Propheten* (ed. Friedrich Diederich and Bernd Willmes; Würzburg: Echter, 1998), 135–56. Hugh Williamson concludes from his redactional analysis that there are no references to creation within the authentic sayings of Isaiah (Williamson, *Book Called Isaiah*, 61).

¹² Even Gunkel concluded that references to *Chaoskampf* have been divested of their polytheistic conceptualization within the present form of the biblical text (Hermann Gunkel, *Schöpfung und Chaos in Urzeit und Endzeit: Eine religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung über Gen 1 und Ap Job 12* [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1895]). Also see Bruce K. Waltke, "The Creation Account in Genesis 1.1–3," *BSac* 132 (1975): 25–36; J. G. McConville, "Yahweh and the Gods in the OT," *EuroJTh* 2 (1993): 107–17; John H. Walton, "Creation in Genesis 1:1–2:3 and the Ancient Near East: Order out of Disorder after *Chaoskampf*," *CJT* 43 (2008): 48–63.

phrasal parallels situated within the contextual activation of the creation theme will be noted as evidence for the direct literary connection between Genesis 1–3 and Isaiah within the following discussion.

In turning to redactional analyses of the text itself, Jacques Vermeylen limits his analysis of creation in Isaiah to Second Isaiah.¹³ He begins by identifying the authentic Second Isaiah oracles concerning creation, and then proceeds to analyze them.¹⁴ Vermeylen identifies the following passages as authentic to Second Isaiah: 40:12, 21a, 22–23, 26; 41:2–4; 42:5–6a, 7b; 44:24, 26b α y, 28a; 45:11a α , 12–13b α ; 48:13, 14b–15. He concludes that the mention of creation within these passages makes the point that the Lord sovereignly uses the Persians as his instruments in order to establish the order of creation.¹⁵ Vermeylen finds that the use of creation in Second Isaiah relates to the political order. This is not spoken to the exiles, but rather to those living in Judea between 539 and 530 BC in order to rally support for Cyrus, who was master of the region.¹⁶ Vermeylen summarizes the relation between creation and salvation in history as follows. Originally, the text speaks of an order established by Cyrus. Then the second redaction consists of a book of consolation in which there is a reconstitution of the people of Israel as the faithful people of the Lord. The final redactor appeals to mythical categories of a victory “on that day,” which is sacral time.¹⁷

Following Vermeylen, Christian Streibert sought to compare and contrast two exilic and post-exilic sources related to Israel’s creation traditions in his 1993 form-critical investigation of creation in Deutero-Isaiah and the Priestly document.¹⁸ Streibert worked under the assumption that Isaiah 40–55 consists of independent units either deriving from Second Isaiah or collected and edited later. In terms of the traditions received within these genres, Streibert concluded that the most frequently occurring tradition is the exodus tradition: just as the Lord led Israel from Egypt, he now leads Israel from Babylon.¹⁹ Deutero-Isaiah selected particular traditions, reinterpreted them, and ordered them in the service of his message of salvation.²⁰ Accordingly, mention of creation is not found in discrete units in Isaiah as within P and J. Rather, creation is one part of the message of larger units.²¹ Moreover, Streibert examines the mention of creation in Isaiah 40–55 based on the genre category of the occurrence. He follows standard form-critical categories and separates the genres into polemic *Gattungen* (disputation and judgment oracles), oracles

¹³ Jacques Vermeylen, “Le Motif de la Création dans le Deutéro-Isaïe,” in *La Création dans L’Orient Ancien*, 183–240.

¹⁴ Vermeylen, “Le Motif de la Création,” 188–212.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 237–38.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 217–20.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 239–40.

¹⁸ Christian Streibert, *Schöpfung bei Deuterjesaja und in der Priesterschrift: Eine vergleichende Untersuchung zu Inhalt und Funktion schöpfungstheologischer Aussagen in exilisch-nachexilischer Zeit* (BEATAJ 8; Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1993).

¹⁹ Streibert, *Schöpfung bei Deuterjesaja*, 17.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 18.

²¹ *Ibid.*

of salvation, songs of praise, oracles of the Lord, and various other smaller genres.²² Within the genres of disputation and judgment, references to creation emphasize the greatness, power, and incomparability of the Lord.²³ This theology of creation influenced Isaiah's monotheistic outlook, whereby only the Lord manifested himself as the universal Creator.²⁴ Both P and Deutero-Isaiah emphasize that God is not merely God of the land. Rather, God's might encompasses the entire world.²⁵

One may conclude that Vermeylen's reading is overly atomistic, and its assumptions regarding exilic authorship lead to wrong inferences regarding the initial historical audience and discourse aim of the text. Rather than the text of Isaiah 40–48 calling late-monarchic Judah and Jerusalem to repent and presenting a message of hope to future generations undergoing judgment that is based on the fulfillment of past prophecy, Isaiah has become a political document in the service of the Persians. As a result, Vermeylen flattens the text and misses the theological import of a prescient, prophetic message which points toward the omniscience and omnipotence of the Creator. One may evaluate Streibert's work similarly.

II. THE EMERGENCE OF CREATION WITHIN ISAIAH

We now turn to an examination of the manner in which the theme and vocabulary of creation emerge within the linear structure of the Book of Isaiah. This investigation will argue that creation builds from its introduction alongside wilderness and tabernacle imagery in Isa 4:2–6, to its integration with the themes of judgment and redemption in chapters 40–48, and then climaxes with new creation in chapters 65–66. This final climax of creation suggests the prominence of the theme within the book's structure and message; however, section III will note the manner in which previous discussions downplay or ignore creation in relation to redemption. These previous discussions focused on redemption and failed to integrate the particulars into an overarching view of judgment and redemption as creative acts culminating in the goal of new creation.

Moreover, this investigation will assume that the emergence of a lexical field characteristic of Genesis 1–3 justifies the identification of a genuine allusion to creation.²⁶ In addition, the use of a single semantically-laden word from Israel's

²² *Ibid.*, 19–39.

²³ *Ibid.*, 22.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 26.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 98.

²⁶ For more on criteria for identifying allusion and echo, see M. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985); Benjamin D. Sommer, *A Prophet Reads Scripture: Allusion in Isaiah 40–66* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), 20–22, as well as the works cited in Jeremy M. Hutton, "Isaiah 51:9–11 and the Rhetorical Appropriation and Subversion of Hostile Theologies," *JBL* 126 (2007): 271–303, esp. pp. 275–78. For an example of identifying allusion within the book of Isaiah, see H. G. M. Williamson, "Isaiah 62:4 and the Problem of Inner-Biblical Allusions," *JBL* 119 (2000): 734–39. For methodological discussions of quotation and allusion in Isaiah 40–55, see Patricia Tull Willey, *Remember the Former Things: The Recollection of Previous Texts in Second Isaiah* (SBLDS 161; Atlanta: Scholars' Press, 1997) and Richard L. Schultz, *The Search for Quotation: Verbal Parallels in the Prophets* (JSOTSup 180; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999). Exact verbal parallel situated within a correspond-

traditional materials (*Leitwort*) also qualifies as a reference to the larger tradition and its semantic *Gestalt, pars pro toto*, in bringing creation typology to bear on Isaiah's message of judgment and redemption within a given unit.²⁷ This identification of single significant words remains justified in the light of the numerous overt references to creation throughout the book of Isaiah and the focal climax on creation in chapters 65–66, which indicates that creation is activated in Isaiah's field of discourse. Such traditional creation language has been identified previously by Wardlaw in *Conceptualizing Words for "God" within the Pentateuch*.²⁸ Finally, this reading will assume the standard divisions of Isaiah into chapters 1–39, 40–55, and 56–66.

1. *Judgment and hope in Isaiah 1–39*. Allusions, echoes, or references to creation or the Creator may be found in Isa 4:2–6; 13:19; 17:7; 27:1, 11; and 37:14–20. However, discussion will be restricted to Isa 4:2–6 as an exemplary passage since it is programmatic for all which follows.

Within Isaiah's vision concerning Judah and Jerusalem in chapters 2–12 one finds the first allusion to creation alongside exodus-wilderness typology within 4:2–6. Similar to the disjunctive use of the verb **בָּרָא** in Num 16:30 in relation to judgment, the disjunctive use of this tradition-laden verb in relation to tabernacle and wilderness terminology in Isa 4:5–6 constitutes a significant lexical occurrence. This initial interweaving establishes the relationship between exodus and creation typology for everything which follows throughout the book. This unit presents a vision of future hope following judgment. "On that day" the branch of the Lord will be for beauty and glory (v. 2), all the holy remnant registered for life will remain in Jerusalem (v. 3), and the Lord will wash the filth of the daughter of Zion with a spirit of judgment and burning (v. 4), which resonates with the thematic movement from judgment to re-creation found in Genesis 6–9, 18–19, and Exodus 1–15. Then in v. 5 the Lord declares that he will "create" (**בָּרָא**) a cloud by day over every dwelling and gathering place, and fire by night as a canopy. Thus, just as the fire and cloud signified divine guidance and protection in the exodus-wilderness traditions, they now emerge in Isaiah as symbols of God once again guiding and protecting the elect after judgment (Isaiah 2–4).²⁹ However, the integrity of the MT has been questioned on the basis of the LXX reading **ἔξει** (equivalent to Hebrew **וּבִרָא**) for MT **וּבָרָא**, and the BHS critical apparatus suggests this reading.³⁰ Nevertheless, both Targum Jonathan and the Vulgate agree with MT "create" over LXX "He came." Therefore, in the absence of stronger manuscript evidence, MT is to be

ing thematic structure seems to be a common methodological requirement for establishing a true literary connection between two texts. Accordingly, the following discussion will note the correspondence of vocabulary between the books of Isaiah and Genesis in passages where the theme of creation emerges.

²⁷ Terrance R. Wardlaw Jr., *Elohim within the Psalms: Petitioning the Creator to Order Chaos in Oral-Derived Literature* (LHBOTS 602; London: Bloomsbury, 2015), 16–38.

²⁸ Terrance R. Wardlaw Jr., *Conceptualizing Words for "God" within the Pentateuch: A Cognitive-Semantic Investigation in Literary Context* (LHBOTS 495; New York: T&T Clark, 2008).

²⁹ John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 1–39* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 148–49; Christopher R. Seitz, *Isaiah 1–39* (IBC; Louisville: John Knox, 1993), 41–42; Gary V. Smith, *Isaiah 1–39* (NAC 15a; Nashville: B&H, 2007), 158.

³⁰ R. E. Clements, *Isaiah 1–39* (NCBC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 54.

preferred over LXX. Moreover, Watts notes that “to come” is frequently related to cloud and fire in the OT; however, the subject here is protection rather than theophany, which supports the MT over against LXX.³¹

Although commentators note the connection between the verb “create” and divine action, they tend not to identify this verb as an allusion to Genesis 1.³² However, just as creation language emerges in the Flood Narrative (Genesis 6–9), the narrative of Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19), and in the Egyptian Plagues (Exodus 6–14) suggesting that judgment is the first step in God’s act of re-creating a sinful world by destroying the wicked and preserving the elect, creation in Isa 4:5 is linked to God protecting and guiding Zion following the judgment of the wicked.³³ Brevard Childs’s identification of creation through judgment and a return to the fruitfulness of paradise remains a notable exception among critical commentators, although he identifies the allusion as the general eschatological theme of the return to paradise or Israel’s general traditions rather than to Genesis 1 in particular.³⁴ The use of the *Leitwort* אָרַץ in conjunction with other Pentateuchal themes, however, suggests an intentional allusion to the creation tradition found in Gen 1:1–2:3 rather than an allusion to other ANE creation traditions or to general Israelite creation traditions. Therefore, this occurrence near the beginning of Isaiah establishes from the outset that references to creation and related themes in Isaiah 27, 40–48, and 65–66 should be read in the light of Gen 1:1–2:3.³⁵

Moreover, the reference to the cloud by day, fire by night, and a booth for protection echoes the pillar of cloud by day and fire by night from the exodus and wilderness complexes (Exodus–Numbers) as types pointing toward the Lord’s presence and protection among the elect during the imminent work of restoration culminating in the new creation of Isaiah 65–66. Therefore, this allusion to both the creation and the exodus-wilderness complexes forms the conceptual framework for linking together the prophetic antitype of second exodus and creation through judgment outlined in chapters 40–66. Calvin rightly applies this unit to the church and notes that it is precisely through judgment that the Lord purifies the church, and the fire and canopy connote guidance and protection for the elect today until they reach their journey’s end.³⁶ Moreover, Beuken identifies this act of purification in 4:2–6 as an act of creation whereby Zion is transformed after the pattern of Sinai as the place where God reveals himself and gathers his people.³⁷

³¹ John D. W. Watts, *Isaiah 1–33* (WBC 24; rev. ed.; Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2005), 74.

³² For example, Motyer, *Isaiah*, 66. Willem A. M. Beuken identifies this verb as anticipatory to the theme of creation in Second Isaiah on the literary and redactional level, yet he fails to relate its occurrence to creation themes from other Israelite traditions (i.e. Genesis 1; *Jesaja 1–12* [HThKAT; Freiburg: Herder, 2003], 127).

³³ For the identification of creation language within these texts, see Wardlaw, *Conceptualizing Words for “God” within the Pentateuch*, 209–12, 215–23, 239–49.

³⁴ Brevard S. Childs, *Isaiah* (OTL; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 35–36.

³⁵ Marvin Sweeney observes the connection between creation and exodus-wilderness traditions in Isa 4:5–6 and the creation language of chaps. 40–55 (*Isaiah 1–4*, 179).

³⁶ Calvin, *Isaiah*, 1.151–59; similarly Smith, *Isaiah 1–39*, 156.

³⁷ Beuken, *Jesaja 1–12*, 129.

From the programmatic reference to creation in Isa 4:2–6 we see that creation is interwoven with the exodus and wilderness traditions (i.e. redemption) from the book's introductory materials, and this in turn establishes a reading frame for the following discourse. Thus, the allusion to the creation of cloud and fire over Zion as the Lord's creative act points toward the sovereignty of God in accomplishing purifying judgment and the salvation of the elect remnant. Moreover, this statement of faith in God's sovereign care follows directly in the tradition of God's past acts of protection with the first exodus functioning as a type for a future exodus as one of the first steps in God's progressive and creative ordering of Israel's chaos of covenant unfaithfulness during the late Davidic monarchy.

2. *God the Creator and judgment in Isaiah 40–55.* As is well known, Isaiah 40–55 may be divided into Isaiah 40–48 and 49–55, and most references to creation are found in chapters 40–48. Previous studies identifying exodus typology in Isaiah 40–48 will be assumed.³⁸

a. *Isaiah 40–48.* Although creation is indicated by explicit lexical occurrences in 40:12–31; 41:17–29; 42:5–9; 43:1, 7, 15; 44:1; 45:5–18; and 48:6–7, 12, we shall focus on 40:12–31; 43:1, 7, 15; and 45:5–18 as three key examples for Isaiah's use of creation typology within chapters 40–48.

Isaiah 40 opens with the well-known declaration “Comfort, comfort, my people” in verse 1, which establishes from the outset that these materials are about deliverance and restoration following judgment, and in due course proceeds to describe the greatness and grandeur of the Creator in verses 12–31.³⁹ Within verses

³⁸ Exodus tradition and function in Isaiah 40–55 has been discussed by J. Fischer, “Das Problem des neuen Exodus in Isaia c. 40–55,” *TQ* 110 (1929): 11–30; H. F. D. Sparks, “The Witness of the Prophets to Hebrew Tradition,” *JTS* 50 (1949): 129–41; B. W. Anderson, “Exodus Typology in Second Isaiah,” 177–95; idem, “Exodus and Covenant in Second Isaiah and Prophetic Tradition,” in *Magnalia Dei, The Mighty Acts of God: Essays on the Bible and Archaeology in Memory of G. Ernest Wright* (ed. F. M. Cross, W. E. Lemke, and P. D. Miller; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1976), 339–60; W. Zimmerli, “Der ‘neue Exodus’ in der Verkündigung der beiden grossen Exilpropheten,” in *Gottes Offenbarung: Gesammelte Aufsätze zum Alten Testament* (TB 19; Munich: Kaiser, 1963), 192–204; idem, *The Law and the Prophets* (trans. R. E. Clements; New York: Harper, 1965), 86–87 (trans. of *Das Gesetz und die Propheten* [Göttingen, 1963]); K. Kiesow, *Exodustexte im Jesajabuch* (OBO 24; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1979). Kiesow's dating and redactional scheme remains questionable because changes in vocabulary and style may reflect a change in discourse topic rather than author or redactor.

³⁹ Although many scholars read 40:1–11 as a call narrative (e.g. Westermann, Clifford; cf. Childs), an understanding of the entire book as deriving from the prophet Isaiah himself precludes the need for identifying a second call narrative for a different prophetic voice at this point (following Delitzsch, Oswalt, Motyer, and Smith). Nevertheless, both lexical and thematic similarities between chap. 6 and 40:1–11 may exist since these are parts of a unified text with discourse cohesion (see John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 40–66* [NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998], 48). Moreover, Christopher Seitz (“The Divine Council: Temporal Transition and New Prophecy in the Book of Isaiah,” *JBL* 109.2 [1990]: 229–47) follows Rowley and Cross in performing a form-critical analysis of Isa 40:1–8, and he argues that these words are spoken in and addressed to the divine council in a reapplication of Isaiah's call from chap. 6. However, a closer reading of this text situated within book context suggests that these words are spoken by the prophet to the people of God on the Lord's behalf. This seems likely since there are no explicit textual indicators in the opening verses of chap. 40 suggesting that the divine council is the setting, and, as observed by Delitzsch, the crier is concealed (*Isaiah*, 392). Form-critically, Westermann identifies 40:12–31 as a unified disputation or argument (Westermann, *Jesaja 40–66*, 42).

1–11 further echoes of exodus-wilderness themes may be identified following the more explicit reference to the way of the Lord in the wilderness (akin to the march to Sinai and the wilderness wanderings, v. 3) and the revelation of the glory of the Lord (the glory of the Lord present at Sinai and with the tabernacle, v. 5). Therefore, verses 1–11 allude to exodus-wilderness typology, and this unit is juxtaposed alongside creation in verses 12–31.⁴⁰ Oswalt observes that this chapter functions as an introduction to chapters 41–55 by setting the stage rather than detailing the following themes, and accordingly, the disputations noting the grandeur of God in verses 12–31 support the assertion that the Lord will deliver those who experienced judgment (vv. 1–11).⁴¹

One may characterize the presentation of creation vocabulary within the larger unit of 40:12–31 as follows. As noted by Delitzsch, the רִיחַ יְהוָה (v. 13) “is the Spirit which moved upon the waters at the creation, and by which chaos was reduced to order.”⁴² The prophet declares that all the nations are as nothing before the Lord, and they are reckoned תְּהוּ, “emptiness,” by him (v. 17//Gen 1:2). Then in verse 18 the text continues by asking to whom will God be likened, or to what דְמוֹת will you compare him (//Gen 1:26–28)? After continuing this indictment against idols (vv. 19–20), the prophet continues the contrast between the Lord and idols (vv. 21–24) by declaring that the One sitting on high stretched out the heavens like a curtain and spread them out like a tent for dwelling (v. 22). This creation imagery of God stretching out the heavens like a curtain recurs throughout Isaiah 40–48. Moreover, the greatness of God renders the judges of the earth כְּתֵהוּ (v. 23//Gen 1:2). Then in verses 25–26 the Holy One inquires again to whom will he be likened, and commands that eyes be lifted up in order to see who created (בָּרָא; //Genesis 1) these things.⁴³ The Holy One brought out the host by name “by the greatness of his might, and because he is strong in power not one is missing” (v. 26). That the Lord alone is the Creator leads to the conclusion that only the Lord wields absolute power over the whole universe.⁴⁴ Then within vv. 27–31 the Holy One inquires of Israel why they say their way is hidden from the Lord and the God of judgment (v. 27). This question is answered with the rhetorical question used as an affirmation that the Lord is the eternal God who created the ends of the earth

⁴⁰ Watts, *Isaiah*, 610.

⁴¹ Oswalt, *Isaiah 40–66*, 46–47; R. N. Whybray, *Isaiah 40–66* (NCB; London: Oliphants, 1975), 53.

⁴² Delitzsch, *Isaiah*, 397.

⁴³ Ellen van Wolde argues that the verb בָּרָא means “to separate, divide” in Gen 1:1–2:4a, and then “to stretch out” in Isaiah 40–48 (*Reframing Biblical Studies: When Language and Text Meet Culture, Cognition, and Context* [Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2009]); idem, “Why the Verb בָּרָא Does Not Mean ‘to Create’ in Genesis 1.1–2.4a,” *JSTOT* 34 [2009]: 3–23; Ellen van Wolde and Robert Rezetko, “Semantics and the Semantics of בָּרָא: A Rejoinder to the Arguments Advanced by B. Becking and M. Korpel,” *JHS* 11.9 [2011]: 2–39). The traditional meaning “to create” is in turn argued by Terrance Randall Wardlaw Jr., “The Meaning of בָּרָא in Genesis 1:1–2:3,” *VT* 64 (2014): 502–13. Although the verb בָּרָא occurs in the context and in parallel with the verb נָטָה, “to stretch out,” there is no reason to narrow the meaning of בָּרָא to this one word from the multiple synonyms from the semantic domain “creation.” As Wardlaw argues, based upon contextual evidence from Gen 1:1–2:3, the concrete meaning of בָּרָא is likely “to sculpt, create” in reference to God’s novel creation of the heavens and earth.

⁴⁴ Whybray, *Isaiah 40–66*, 58.

(בּוֹרֵא קְצוֹת הָאָרֶץ), v. 28); as noted by Delitzsch, this suggests that even the Babylonians were not beyond the domain of God's power.⁴⁵ The Lord grows neither faint nor weary, and he provides strength to those who are weak (vv. 28–31). Westermann identifies the progression in thought as moving from the idea that God is the Lord of creation (vv. 12–17), to God being the Lord of history (vv. 18–24), and God having created the stars (vv. 25–26).⁴⁶ Therefore, creation vocabulary and imagery is used in Isaiah 40 (1) to contrast the Lord with idols as part of Isaiah's monotheistic impulse, (2) to point toward the greatness and the majesty of God, and (3) in order to affirm God's omniscient knowledge of the weakness of those who have experienced judgment. Calvin writes that if this conviction of God's power were deep seated in our hearts we would not be disturbed by calamity or adversity when the power of God is concealed.⁴⁷

Within chapter 43, verses 1 and 7 form an inclusio of allusions to creation around the intervening materials.⁴⁸ In forming the context of this message of assurance, verse 1 begins with exegetical references to the Lord, who is בּרָאָהּ יַעֲקֹב בְּרֵאשִׁית יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּצְרָהּ יִשְׂרָאֵל, “your Creator (//Genesis 1), O Jacob, and the One who formed/is forming (//Gen 2:7) you, O Israel.” Moreover, the Lord redeemed Jacob and called him by name. Delitzsch, Whybray, and Smith identify these opening statements as references to God's initial acts of creating Israel through the election and blessing of the patriarchs, as well as redeeming Israel by delivering them from Egypt through the exodus.⁴⁹ Then in verse 7 the Lord declares everyone will be gathered who is called by his name, who have been created for his glory, formed, and made (כֹּל הַנִּקְרָא בְּשֵׁמִי וְלִכְבוֹדִי בְּרֵאשִׁית יִצְרָתִי אֶפְעִשִׁיתִי). The Lord will send them through the waters and fires of judgment (v. 2), yet he is their deliverer (v. 3) who loves them (v. 4) and will be with them (v. 5//Exod 3:12, 15–16) as he gathers them from the ends of the earth (v. 6//Deut 30:3–4).⁵⁰ Thus, these references to creation surrounding the assurance of the Lord's presence in judgment and deliverance from it imply (1) that God is creating and forming a pure remnant through destruction and exile, and (2) that the Lord wields the sovereign power to protect his people through this process. That this is done by the Holy One of Israel (v. 3) implies that creation within Isaiah is a movement from idolatry to the holiness of an Israel who is exclusively devoted to the Lord, and the Lord's holiness will now be imparted to the nation. This reading is confirmed by verses 8–13, where the Lord characterizes Israel as blind and deaf.⁵¹ However, Israel is still his servant, chosen to know and trust him, as well as to understand that there is no other God save the Lord (וְתִבְנֶנּוּ בְּרֵאשִׁית הוּא לִפְנֵי לֹא־נִצְרָה אֵל וְאֲחֵרִי לֹא יְהִיָּה), v. 10//Deut 32:39). Moreover, this reading frame is strengthened in verses 14–15 with the explicit

⁴⁵ Delitzsch, *Isaiah*, 401.

⁴⁶ Westermann, *Jesaja 40–66*, 43.

⁴⁷ Calvin, *Isaiah*, 3:217.

⁴⁸ Westermann (*Jesaja 40–66*, 95) identifies 43:1–7 as an oracle of salvation.

⁴⁹ Delitzsch, *Isaiah*, 424; Whybray, *Isaiah 40–66*, 82; Smith, *Isaiah 40–66*, 192–93.

⁵⁰ Westermann (*Jesaja 40–66*, 96) finds the phrase “I will be with you” to be reminiscent of the Joseph narrative.

⁵¹ Westermann (*Jesaja 40–66*, 99) categorizes 43:8–15 as a judgment speech.

statement that the Lord is the Holy One and redeemer of Israel who makes the Babylonians fugitives for the sake of the elect (v. 14). Then in verse 15 many of the themes of Isaiah converge in the titles of God: the Lord is Israel's Holy One, he is Israel's Creator, and their king (אֲנִי יְהוָה קְדוֹשְׁכֶם בּוֹרֵא יִשְׂרָאֵל מְלַכְכֶם).⁵² These titles assure the reader that God will perform what has been predicted for the future.⁵³ Moreover, through the creative act of judgment and deliverance Israel will recognize the kingship of God over the nations, and God's holiness will be imparted to them in fulfillment of the Lord's creative purpose. Reference to exodus, wilderness, and creation traditions are then found in vv. 16–21 as a type for a future return.⁵⁴ The Lord made a way in the sea (vv. 16–17//Exodus 14–15), yet the former things will no longer be remembered because God is doing something new which will spring forth as he makes a way in the desert (הֲנִי עֹשֶׂה תְּדָשָׁה עֲתָה תִצְמַח, vv. 18–19//Genesis 2). As noted by Childs, the call not to remember the former things is prophetic rhetoric, and it is not absolute (cf. v. 26; 44:21).⁵⁵ Analogous to his past acts in the wilderness, the Lord will reverse the covenant curses (Deuteronomy 27–28) as he again provides water for the people he formed for himself (עַם-זוֹ יִצְרַתִּי לִי) on this new journey through the wilderness to the Promised Land (vv. 19–21).⁵⁶ Thus, the Lord will work like a potter in order to use this merited judgment in order to pressure and shape Israel into the desired image.⁵⁷ This unit then ends with the Lord's accusations of Israel's sinfulness and the declaration that he will remove this sin through judgment (vv. 22–28). Therefore, as in the previous chapter, Isaiah 43 develops the notion that the Lord's judgment of Israel and the return of the people is an act whereby he shall create them to be his holy servant.

Chapter 45 continues the Cyrus oracle (44:24–45:8), in which the Lord declares that he will grant victory to Cyrus his anointed servant (vv. 1–3) for the sake of Israel who did not recognize his sovereignty (v. 4). Therefore, Cyrus will be used instrumentally for the Lord's purposes, and the following references to the Creator undergird the basic premise that the Lord is God over all of creation and will accomplish his will. Consequently, the point of this act of judgment is to make known that the Lord is the Creator (אֱלֹהִים) and there is no other (v. 5). Moreover, this knowledge that the Lord alone is the Creator will extend from the rising to the setting of the sun (v. 6). It is the Lord who forms light (יוֹצֵר אוֹר), creates darkness (וּבּוֹרֵא חֹשֶׁךְ), makes peace (עֹשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם), creates ill (וּבּוֹרֵא רָע), and performs all of these deeds (אֲנִי יְהוָה עֹשֶׂה כָּל-אֵלֶּה, v. 7). The creation of ill or bad things could be seen as theologically problematic. However, Calvin observed that God uses calami-

⁵² Oswalt (*Isaiah 40–66*, 153–54) observes that these names encapsulate all of OT theology in miniature.

⁵³ Smith, *Isaiah 40–66*, 207.

⁵⁴ Delitzsch, *Isaiah*, 429. Westermann (*Jesaja 40–66*, 104) identifies 43:16–21 as a salvation account. Whybray (*Isaiah 40–66*, 88), Oswalt (*Isaiah 40–66*, 155), and Motyer (*Isaiah*, 337) understand “the former things” as a reference to God's acts of salvation in the exodus and wilderness.

⁵⁵ Childs, *Isaiah*, 336–37.

⁵⁶ Smith, *Isaiah 40–66*, 210.

⁵⁷ Motyer, *Isaiah*, 337.

ties in order to chastise his people, and human evil may be used by divine agency.⁵⁸ Moreover, Delitzsch correctly notes that within the literary context “bad, evil” refers to purifying judgment and God’s act of creation through judgment. Divine acts of destroying chaotic evil, sin, and idolatry will result in a purified servant mirroring the Lord’s own holiness.⁵⁹ Rhetorically, the collocation of creation with darkness and ill gives the ideal reader pause and brings focus to bear in reflecting on this complex of God creating his holy servant Israel through judgment and the destruction of his servant Cyrus. Overall, this statement is an assertion of the Creator’s omnipotence. That holiness is the purpose of judgment is confirmed with the call for the heavens to pour forth righteousness and for righteousness to spring up (וַצְדָקָה תִצְמֹחַ//Genesis 2) from the earth, which is the Lord’s creative act (אֲנִי יְהוָה (בְּרֵאשִׁית, v. 8). Therefore, the Lord’s creative purpose of using darkness and ill is to the end that righteousness may spring forth from his elect.

The rhetorical aim within 45:9–13 is to establish the authority of artificers over what they create in the move to point toward the Lord’s creative authority over Israel to chastise through the agency of Cyrus.⁶⁰ This unit begins, “Woe to the one who contests his maker” (הוֹי רַב אֲתִיּוֹצְרוֹ), and then the Lord asks, “Will the clay ask the potter, ‘What are you doing?’” (הֲיֹאמֵר הַמָּר לְיוֹצְרוֹ מִהֲתַעֲשֶׂה). The point is that a creator is greater than what is being created, and that the creator is above question. Next the Lord is identified as the Holy One of Israel and Israel’s Creator (אֲנִי יְהוָה קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיוֹצְרוֹ), created man upon it (וְאָדָם עָלֶיהָ בְּרֵאשִׁית), stretched out the heavens (אֲנִי אֲרִץ וְכָל-צְבָאָם צִוִּיתִי), and commanded all the hosts of heaven (וְיָדִי נָטוּ שָׁמַיִם), and returned the exiles (v. 13). Therefore, the Lord’s identity as the Creator affirms his authority and power to accomplish divine ends through Cyrus, without question on Israel’s part.

Following another unit division in 45:14 (כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה), this universal sovereignty is particularized further with the statement that the wealth of Egypt and others will be given to the elect remnant as the nations who manufacture idols confess that there is only one God (אֵל), and apart from him there is no other Creator God (כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה בּוֹרֵא הַשָּׁמַיִם), the

⁵⁸ Calvin, *Isaiah*, 3.403.

⁵⁹ Delitzsch, *Isaiah*, 444–45; Oswalt, *Isaiah 40–66*, 204–5. Cf. the evaluation of Westermann (*Jesaja 40–66*, 132), who interprets God creating darkness and evil in Isa 45:7 as a contradiction of Gen 1 and 3. Smith (*Isaiah 40–66*, 257 n. 562) follows Whybray (*Isaiah 40–66*, 106) in doubting that 45:7 is polemic against or a reference to the Zoroastrian dualism of light and darkness; cf. Watts, *Isaiah 34–66*, 157.

⁶⁰ Whybray, *Isaiah 40–66*, 107. Cf. Westermann, *Jesaja 40–66*, 134, who finds 45:11–13 to be a unit with textual difficulties that is independent from vv. 9–10, rather than reading 45:9–13 as rhetorical backing for the preceding Cyrus oracle. Though there is a disjunctive discourse marker (כֹּה-אָמַר יְהוָה), this seems to be a focus structure within a segment of text unified by the term יָצַר in vv. 9–13, where vv. 11–13 explain the didactic point of the illustrations in vv. 9–10. Westermann (*Jesaja 40–66*, 136) later observes the manner in which vv. 9–10 and vv. 11–13 are bound together, but this then raises the question of why these segments must be seen as separate rather than originally composed as a unity. Smith (*Isaiah 40–66*, 259–60) correctly reads this unit as one paragraph with two sub-paragraphs.

one true God (הַאֱלֹהִים), the One who formed the earth and made it (יָצַר הָאָרֶץ), the One who did not create it empty or in chaos (לֹא־תָהוּ בְרָאָה) (ועֲשָׂה הוּא כּוֹנֵן), the One who created it to be inhabited (לְשִׁבְתָּ יָצָרָה), and the only true God (אֲנִי יְהוָה וְאֵין עוֹד, v. 18).⁶¹ Childs observes that this message is not different from that of Genesis 1, although “it has now been given a polemical, disputational form.”⁶² Whybray observes that the word תָּהוּ is found in Gen 1:2; however, he gives priority to all occurrences of this word in Second Isaiah with the meaning “that which is utterly ineffectual” rather than recognizing the full implications of his observation.⁶³ In the light of the recurrent echoes of creation in Isaiah 40–48 it seems rather likely that Isaiah intentionally used the word תָּהוּ in order to conceptualize idolatry in terms of the chaos which stands in opposition to the created order.⁶⁴ Smith reads this occurrence in the light of Gen 1:2, but defines it as “empty, uninhabited” based upon contextual usage in which the following line refers to habitation. However, considering this occurrence an echo of Gen 1:2 and also considering the subject of habitation in the following line allows for the meaning of “chaos,” which is hostile to habitation. In fact, the point of creation in Genesis 1 was the ordering of chaos on days one through three so that life could be brought into existence on days four through six. Seen in this light, the idolatry within Israel in Isaiah’s day created moral, social, and political chaos which was hostile to life in the presence of the Lord. Moreover, this description of God as the Creator who did not create chaos contrasts with the fugitives of the nations who carry their idol and pray to a god who cannot save (v. 20), which elsewhere in Isaiah is described as chaos. Moreover, within this unit the monotheistic claim of the one true God from verse 18 is particularized with the statement that there is no other God besides the Lord (v. 21). The implication of only one true God is that there is only one true Savior, who is calling all the ends of the earth to turn to him (vv. 22–25) to the end that every knee will bow and every tongue confess allegiance to the sovereign Creator (v. 23; Rom 14:11).⁶⁵ Therefore, the identity of the Lord as the only sovereign Creator is further developed in the service of Isaiah’s message of salvation: there is only one Savior to whom all will eventually bow (v. 23), righteousness and strength are only to be found in the Lord, and those who oppose him will be put to shame (v. 24).

⁶¹ Although Weinfeld (“God the Creator in Gen. I and in the Prophecy of Second Isaiah,” *Tarbiz* 37 [1968]: 105–32) concludes that Second Isaiah conflicts with the creation account in Gen 1, Calvin (*Isaiah*, 3.418) writes, “The Prophet does not speak of the commencement of the creation, but of God’s purpose by which the earth was set apart for the use and habitation of men; and therefore, there is nothing here that is contrary to what is said by Moses, for Isaiah contemplates the end and use.”

⁶² Childs, *Isaiah*, 355.

⁶³ Whybray, *Isaiah 40–66*, 110–11.

⁶⁴ Following Anderson, “Exodus Typology in Second Isaiah,” 184; idem, “Exodus and Covenant in Second Isaiah,” 342. Anderson concludes that “Second Isaiah” knew the priestly creation tradition in approximately the form given to it by the Priestly writer.

⁶⁵ Whybray (*Isaiah 40–66*, 111–12) disputes the interpretation which concludes that these verses refer to the salvation of the nations. Cf. Oswalt, *Isaiah 40–66*, 220, 223–24.

b. *Isaiah 49–55*. We now turn to Isaiah 49–55 and observe that within the so-called Servant Song in Isa 49:1–6 creation language emerges (vv. 4–5) in bridging the message of chapters 40–48 to chapter 49–55. Moreover, creation language emerges in 51:1–23 and 54:5, 11–17; however, we shall examine only 51:1–23 in detail as a representative passage.

Within chapter 51 both the themes of the new exodus and creation emerge in an eschatological vision of what the Lord will do. In verses 1–2 the Lord calls the righteous to look to Abraham, whom he blessed and made numerous, and in verse 3 declares that the Lord will comfort Zion and make her wilderness like Eden (//Genesis 2).⁶⁶ Within verses 4–8 the fruitfulness of the garden of the Lord, mentioned in verse 3, is particularized and described in terms of the law (תּוֹרָה) going forth with justice, righteousness, salvation, and judgment to the peoples and coastlands. Therefore, the future restoration of Zion (antitype) following the type of Eden depicts Zion's future fruitfulness in terms of the Lord's law, justice, righteousness, and salvation going forth to the nations. Thus, whereas in chapters 40–48 creation was limited to Israel, now in chapters 49–55 the typological appropriation of creation is expanded to the nations as a figurative way of describing moral and ethical recreation when the covenant with Israel (i.e. the law) is extended to the ends of the earth. Yet this extension to the nations does not come without suffering. As noted by Delitzsch, verses 7–8 contains an exhortation for Israel (and by extension, the persecuted church) not to be afraid of man because the Lord's righteousness and salvation remain forever.⁶⁷ Following directly on the heels of this figurative mention of creation, the exodus as a type for the future return is found in verses 9–11. The Lord mentions "the days of old," the defeat of Rahab the dragon (figurative for the waters of the Red Sea, v. 9), the drying up of the deep as a pathway for the redeemed (v. 10), and then affirms that in the same way the ransomed of the Lord will return to Zion with shouting and joy (v. 11).⁶⁸ Thus, moral creation with the extension of salvation to the nations is set alongside a new exodus and return to Zion. Following this mention of exodus, creation language once again emerges in verses 12–16 following the Lord's declaration that he comforts Israel (v.

⁶⁶ Westermann (*Jesaja 40–66*, 189) posits that 51:1–2 is a servant text, and that v. 3 is a cry of praise added later. He goes on to divide the rest of the chapter into various units with their own individual background. However, I agree with Childs's (*Isaiah*, 401) assessment of this type of analysis: it is unconvincing, atomizing, subjective, and largely unhelpful.

⁶⁷ Delitzsch, *Isaiah*, 488.

⁶⁸ Westermann (*Jesaja 40–66*, 195–96) concludes these are references to underlying *Chaoskampf*, and that multiple views of creation reside within the OT. However, he fails to consider that Israel's own creation traditions (Genesis 1–2) are determinative, and that language such as "Rahab" and "Sea/Yam" are used figuratively within a Yahwistic conceptual matrix, stripped of their Canaanite, Egyptian, and Mesopotamian framework. Likewise, Whybray (*Isaiah 40–66*, 159) notes this language and marvels at the juxtaposition of Isaiah's monotheism alongside these mythic references. In context, however, Isaiah uses these mythic references as a literary device for asserting the Lord's victory over the gods of the nations, which accords perfectly with Isaianic monotheism and the Lord's victory over the gods of the nations through the deliverance of Israel in a second exodus (so Anderson, "Exodus Typology in Second Isaiah," 192–94; Oswalt, *Isaiah 40–66*, 341–42; Motyer, *Isaiah*, 408–10; Childs, *Isaiah*, 403–4; Smith, *Isaiah 40–66*, 404–5).

12). The Lord accuses Israel of forgetting the Lord “your Maker, who stretches out the heavens and founds the earth” (וַתִּשְׁכַּח יְהוָה עֹשֵׂךְ נוֹטֵה שָׁמַיִם וְיֹסֵד אָרֶץ) (v. 13).⁶⁹ This, in turn, moves into the promise that those in exile will soon be set free (v. 14), which is substantiated in verse 15 with the declaration that the Lord stirs up the sea and its waves roar. Therefore, just as the Lord proved himself sovereign over Egypt and the sea with the initial exodus, the Creator will once again demonstrate his sovereign omnipotence over the nations and the waters of chaos with another exodus. The Lord has put his words in the mouth of the redeemed and protected them in order to stretch out the heavens and found the earth (וּבְגַל יְדֵי כְּסִיתֶיךָ לְנוֹטֵעַ שָׁמַיִם) (וְלִיֹּסֵד אָרֶץ), as well as to say to Zion, “You are my people” (v. 16). Thus, the redemption and return to Zion in the new exodus is for the purpose of God’s new act of creation (antitype). Then this unit closes with the message that the Lord will take the cup of reeling from Israel and give it to her tormenters (vv. 17–23).

Thus the Lord is depicted in chapters 40–55 as the Creator with sovereign power over Cyrus, Babel, and the unfaithful servant, Israel. Destruction was not a threat to God’s power. Rather, destruction was the tool of God’s judgment for afflicting Israel in order to produce a new creation through the individual suffering servant (Isa 49:1–6; 52:13–53:12). This creation will come to fruition with the second exodus and the return to Zion. However, this second act of creation and exodus will be greater than the first in that it will extend to the nations, who will receive justice, righteousness, and salvation from Zion. Although there was a return from the Babylonian exile along the lines of the return of the elect outlined in Isaiah 40–55, the grandeur of the eschatological language within which exodus and creation typology are situated points toward a much greater fulfillment yet in the future. Therefore, the initial return from exile in the sixth and fifth centuries BC as reported in Ezra-Nehemiah does not completely fulfill the eschatological creation and second exodus of Isaiah.

3. *The future hope of new creation and judgment in Isaiah 56–66.* Within Isaiah 56–66 creation vocabulary does not emerge until the new creation of chapters 65–66 (excepting 63:8), following a progression of ethical ideals expected of Israel, as well as declarations of judgment for violating them, in chapters 56–64.

New creation appears within chapter 65 alongside the final judgment in chapter 66, and these two themes form the climax of the book.⁷⁰ As noted by Childs,

⁶⁹ Calvin’s assertion that “Creator” refers to spiritual regeneration rather than universal creation goes against the immediately following phrase, “who stretches out the heavens and founds the earth” (*Isaiah*, 4.79). In context, “Creator” likely refers both to original creation, sustenance, and also to the antitype of redemption patterned after the original type of creation. Motyer (*Isaiah*, 411), similar to Calvin, identifies the creation of Israel in terms of election, grace, exodus-redemption, and providential care.

⁷⁰ Oswalt, *Isaiah 40–66*, 654. Cf. W. A. M. Beuken, “Isaiah Chapters LXV–LXVI: Trito-Isaiah and the Closure of the Book of Isaiah,” in *Congress Volume: Leuven, 1989* (ed. J. A. Emerton; VTSup 43; Leiden: Brill, 1991), 204–221. Beuken is basically correct in observing that “the servants of YHWH” comprises the main theme of chapters 56–66; however, he fails to note the prominence of the new creation of the servants of the Lord in conceptualizing how the servants are portrayed within this unit (“The Main Theme of Trito-Isaiah: ‘The Servants of YHWH,’” *JSTOT* 47 [1990]: 67–87). For a representative view on the redaction of Trito-Isaiah, see O. H. Steck, *Studien zur Tritojesaja* (BZAW 203; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1991). Steck’s work remains valuable for noting literary connections, though his redactional

unmitigated evil is purged in a new divine order with a return to paradise (*Endzeit wird Urzeit*; Revelation 20–22).⁷¹ Moreover, within chapters 65–66 the end of the godly and the end of the wicked are contrasted. This unit begins with the Lord’s declaration that he was ready to be sought by those who did not ask for him, and he will repay their scorn and iniquity (65:1–7). In particular, the Lord will bring forth offspring from Jacob, while destroying those who do what is evil in his eyes (vv. 8–12). The servants of the Lord shall be blessed, while those who are faithless will become a curse (vv. 13–15). Then the depiction of the creation of the new heavens and the new earth emerges in verses 17–25, with this phrase forming an *inclusio* in verses 17 and 22. The Lord declares that he is creating or will shortly begin to create the new heavens and earth, and that the former things will not be remembered (כִּי־הִנְנִי בּוֹרֵא שְׁמַיִם חֲדָשִׁים וָאָרֶץ חֲדָשָׁה וְלֹא תִזְכְּרֶנָּה הַרְאֵשְׁנוֹת וְלֹא תִעֲלֶינָה עַל־לֵב: (v. 17). This new creation stands in contrast to the previous affliction since the people are called to be glad and rejoice forever in the Lord’s creation (כִּי־אֲסִי־שִׂישׁוּ וְגִלּוּ עַד־עַד אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי בּוֹרֵא (v. 18). Not only are the people to rejoice, but the Lord himself will rejoice in this newly created Jerusalem (וְגִלְתִּי בִירוּשָׁלַם וְשִׂשְׁתִּי (v. 19). This new creation is created both for the people and the Lord’s delight, and in it there will be blessings of long life, pleasant habitations, and security without the fear of judgment (vv. 20–23). The Lord will hear the prayers of his people before they call out to him (v. 24), and all evil will be removed as the wolf and the lamb graze together (v. 25; //11:6–9). Moreover, in a reversal of the fall (Genesis 3), the serpent will only have dust for its food, and there will be no more destruction on God’s holy mountain. As noted by Childs, the new creation of chapter 65 is intentionally identified with the messianic hope of chapter 11.⁷²

Directly following this declaration of the new creation the Lord continues by describing the details of this new creation. Foremost, he is sovereign over the heavens (his throne) and the earth (his footstool) because he made and brought everything into existence (וְאֶת־כָּל־אֲלֹהִים יָדִי עֲשִׂתָה וַיְהִי כָל־אֲלֹהִים נֶאֱסִי־הוּא (66:1–2). It is generally accepted that the statement regarding the temple is not anti-temple; rather, it emphasizes that humility and obedience toward God are more important than outward observance (e.g. Psalm 50).⁷³ At the same time, God’s exalted sovereignty is held in tension with him looking to the humble and contrite in spirit who trembles at his word (v. 2b). The Lord detests those who offer sacrifice without listening to his word (vv. 3–4), whereas those who tremble at it and are hated for their faithfulness will see the shame of the disobedient as the Lord’s recompense comes from the temple against his enemies (vv. 5–6). Therefore, this is a picture of justice for the faithful remnant within the new creation, and evil hypocrites will no longer

hypotheses seem overly speculative and historically suspect, analogous to Melugin’s observation that indicators regarding “the process of the growth of the traditions” are lacking in Isaiah 40–55 (Melugin, *Formation of Isaiah 40–55*, 175–76).

⁷¹ Childs, *Isaiah*, 537–38.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 539.

⁷³ Westermann, *Jesaja 40–66*, 327–28; Whybray, *Isaiah 40–66*, 280; Oswalt, *Isaiah 40–66*, 667.

appear triumphant when the Lord makes all things new. The Lord affirms that he will indeed bring forth birth through Zion (vv. 7–9), therefore all are to rejoice in Jerusalem, which is the glory of the nations (vv. 10–14). It is precisely in this new creation of Jerusalem that the hand of the Lord will be made known to his servants, whereas he will be indignant toward his enemies (v. 14b). Indeed, the joy of new creation will go hand in hand with the judgment and destruction of the Lord's idolatrous enemies (vv. 15–17). With the new creation of Jerusalem will come the ingathering of the nations in order to see the Lord's glory, and brethren from all the nations will be brought to Jerusalem as a grain offering to the Lord (vv. 18–20). As the nations pour into Jerusalem, some will be taken for priests and Levites (v. 21). This new heavens and new earth will endure before the Lord and all flesh will come to bow down and worship before the Lord (vv. 22–23). Then, just as judgment and hope waxed and waned throughout the book of Isaiah, the final verse holds the judgment of the Lord in tension with this new creation: "And they shall go out and look on the dead bodies of the men who have rebelled against me. For their worm shall not die, their fire shall not be quenched, and they shall be an abhorrence to all flesh" (66:24). Thus, although new creation brings joy to those who tremble at the word of the Lord, new creation also implies the destruction of evil and the judgment of the enemies of the Lord, who refuse to heed his word.

4. *Conclusions.* Therefore, it is noteworthy that the creation theme builds from its initial introduction alongside wilderness tabernacle imagery in 4:2–6, progresses to the Lord's use of chastising judgment for ordering the chaos of Israel's covenant unfaithfulness in chapters 40–48, and then culminates with the association of new creation and obedience to the covenant while trembling at God's word in 66:2. Moreover, exodus and wilderness themes are juxtaposed with creation not only in 4:2–6, but also in other passages, such as 40:1–11 and 51:3. Thus, Isaiah holds both creation and redemption in tension throughout the book, and then the discourse as a whole climaxes with Israel's new creation as ideal servants who tremble at the word of God and live in obedience to the covenant. Therefore, sanctification is held in tension with redemption, and the discourse climax suggests that redemption climaxes with sanctification and the destruction of the wicked. This rhetorical and literary structure functions as a corrective on contemporary theological and ecclesiastical discourse and practices, as we will note in the following section.

III. CREATION AND REDEMPTION IN BIBLICAL THEOLOGY

Given their concerns for separating historical sources and accounting for the historical development of Hebrew religious traditions, some interpreters over the last century read creation as distinct from redemption in Isaiah rather than following the literary structure of the extant text in which the two are linked. For example, the relation between creation and exodus, or creation and redemption, plays an important role in Gerhard von Rad's discussion of the theological problem of OT

creation faith.⁷⁴ He distinguishes between creation and redemption, and argues that salvation faith is central to Yahwistic religion, whereas creation is secondary. He argues from Isaiah 40–55 that creation always appears secondary to or in support of salvation (e.g. Isa 43:1; 44:24–28; 51:9–10). He likewise argues from Psalm 74 and 89:2 that creation is conceptualized in terms of soteriology. In his evaluation, the priestly creation account is the first step in a series of events which surround the Lord's salvation of Israel in concentric circles. Creation is not of interest in and of itself. Rather, it is one of the events which ground the salvation of the people of God. In terms of origin, von Rad argues that creation theology was mediated through wisdom traditions, as supported by evidence from Egyptian wisdom literature. Although creation in Israelite traditions is younger than salvation traditions, this does not call into question the antiquity of creation traditions in Palestine, which are amply evidenced by *Chaoskampf* texts and creation traditions within wisdom literature from Egypt. Von Rad found that the exodus traditions were central in his reading of Deutero-Isaiah (Isa 43:16–21; 48:20–21; 51:10; 52:12): “The position of the Exodus in Jahweh's saving activity for Israel is such a central one that this prophet can only imagine the new saving acts in the form of another Exodus.”⁷⁵ Thus, von Rad's history of traditions approach downplays creation in Isaiah's soteriological schema, where exodus and redemption remain central.

More recently, these conclusions were taken up by Brevard Childs, who, like von Rad, assumed that Israel borrowed creation traditions from neighbors, and “that creation was an ancillary doctrine in relation to Israel's primary faith in a historical salvation.”⁷⁶ To the point, creation was only adopted secondarily into Israel's faith. Within Isaiah, identifying the Lord as the Creator stresses his total supremacy, and the emphasis on the creation of the new heavens and the new earth “illustrates the one redemptive will of God from the beginning to the end.”⁷⁷ Although Childs provides one of the more balanced evaluations of the role of creation in Isaiah's depiction of exodus and redemption, this position is *flawed* in that it denies the assumptions of the history-of-religions approach, and *yet* accepts its results regarding dating and authorship. As a result, creation in Isaiah 40–55 and 56–66 stems from different authors and periods, and the link between the two may be found only in the surface structure of the text and the canonizing function of the community of Trito-Isaiah and his followers.

⁷⁴ Gerhard von Rad, “Das theologische Problem des alttestamentlichen Schöpfungsglaubens,” in *Gesammelte Studien zum Alten Testament* (TB 8; München: Kaiser, 1958 [1936]), 136–47. Von Rad assumes this understanding in his OT theology (Gerhard von Rad, *OT Theology* [trans. D. M. G. Stalker; 2 vols.; San Francisco: Harper, 1962, 1965], 1.136–39; trans. of *Theologie des Alten Testaments* [Munich: Kaiser, 1957]). Cf. Anderson, “Exodus Typology in Second Isaiah,” 185.

⁷⁵ Von Rad, *OT Theology*, 2.239.

⁷⁶ Brevard S. Childs, *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments: Theological Reflection on the Christian Bible* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), 108–110. For another theological application of von Rad's work, see Rolf Rendtorff, “Die theologische Stellung des Schöpfungsglaubens bei Deuterjesaja,” *ZTK* 51 (1954): 3–13.

⁷⁷ Childs, *Biblical Theology*, 114.

Among evangelical interpreters, Walter Kaiser takes a very different approach from that of von Rad and Childs, yet he still misses Isaiah's distinctive message of creation through judgment and redemption. In contrast to the fracturing tendency and the naturalistic assumptions of literary and redaction criticism, which continue to inform the traditio-historical approach of von Rad and the canonical approach of Childs, Kaiser, assuming the Bible's historical validity and inspiration, argues for reading the Bible as a unity.⁷⁸ As the foundation for his work, Kaiser builds on the observations of Willis Beecher regarding the series of promises developed through the OT, and which then are attested by NT writers to have culminated in the person and work of the Messiah.⁷⁹ However, it is noteworthy that Kaiser focuses on the covenants and messianic doctrine in his outline of the promise-plan, and although creation is the prologue of the Christian canon, it is hardly mentioned in the overview of his schema.⁸⁰ Kaiser provides a helpful and insightful discussion of the significance of creation and Genesis 1–11; however, creation then fails to influence the ensuing conceptualization of the promise-plan to any significant degree.⁸¹ This is also evident in his discussion of Isaiah. Kaiser makes brief mention of creation in establishing God's credentials as rightful Lord of human history and final destiny, as well as the "new things" (i.e. the new Jerusalem and the new heavens and earth).⁸² However, in his reading of the book he fails to notice that exodus and redemption culminate in new creation (as has been shown above), and instead focuses on the vision of Isaiah 6, messianic titles, redemption, and judgment. As with von Rad, creation is acknowledged as the backdrop or stage-setting, but its role is downplayed as a type contributing to Isaiah's message of redemption.

Therefore, whereas Enlightenment scholarship downplays the voice of creation in relation to redemption within Isaiah based on literary and redactional analyses assuming the centrality of exodus traditions and the late assimilation of creation traditions, evangelical discussions, as represented by Kaiser, downplay the role of creation in relation to redemption by neglect. As the preceding discussion demonstrated, Isaiah holds both creation and exodus (redemption) in tension as two typologies guiding his historical understanding of Israel's present judgment and future hope. Consequently, judgment is viewed as the Lord's creative act purifying Israel, transforming chaos into order, returning faithful Israel to Zion in a second exodus, and culminating in the eschatological goal of the new creation. Moreover, this investigation's reading of the book of Isaiah hints at the larger misunderstanding of the role of creation within the Pentateuch and the canon at large. As demonstrated elsewhere, not only is creation (Gen 1:1–2:3) the discourse focus of the Pentateuch and canon, but creation vocabulary is intentionally echoed throughout

⁷⁸ Walter C. Kaiser Jr., *The Promise-Plan of God: A Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008); idem, *Recovering the Unity of the Bible: One Continuous Story, Plan, and Purpose* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009).

⁷⁹ Kaiser, *Promise-Plan of God*, 17; Willis J. Beecher, *The Prophets and the Promise* (Princeton Stone Lectures; New York: Crowell, 1905).

⁸⁰ Kaiser, *Promise-Plan of God*, 17–31.

⁸¹ Ibid., 35–51.

⁸² Ibid., 184, 187.

the Patriarchal, Exodus, Sinai, and Wilderness Narratives in order to reinforce the manner in which redemption (i.e. promise-fulfillment, or the promise-plan) is to be read in the light of creation.⁸³ Creation is not mere literary garnish for salvation-history. Rather, it is part of the framework for conceptualizing the identity of God, as well as his purpose in and mode of redeeming both Israel and the nations. It is significant for redemption that the Creator follows the pattern of systematic and progressive ordering following the analogy of the six days of creation until his work is completely accomplished and the Sabbath rest is entered. As noted by Anderson, "The end-time will correspond to and parallel the beginning-time, even though it will be far more wonderful."⁸⁴

But why is this important, and what are some possible practical outworkings in the theology and ministry of the church, and especially the evangelical church today? First, the focus on exodus and redemption in Biblical theology seems to mirror the focus on conversion experience in practical ministry, to the neglect of the process of serious discipleship and sanctification. Contemporary evangelicalism is now defined in America and Europe in terms of a common commitment to a conversion experience, while tactfully avoiding reference to an assumed body of traditional biblical doctrine, orthodox belief, or boundaries against error and heresy. Common core beliefs and practices have eroded over the last century to the point that one must now distinguish between evangelicals and conservative evangelicals. Evangelicals fail to maintain both the type of redemption (exodus and second exodus) conceptualized in terms of or held in tension with creation. The evangelical church has lost the vision of maintaining the new creation traditions of trembling at the word of God (Isa 66:2) in order to follow the ethics of Zion (Isaiah 56–66) in the wake of the Servant (Isaiah 40–66). Ultimately, this is a progressive transformation of both individual and corporate sinful chaos following the pattern of Gen 1:1–2:3 until the people of God enter the final Sabbath rest with the restoration of the *imago Dei* (Gen 2:1–3; Isaiah 65–66; Psalm 95; Heb 3:7–4:13; Revelation 20–22). The tension between the types of creation and redemption in Isaiah challenges the church to place dual emphasis on evangelism *and* sanctifying discipleship toward the *telos* of new creation into Christlike believers who stream into Zion from the nations in order to worship the Holy One of Israel.

Moreover, a greater awareness of creation typology in identifying exilic suffering as divine chastisement for the purpose of creative purification leads to a richer understanding of redemption. Redemption is not just an experience identified at a single point in time (although justification is). Salvation is much more than an abstract state with no practical implications. Rather, salvation includes chastisement intended to purify "Israel" toward the final goal of new creation (Isaiah 65–66). There is no static rest in redemption; rather, there is movement toward the goal of the believer fully identifying with the Servant in obedience to the Lord. Furthermore, an exclusive focus on redemption apart from creation leads to downplaying

⁸³ Wardlaw, *Conceptualizing Words for "God" within the Pentateuch*, 193–290.

⁸⁴ Anderson, "Exodus Typology in Second Isaiah," 185.

the importance of both the daily and the eschatological reversal of the fall with new creation. A full recognition of the new creation should lead to a greater recognition of the implications of the *telos* of history for contemporary living.

IV. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study began by briefly examining the manner in which critical scholarship has atomized the text of the book of Isaiah both in terms of authorship and historical setting, as well as in terms of redactional layers within discrete units throughout the book. By way of contrast, this analysis followed a pre-critical mode of reading Scripture, akin to that of John Calvin. Accordingly, the results of the present study may be distinguished from those of the mainstream academy. Whereas exegetes working within the Enlightenment tradition separate references to creation and date them in fractured fashion according to their various redactional levels and hypothesized historical settings sometime in the exilic or postexilic periods, the present analysis presents a reading of this theme alongside the theme of exodus and redemption through the book of Isaiah as a unified discourse deriving in its entirety from the eighth-century-BC Isaiah of Jerusalem. Accordingly, one may identify the development of the Lord returning Israel from exile to Zion after the pattern of the first exodus out of Egypt and into the wilderness (4:2–6), thence to the identification of the Lord as the Creator in Isaiah 40–48, culminating in the new creation and the destruction of the wicked in Isaiah 65–66. In contrast to Enlightenment readings of the new creation, the authority of this reading regarding the future fulfillment of the new creation rests on the past fulfillment of Isaiah of Jerusalem’s prescient foretelling of the sixth-century-BC exile and return. For Enlightenment exegetes, the new creation remains a literary construct of the sixth or fifth century BC which may or may not happen in the future.

In particular, the use of the creation theme and creation vocabulary follows 4:2–6 with a fuller development in Isaiah 40–55: (1) the Lord is identified as the Creator in order to establish divine sovereignty to accomplish the second exodus and redemption; (2) the Lord is identified as the Creator in developing the monotheistic professions of Isaiah 40–48, in contrast to the תהו, “emptiness, chaos,” of the idols and false gods worshipped by Israel; and (3) Israel’s judgment in the exile is identified as an act of creation whereby the Lord will create an elect and redeemed people who will serve him in holiness and faithfulness to the covenant. Then, following the pattern of Gen 1:1–2:3, the development of this creation theme climaxes in the finished new creation of Isaiah 65–66 and an elect remnant who trembles at the word of God.

Finally, we concluded by noting the manner in which Isaiah weaves the themes of creation and exodus, akin to the manner in which the Pentateuch intertwines redemption texts with creation language in order to make the point that the Creator is at work in redemption. Moreover, examples were given both of mainstream and evangelical biblical interpretation which downplay the importance of creation in rightly conceptualizing redemption. Moreover, we noted that a proper weighting of creation after the pattern of both Pentateuchal and Isaianic discourse

highlights the current evangelical and mainstream ecclesiastical failure to follow the Servant toward new creation as we approach Zion's final destiny.⁸⁵

⁸⁵ Many thanks to John Oswalt and Gary Smith for reading earlier drafts and asking questions which clarified my thinking on the issue of creation in Isaiah. Many thanks also to those who interacted with this presentation in the Isaiah and Jeremiah section of the 2015 national ETS meeting.