PHILOLOGICAL PROBLEMS IN ISAIAH 6 – AN INVESTIGATION OF THE DSS EVIDENCE

A Paper
Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements For the Course
Philological Problems in Isaiah
in the Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls

By
Rodrigo de Galiza Barbosa

Fall, 2013
Introduction

The importance of the Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS) for biblical textual criticism has not being rightly appreciated on the aspect that very few commentaries or critical study of a particular biblical text make use of it. As Emanuel Tov explains, while New Testament scholarship is very advanced on textual criticism, the scholarship of the Hebrew Bible (HB) has fallen behind especially in relation to the DSS variants.¹ And in particular the scholars of the book of Isaiah have used meagerly the large compendium of Hebrew textual evidence of Isaiah to discuss the text.²

One explanation may be that before the DSS discoveries the HB textual family had just minor variations which were not significant to its content. So the consensus was that since the Masoretic Text (MT), as the larger manuscript(s) (mss) witness, had few variables it was very reliable. Along with this idea probably goes also a strong religious historiography.³ However,  

¹ Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, 3rd ed. (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2012). 342. He mentions that while NT critical texts are eclectic making using of a plethora of variants to establish a text most of the critical editions of the HB take the Masoretic Text (MT) at face value and use the DSS very sparingly. The exception of the rule is the Hebrew University Bible which shows almost all variants of the Hebrew text but does not decide on them (p.357).


³ That only the Rabbinic mode of interpreting Scriptures was the legitimate and most reliable one. Now with the DSS discovery the notion of the existence of one Jewish sect in Antiquity has been almost dismissed and
with the DSS pushing back around 1000 years of biblical textual evidence, many numbers of
unknown variants became available to the point that leading scholars now believe that the MT
was one from many acceptable texts. The reality in 2nd Temple Judaism was one of textual
plurality.⁴

Although there are studies produced about the peculiarities of the biblical text of
Qumran in comparison to the MT, no attempt has been made to establish a preferred text
systematically. The Hebrew University Bible and the Discoveries of the Judaean Desert (DJD)
series, for example, only present a number of variants but take no position to which one is
preferable.⁵ Tov, the leading scholar in DSS textual criticism and the editor in chief of the DJD
project, recognizes that it is a hard work to establish a biblical text because all variants possible
need to be taken into consideration. This nonetheless did not dodge NT scholarship of trying
doing it as Tov acknowledge and criticize the HB scholarship for missing on it.⁶ Despite the
criticism, Tov’s opinion is that the method(s) to establish preferred variants is very subjective
and unreliable most of the time so it should be used carefully and sparingly.⁷ This is maybe why
it has not been done systematically, because of method.

the multiplicity of Jewish sects with their peculiar biblical texts and interpretation is now being advocated. Shaye J.
D. Cohen, "Sectarian and Normative," in From the Maccabees to the Mishnah (Louisville, KY: Westminster John
Companion to the Talmud and Rabbinic Literature, ed. Charlotte Elisheva Fonrobert and Martin S. Jaffee
Hebrew," in Diggers at the well: proceedings of a third International Symposium on the Hebrew of the Dead Sea
Scrolls and Ben Sira, ed. T. Muraoka and J. F. Elwolde, Studies on the texts of the desert of Judah (Leiden; Boston:
Brill, 2000).

⁴Segal.6; Tov.117. Tov also makes the point that many variants are found inside Qumran themselves
which may suggest that not all copies of biblical texts found in Qumran itself were from the same textual group.
(p.103)

⁵ For evaluation of different critical and non-critical texts of the Hebrew Bible see Tov.342-358.

⁶ Tov.341.

⁷ Tov, 270, 280. He affirms this after evaluating in chapter 6 the textual criticism guidelines proposed by
many scholars (e.g. lectio defficilia melior, lectio brevior, scribal assimilation/harmonization). Albright also
recognized that there is vagueness to the applications of linguistic methods to establish proper texts of ancient
writings. Thus said, he is not skeptic about the possibility that Chaim Cohen calls for (see below). William Foxwell
Albright, From the Stone Age to Christianity - Monotheism and the Historical Process, 2nd ed., Doubleday Anchor
Chaim Cohen, in an article published in 2000, when the publication of the DSS through DJD was reaching its completion, called for a reevaluation of individual variants of the MT in light of the new data. Against the unbelief of Tov regarding this reevaluation project, Cohen advocated that when a proper method is used one can come close to a preferred biblical Hebrew text. Criticizing the way textual criticism has been done in major critical editions of the Hebrew Bible Cohen proposes the philological method of his mentor Moshe Held as the most suitable one to accomplish the task he calls for.

On Method

Although Held has not written the steps of his method, his student Cohen systematized it in an article. What follow is a summary of the 8 steps.

a) Principle 1

Inductive method is more primary than etymology. This means that semantic equivalence is not necessary equal to etymological equivalence. In practice when a questionable word form is compared to variants one should not look for etymology first in order to determine its meaning. Held-Cohen argues that many times etymological equivalent terms developed differently semantically in Semitic languages.

b) Principle 2

---

8 Chaim Cohen, "A Philological Reevaluation of Some Significant Dss Variants of the Mt in Isa 1-5," in *Diggers at the Well : Proceedings of a Third International Symposium on the Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Ben Sira*, ed. T. Muraoka and J. F. Elwolde, Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2000). In a tone of convocation he wrote, “it should be clear to all that the time has come to begin philologically reevaluating the individual variants of the MT from the Dead Sea biblical scrolls. It is not enough simply to catalogue each variant” but to argue for a preferred text. (p.40-41)

9 Ibid. 45. In this article Cohen argues that in Isa 1-5 out of 31 significant variants 15 of them are preferable from the DSS version comparing to the MT. This is an example that the exercise ignored by biblical scholars can be fruitful in this regard. And also this goes against the main assumption discussed above that the MT is always the most reliable Hebrew text and should rarely be questioned or checked.


11 For example see ibid. 11. Albright. 46.
There is a distinction between everyday language and special poetic language. Often what is “poetic in later Semitic languages may be everyday language in the earlier Semitic languages.”

c) Principle 3

The usage of words in parallelism may be assumed to be semantically equivalent. Normally the second term in the parallelism structure is the hard/poetic one and sometimes it would only occur with the first pair that gives its meaning. This principle runs in connection with principle 1, which prioritizes the semantic equivalency of words under question, examining the words usage/distribution throughout a specific written document, rather than etymology to start with.

d) Principle 4

Considered by Cohen the pillar of the Held method it postulates that for one to make a case about a definition of a questioned vocab one needs to investigate all cases of etymology and semantic parallels in all Semitic languages. This is the principle of interdialectal distribution which goes closely to principle 1. Etymology here does not suffice for in order to “determine what term is regularly used in each of the Semitic languages for a particular concept, one must be familiar with the textual resources of all the Semitic languages...[including] corresponding idiomatic phrases even when such correspondence involves only semantic and non-etymological equivalents.”

e) Principle 5

12 Cohen, ”The ‘Held Method’ for Comparative Semitic Philology.” 11. For examples see p.11-12.


14 Ibid. 13. For example see p.14. Reflecting upon linguistic methodology Albright wrote, ”formerly the main special use of linguistic method was in determining the etymology and hence the primary meaning of a given word. Biblical handbooks are cluttered with false etymologies, as well as with correct etymologies from which erroneous or undemonstrable deductions have been made.” And he concluded that the meaning of a word cannot be established on etymology only but rather by “collecting as many passages where the word occurs as possible or practicable and by listing all meanings and shades of meaning in them.” (Albright. 46) This seems to be the same as the principle outlined by Held-Cohen above – of interdialectal distribution.
There is a distinction between technical and non-technical terms in ancient Semitic languages. Similar to principle 2 this principle postulates that sometimes the same word has one technical meaning and another simple meaning. So there is a need of classifying each word under its appropriate genre or category in order to determine its meaning.15

f) Principle 6

The following 2 steps are deduction of Cohen from Held’s material. The 6th principle postulates that parallel usage of terms in parallel context need to be carefully examined to see if they are also semantically equivalent. If it is determine that they are not than the comparison is doubtful philologically speaking.16 Cohen does not elaborate on the difference between this principle and number 3, which assumes the semantic equivalence of parallel terms, neither did he explained how to determine if the terms are equivalent semantically or not.

g) Principle 7

It postulates that “identical semantic development of semantically equivalent terms” can occur “even if they are etymologically distinct.” Here the interdialectal distribution is key to determine other semantic variants of the same term, as Chaim show with the word מָבָל.17 The semantic development needs to be attested in many Semitic languages and it is not required to have a “logical” explanation for its involvement.

h) Principle 0

Cohen called the rationale behind each of the above steps principle 0. The idea is that philological investigation needs first to start internally (dialectical distribution in same document), and not externally, with comparison with other Semitic languages (e.g. etymology) and for this matter of translated biblical texts into non-Semitic languages. By internal

15 Cohen, "The 'Held Method' for Comparative Semitic Philology." 14
17 ibid. 17 with examples on p.18-19.
investigation he means exhaustive study of the word distribution throughout the Bible. Only afterwards, when the data is not sufficient to establish a case, the external evidence is sought for to help.\textsuperscript{18}

**The method in use**

Held-Cohen philological method seeks to indicate a most preferred version when there is a problem in the text. In doing this they do not claim to reconstruct the original reading for sure. Honestly recognizing the limits of the discipline the suggestion is that only in the broader basis of comparative Semitics one can get close to see a better text based on distinct variant readings we have available today. So the importance of the DSS biblical texts to the textual criticism of the HB is evident. Instead of using translations (like the Septuagint [LXX] or the Targumim) one should consider first the variants of a Hebrew mss regarding the passage under scrutiny.\textsuperscript{19}

In this paper, I use Held-Cohen’s method to try to establish a preferable reading of Isaiah chapter 6, using the pertinent steps (not all are needed in every case) he alluded in the article but later explained in detail on a class at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem which I participated. The first thing in Cohen’s method is to distinguish non-significant variants from significant ones.\textsuperscript{20} So this paper starts presenting a table with all the attested variants between

\textsuperscript{18} For similar idea see Albright. 42,46.

\textsuperscript{19} The principle here is that all internal biblical evidence must first be examined exhaustively, later compare to Semitic texts and only afterward to translations of non-Semitic languages. What this means is that before doing comparative Semitic the researcher need to exhaust the internal evidence of word usage/distribution in the Bible itself. Cohen, "The 'Held Method' for Comparative Semitic Philology." 10. Barr also agrees that non-Hebrew/Aramaic mss of the Bible has primacy over non-Hebrew mss like the Septuagint. James Barr, *Comparative Philology and the Text of the Old Testament : With Additions and Corrections* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1987). 2. Tov however is a little more optimistic about the possibility of comparing all ancient variants despite their language. He gives equal status of all variants be it translations of Biblical texts or not. (Tov. 272)

\textsuperscript{20} By insignificant first of all he does not mean it is completely irrelevant for scholarship but just for the purpose of establishing a better reading of the biblical text they are insignificant because they do not alter the meaning of the text. This is so because they are basically the same word just with minor orthographical variations. He gives two labels to significant variants: distinct significant differences (which are all differences except “those due to the general tendency towards more plene spelling in DSS orthography” – which are the non-significant variants) and distinct significant variants (“variants which provide evidence for a reading significantly different from the MT”). In the significantly different variant characteristics he exclude “orthographical and phonological distinctions, different morphological verbal and non-verbal forms (including Aramaic forms) which are semantically equivalent, addition or deletion or prefixed $\mathfrak{b}, \mathfrak{p}, \mathfrak{t}, \mathfrak{s}, \mathfrak{v}$ (unless the meaning has changed significantly), pausal
the MT and the DSS fragments. Based on the linguistic analysis of the DSS by Kutscher and Qimron, it is selected just the significant variants (showed in the 2nd chart), which is scrutinized one by one. In the end, after the study of each case, another chart is constructed with the suggested preferred distinct significant variant and translation.

In order to determine what is a significant variant from a non-significant comparing the MT with the DSS it is of key importance the linguistic studies of the Hebrew of Qumran because of some peculiar characteristics of the DSS Hebrew. Here the study of Kutscher is extremely valuable because his focuses on the Isaiah scroll (1QIsa⁹), but pointed to general tendencies of Qumran and 2nd Temple Hebrew in general. Since the present study is a short one, which focuses on Isaiah chapter 6, only some linguistic peculiarities of Qumran is presented as explanations for the problems found in Isa 6. First I highlight some peculiarities that explain insignificant problems, and later in each case Kutscher and Qimron are used when they give information regarding the particular issue under discussion.

**Variant analysis**

**Non-significant differences**

In this 1st chart all variants are listed and color coded. In blue is marked the non-significant variants which is not included in the critical discussion of a possible best variant later. As explained before the non-significant variants are basically orthographical peculiarities of the DSS Hebrew pointed out by Qimron and Kutscher that does not change meaning of a word.

**Chart 1 – All textual variants**

| Isaiah 6:1 | בְּעַצְיָו | (1QIsa<sup>a</sup>) |
| Isaiah 6:2 | הָאָדָּוָּן | (1QIsa<sup>a</sup>) |
| Isaiah 6:3 | הָאָדָּוָּן | (1QIsa<sup>a</sup>) |
| Isaiah 6:4 | הָאָדָּוָּן | (1QIsa<sup>a</sup>) |
| Isaiah 6:5 | הָאָדָּוָּן | (1QIsa<sup>a</sup>) |
| Isaiah 6:6 | הָאָדָּוָּן | (1QIsa<sup>a</sup>) |
| Isaiah 6:7 | הָאָדָּוָּן | (1QIsa<sup>a</sup>) |
| Isaiah 6:8 | הָאָדָּוָּן | (1QIsa<sup>a</sup>) |
| Isaiah 6:9 | הָאָדָּוָּן | (1QIsa<sup>a</sup>) |
| Isaiah 6:10 | הָאָדָּוָּן | (1QIsa<sup>a</sup>) |
| Isaiah 6:11* | הָאָדָּוָּן | (1QIsa<sup>a</sup>) |

the others DSS fragments (4QIsa<sup>a</sup> and 4QIsa<sup>f</sup>) I used the Eugene Ulrich and Patrick W. Skehan, eds., *Qumran Cave 4 - the Prophets*, ed. Emanuel Tov, Discoveries in the Judaean Desert (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1997).
Some DSS Hebrew peculiarities – explanations for non-significant variants

According to Kutscher and Qimron the first frequent peculiarity of the Hebrew of the DSS (and also the most frequent variant in Isa 6) is the extensive use of י as a vowel letter (mater lectionis), and sometimes י augmenting words normally found in defective position in the MT.22 This characteristic alone accounts for 20 non-significant differences found in Isa 6 (3 is repeated twice – 22x). But not always the DSS variants have the plene spelling, sometimes it is the opposite and the MT has the augmentation of the mater lectionis (e.g. Isa 6:1).23 The case still remains, orthography, which are insignificant24 for the purpose of this work since is to establish preferred reading from significant variants.

Consider some examples of the use of י in Isa 6 as cases of insignificant differences. The proper noun of the king of Judah (Uzziah) is spelled plene in the MT וּעֻזִּי ה (v.1), while defective

---


23 In the 17 cases which the DSS augment the MT word with י or י almost all cases came from 1QIsa a the exception is מְרָא (4QIsa f). The MT has 3 instances where it has an extra י (1 from 1QIsa a and 2 from 4QIsa a). Out of the 17 cases the MT has equal reading 6x with one scroll but varied with the other (4x equal to 4QIsa f - always defective; and 2x to 1QIsa a - always plene). At least one tendency it is noticeable in Isa 6. While 1QIsa a frequently uses mater lectionis the scribe of 4QIsa f prefers defective reading to the point that 4x it agree with the MT in defective position and differ having the defective form 5x when 1QIsa a has the plene reading and 2x when both the MT and 1QIsa a presents the plene spelling. Remember that the numbers are not isolated problems because one same variant may possess 2 variations and one can be insignificant and the other significant. Like Isa 6:8 - וַיֹּאמְר (MT), וַיֹּאמְרו (1QIsa a), וַיֹּאמְרו (4QIsa f).

24 For as Weinberg concludes in his study of the history of Hebrew plene spelling although some minor tendencies are noticeable in the development of the Hebrew language (older documents tends to use defective), the mater lectionis system in Hebrew cannot be set as a fixed pattern to any specific literature or time. Weinberg. 3-4.
in the DSS (the last \( \) is absent). But since the MT in other passages also attests both rendering (with and without \( \)\), it indicate the variant to be irrelevant, although one can notice that in this case the plene reading is preferred by the MT.\(^{25}\) Most of the times, however, it is the opposite and the plene reading is preferred by DSS in contrast to the MT. One test case is the usage of the 1\textsuperscript{st} singular personal pronoun (אֲדֹנִי or אָדָם) which is a nice example for the DSS preference of plene spelling. It is never used in the MT with mater lectionis while in 1QIsa\(^9\) it is the rule.\(^{26}\)

Another marked characteristic is the mater lectionis tendency in DSS, which is the use of \( \) in the end of the word to sound \( a, e \) as in the MT. The case Qimron points out in his description of this phenomena the usage of \( \) in the 2\textsuperscript{nd} person affirmative of the perfect, which is the case of Isa 6:9 (ואמרתה instead of וְאִמַּרְתָּ [MT])).\(^{27}\) But there is also the usage of the cohortative and the long form of the pronominal suffix.

The cohortative case is found in v.8 and 11 where 1QIsa\(^9\) has an extra \( \) in the verb אָמַר. On the surface it appears two syntactical tensions of reading the variants: if the verb is to be read perfect (qtl) than it is 3\textsuperscript{rd} person and the tension is just between gender, masculine (MT) or feminine (1QIsa\(^9\)). In the case of Isa 6 (v.8, 11)\(^{28}\) it makes no sense that it is a feminine voice

\(^{25}\) In the MT: - 2 K 15:32, 15:34, 2 Ch 26:1, 26:3, 26:8, 26:9, 26:11, 26:14, 26:18, 26:19, 26:21, 26:22, 26:23, 27:2, Is 1:1, 6:1, 7:1. - 2 K 15:13, 15:30, Ho 1:1, Am 1:1, Zc 14:5. Notice that most of the usage in the MT is plene. Kutscher points out that MT uses names with plene spelling which is a rule in 1\textsuperscript{st} Temple Hebrew in contrast to 1QIsa\(^9\) which uses defective form as the rule of 2\textsuperscript{nd} Temple Hebrew. (Kutscher. 4-5) All the word searches were done through the software BibleWorks9 which uses the BHS. (Michael Bushnell, Michael D. Tan, and Glenn L. Weaver, Bibleworks Ver. 9.)

\(^{26}\) Just a few other examples of the use of \( \) and \( \) in the MT the form אֲדֹנִי (Isa 6:1,8,11) is almost always used defectively while in the DSS it is spelled plene (אדורי). There are few exceptions in the MT (e.g. Jdg 13:8, 19:26,27, Ps 123:2 and 147:5). There is also no consistency in the use of יִשָּׁב or יָשָׁב in the MT, although most of the time it uses the plene form. In Isa 6 for example the MT uses the defective in v.1 and switch to plene in v.5, 11. In 1QIsa\(^9\) the use is consistently plene in Isa 6 while 4QIsa\(^1\) has a variant in v.11 without the mater unlike the MT and 1QIsa\(^9\). The variations suggests what Weinberg concluded in his study of plene spelling, there is no uniformity or consistency of the mater lectionis as a system in any given period or body of documents in Hebrew, only some tendencies. (see footnote 24) For אֵלַי see Kutscher. 390.

\(^{27}\) Qimron. 23. Just as a note, it makes no sense to interpret the verb as a 3\textsuperscript{rd} person feminine singular because it is a command of God to the prophet Isaiah to “speak to this people”.

\(^{28}\) It should be added to the discussion v.5 which also has the third person singular (יִשָּׁב) while most translations renders it as 1\textsuperscript{st} person singular, which makes sense from the flow of the narrative.
who speaks because the subjects of the chapter are all masculine nouns in Hebrew. But at the same time, since the context is a vision described in 1st person the 3rd person, at all does not fit the text.

The second possibility is to read the MT as imperfect (yqtl), than it can only be in the 1st person but as a waw conversive form. In this case the DSS could be a cohortative. The 1st person reading fits better the context as all translations render the text. Kutscher commenting on this specific case in 1QIsa explained that the form in 1QIsa can sometimes be considered a cohortative, however, in this verse the waw conversive indicates that the long imperfect form in the MT is the Qumran regular imperfect. And Qimron affirms that this phenomenon is a “basic feature of the language of the DSS, which is that the system of ‘conversive’ imperfect forms is almost identical to the system of the biblical cohortative-jussive forms.” To add in favor of the MT reading another variant of Isa 6:8 reads רמיה (4QIsa) without the cohortative ending.

Although the preferred reading seems to be the MT, because of the DSS peculiar Hebrew the issue here is not a significant variant because the orthography here does not change the meaning of the text. One valid comparison is Isa 40:6 where the MT has (3rd imperfect [qtl] masculine singular), when the 1QIsa has (waw conversive 1st masculine singular cohortative). The context leans in this case toward the DSS reading because of the next verb in the 1st person (איהם). Here since the difference alters the meaning it would be a distinct significant variant.

Another case of the usage of ה in the DSS text is the longer pronominal suffix which occurs in the hard phrase of Isa 6:13. Kutscher explains that the 3rd masculine plural pronoun

29 יְהוָה - which has no gender but when God is used normally with masculine nouns like in v.5 - יְהוָה; Seraphim - שְרַפִים; and the prophet Isaiah which is assumed although not mentioned in the chapter but v.5 indicates it is a male – איש.

30 v.1 - אֹהֶל; v.5 - אֹלֶל; v.6 - אֶלֶה; v.7 - פָּתי; v.8 - אָלִי. For more information about 1st person speech in Isaiah and prophetic vision see Watts. 71.

31 Kutscher. 327. He also noticed that there is a tendency to use longer forms in the second part of Isaiah, and only twice it occurs in the first half (6:8,11) where the scribe wrote (p.326)

32 Qimron. 44.
and its suffixes occurred in short and longer forms in the HB, but the longer form more frequently in the 2nd Temple literature. In the DSS the longer form occurs almost exclusively.\textsuperscript{34}

The last case of an extra letter as a non-significant variant is the forms of the verb הָיוֹת. 1Q\textsuperscript{a} Isa\textsuperscript{a} has הָיוַת, while the MT renders הָיוַתָּה. The MT form is clearly an imperfect 3rd feminine singular. What could be read in many ways is the 1Q\textsuperscript{a} form. The double י with an a ending could be a 2nd masculine singular if the final ה is a case of mater lectionis explained above, or a 3rd feminine singular like the MT just with double י. This last form occurs once in the HB in II Sam 5:2, as qetiv with the suggested qereh הָיוֹת – הָיוֹת the same form as in the MT in Isa 6.

Kutscher clarifies the matter saying they are to be read as identical forms, as 3rd feminine singular. The MT uses the regular form in 1st and part of 2nd Temple period. Later in MH the rule is with the extra י and the old form is dropped.\textsuperscript{35} This makes sense for two reasons, the context of the verse where the 3rd feminine singular is the form used וְשַׁבְּה הָיוֹת… וְשַׁבְּה הַמֵּלֶךְ, and 4Q\textsuperscript{a} Isa\textsuperscript{f} reads as the MT with one י. As in the previous case it is the MT which is most probably preferable but it does not really matter since they have the same meaning.

Finally, the difference between אֲדֹנַי (MT) and הוהי (1Q\textsuperscript{a} Isa\textsuperscript{a}) is also not relevant because not only they have the same meaning but they were used interchangeably in biblical literature.\textsuperscript{36}

**Marked significant differences**

So after the removal of these cases that do not change the meaning of the text it leaves us with a table of 16 significant cases to investigate. As explained above (footnote 20), not all

---

\textsuperscript{33} Because of its hard reading there is no consensus that בָּמָה is a case of longer pronominal suffix. Some have understood it as a noun “high places”, but I side with those who think it is a case of orthography and not a different word. If it is a noun then it would be a distinct significant variant because it would change the meaning of the text. For a summary of the discussion see Oswalt. 187

\textsuperscript{34} Kutscher. 434. For full explanation of pronoun and pronominal suffix see p.432-440. Here I would add that it seems that Isa 6:13 is not a noun because there is another different pattern of linguistic shift in this case. Ibid. 368-369

\textsuperscript{35} ibid. 159, 343, 395. The double י is explained more extensively by Qimron. in p.24, 32-33.

\textsuperscript{36} Kutscher. 216, 241.
the cases will turn out to be distinct significant variant. But to establish which one is and is not there is a need of further investigation of each case. I organized them not by order of appearance in the text but by common problems, and then, by text. First it is discussed the groups of problems and later isolated cases.

**Chart 2 – Distinct significant differences**

| Isa 6:1 | נאַראַה | אֶרְאֶֶ֧ה (1QIsa⁰) |
| Isa 6:2 | קמא | כמא (1QIsa⁰) |
| Isa 6:3 | קָפָלָה | קפלה (1QIsa⁰) |
| Isa 6:4 | קָפָלָה | קפל (1QIsa⁰) |
| 6:7 | קָפָלָה | קפה (1QIsa⁰); ~ytp[v (4QIsa⁰) |
| 6:9 | וּרוֹא | רוא (1QIsa⁰) |
| Isa 6:10 | נְשָפָה | נשפה (1QIsa⁰) |
| | יָבָאָה | יבאה (1QIsa⁰); wnza[bw] (4QIsa⁰ |
| | יָפָת | יפת (1QIsa⁰); [mvy (4QIsa⁰ |
| | בָּלָב | בלב (1QIsa⁰); wbblbw (4QIsa⁰ |
| Isa 6:12 | יָבָאָה | יבאה (1QIsa⁰) |
| 6:13 | כָּרָת | כרת (1QIsa⁰) |

- **YQTL to VYQTL:** (v.1 MT – ו אֶרְאֶֶ֧ה; 1QIsa⁰ – אראה; v.9 MT – וּרוֹא; 1QIsa⁰ - רוא) (v.1 MT – ו אֶרְאֶֶ֧ה; 1QIsa⁰ – אראה; v.9 MT – וּרוֹא; 1QIsa⁰ - רוא) (v.1 MT – ו אֶרְאֶֶ֧ה; 1QIsa⁰ – אראה; v.9 MT – וּרוֹא; 1QIsa⁰ - רוא)

The first group of problems is the use of *wyqtl* by the MT, while the DSS uses *yqtl*. This occurs twice in Isa 6 (v.1 MT – ו אֶרְאֶֶ֧ה – אראה [1QIsa⁰]; v.9 MT – וּרוֹא – רוא [1QIsa⁰]). Fassberg argues that the replacement of מ consecutive by simple tenses is a characteristic of late biblical

---

37 Above it was already separated minimal orthographical changes that did not change the meaning. Here it would be included linguistic distribution of similar word in cognate Semitic language as suggested by Cohen, "The 'Held Method' for Comparative Semitic Philology." 13 and Barr. 7-8. But it seems that issues in Isaiah 6 are mostly on the level of morphology related to syntax and 2 cases of literary difference (number of repetition in v.2,3). So the cases discussed below bring up morphological differences, word order and syntax that may or not change the meaning – this is decided in the discussion and the end product is a chart with the distinct significant variants and from which source it is preferred.
Hebrew. Kutcher argues that the MT construction of *wyqtl* was not very common in Hebrew and this was the reason why the DSS scribe deleted in his copy of Isaiah, although he questions if the DSS form (*yqtl*) fits the context. Qimron says that the *wyqtl* usage is not so clear in the DSS Hebrew because there are cases “where the *waw* does not convert the tense...and the BH [MT] too employs the short form of the imperfect with both *waw* consecutive and *waw* conjunctive.”

Ohad Cohen explains that the *wyqtl* “forms do not necessarily denote chronological relation...the only constant function of these forms is the signification of the R-time [referent time], and event as one unit.” And the *wyqtl* may fit the narrative of Isa 6 in this aspect. To use the nomenclature of Ohad Cohen, in the case of v.1, the R-time is the death of Uzziah, and the event (action/verb) occurs close to the R-time but past of S (the speech time). This characterizes in English a simple past as most translations render it.

To add it to the discussion, Kutscher notices that in many instances the DSS adapted the format of verbs to the context, as it is seen in Isa 6:9 where scribe continues with the pattern of imperative + infinitive absolute without the ṭ. So it seems that the DSS scribe sought to remove what was seemingly difficult pointed out by Qimron (the usage of *waw* consecutive). But after one understand the logic behind the verbal tense usage as explained by Ohad Cohen

---


39 Kutcher. 355.

40 Qimron. Footnote 7 in p.45.


42 Cohen, The Verbal Tense System in Late Biblical Hebrew Prose. 16. He explains that while *wyqtl* in classical Hebrew was used to mark successions in 2nd Temple Hebrew (DSS) this syntactical characteristic was marked with the *yqtl* form. And this seems to be the case of Isa 6:1.

43 Kutcher. 349,355.
together with lectio defficilior potior (at least in the first case), it seems that the MT is preferable in both cases, although it is good to note that Ohad Cohen affirms that many times in 2nd Temple Hebrew yqtl function as wyqtl of the 1st Temple Hebrew. If so, than the case would be somehow insignificant because it does not change the meaning.

- Repetition of terms  

The second group of variants is about frequency of terms. It has nothing to do with orthography or morphology but with literary pattern. In Isa 6 there are two cases where the MT repeats terms more than the DSS (v.2 - while 1QIsa has קדוש קדוש, while 1QIsa has קדוש קדוש in v.2 and with the MT in v.3. But why?

Here the hard work of research for the internal dialectal distribution so much stressed by Held-Cohen pays off. In the first case (v.2) there is a structure of + number + object (not necessarily in the same order), which is used as nominal partitives. The usage of this construction throughout the HB shows first of all that numbers are almost never repeated when there is only one usage of + object in the phrase. The only two cases when number is repeated are Isa 6:2 and Ezek 10:21, which is questionable.

These two exceptions are also similar in content. They both describe a prophetic vision of the divine throne and winged creatures surrounding God. And in the description of these winged creatures both prophetic books in Hebrew (לְאֶחָד) and in Greek (τῷ ἑνί) used the same expressions and constructions (see also Ezek 1:6 and 10:14). The similarities are not only in content but in precedent for the repetition of the number consecutively without further

---

44 There is also another similar Hebrew construction using + number. The LXX uses τῷ ἑνὶ or ἑνὶ τῶν for both cases in Hebrew (e.g. Exod 16:22, 26:17, 29:40; Num 36:3,8). The important data here is that in Isa 6:2, Ezek 1:6 and 10:21 the same expression is used both in Hebrew (לְאֶחָד) and in Greek (τῷ ἑνὶ). For the search I used BibleWorks9 which uses the Greek text of Rahlfs. "LXX - Septuaginta," ed. Alfred Rahlfs (Stuttgart: Deutsch Bibelgesellschaft, 1935).

addendum. In Ezek 10:21 the MT repeats the first number while the LXX doubles the second number.⁴⁶ And in Isa 6:2 the LXX repeats like the MT.

To clarify even more this case, when ל + object are repeated in the same text, each construction describes further each distinct object/number/subject. So it seems that the rule is to repeat the numbers with the preposition and/or further description. That is not the case in Isa 6:2 where there is repetition of only the object/number without repeating the preposition and the further explanation to the object/subject. So after all this data it seems strong the idea that the DSS non repetition of the number in Isa 6:2 is a preferred text.

Is it the same with the second case of repetition in Isaiah? Should we prefer קדוש twice or thrice? Consider some facts. From the point of view of grammar there is nothing wrong with either. Looking at the history of reception or the later usage of Jewish-Christian documents almost all of them use the triplet doxology: the LXX in Isa 6:3,⁴⁷ Rev 4:8 (which is also a vision of the heavenly throne and creatures), the Targum Jonathan (which has a Midrash explaining each holy domain of God),⁴⁸ both Jewish and Christian liturgy.⁴⁹ What this data demonstrate is that, at least, the tradition accepted overwhelmingly the Trisagion and not the Disagion.

---

⁴⁶ Ezek 10:21 (MT) - (MT) - (BGT) - τέσσαρα πρόσωπα τοῦ ἐνιά και ὀκτώ πτέρυγες τοῦ ἐνιά [...]. Would the 8 wings in the LXX instead of 4 in the MT be equivalent to the double four in the beginning of the MT, which in this case would also use double the numbers? Cooke is the only one I found to mention this issue (of eight) saying that the LXX wrongly interpreted the MT as four pairs of wings without any relation to the repetition of ארבעה פרצפתים in the beginning (p.121). But regarding the double four of the MT the majority of scholars argued that the LXX non-repetition is a better text than the MT which is a case of dittography. G. A. Cooke, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Ezekiel, Reprint of 1936 ed., The International Critical Commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments V 21 (Edinburgh, T. & T. Clark, 1951). 120-121; followed by other like Walther Zimmerli, Frank Moore Cross, and Klaus Baltzer, Ezekiel: A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel, 2 vols., Hermeneia—a Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979). 228; William H. Brownlee, Ezekiel 1-19, ed. David A. Hubbard and Glenn W. Barker, Word Biblical Commentary (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1986). 148; Block. 326. Hummel goes against the majority and doesn’t see any problem in the MT repetition of ארבעה פרצפתים but as distributive to each creature using Ezek 10:9 as support. However in Ezek 10:9 the number is not repeated in sequence but after explanation to each object as I explain above. Cooke correctly reconstruct Hebrew if distributive would be the intention - ארבעה פרצפתים עמה לולא (p.121).

⁴⁷ Apparently based just on that Blenkinsopp sides with the MT which demonstrated the presupposition mentioned above that the MT should be always preferable without question (Blenkinsopp. 223).

⁴⁸ מַכְסַל דְּנֵי מְדִיוֹן אֵצְרוֹרִי קִדְוִי בַּשְּׁפָּרֵי מַעֲרֹפָא הָעֱדָה מְדִיוֹן אֵצְרוֹרִי קִדְוִי בַּשְּׁפָּרֵי מַעֲרֹפָא

⁴⁹ יִשְׁלָה בְּאֵלַכָּה מְדִיוֹן עַל אֵצְרוֹרִי קוֹדֵשׁ בְּשֵׁלֶשׁ בְּכִלָּה קוֹדֵשׁ בְּכִלָּה עַל אֵצְרוֹרִי קִדְוִי בַּשְּׁפָּרֵי מַעֲרֹפָא.
It seems that only the DSS prefers the double usage, so is the case closed? Norman Walker argued that actually the DSS reading is preferable, but added that it does not contradict the MT. His theory is that the *paseq* sign in the MT, which separates the first קֶדֶשׁ from the other two, is evidence that there were two possible readings, with one and with two. The support for two comes from the DSS and two Greek mss (LXX miniscule 18 and 181). The evidence for both one and two “holy”, reasons Walker, is the MT which has the three קֶדֶשׁ but separated by the *paseq* (one before and two after). Because the MT version with three was chosen by the majority both of Jews and Christians the Trisagion was popularized because reader-scribes did not pay attention on the *paseq* division or double reading and read as one text the three קֶדֶשׁ.\(^{50}\)

Burton Leisler,\(^{51}\) one year later, criticized Walker’s theory attacking the two assumptions of Walker: the *paseq* usage and the plausible reading of the DSS. For Leisler the *paseq* is a much later textual sign than Qumran, and even then not with the function attributed by Walker. The second argument against Walker was that the DSS just had a wrong reading. For Leisler the great Isaiah scroll was written in very bad Hebrew. He gives five examples of blunt Hebrew “mistakes” like the improper usage of נָרַא instead of נָרַא. But it seems that was Leisler who knew little Hebrew for, as explained above by Kutscher and Qimron, this orthographical difference attested to the changing of the Hebrew language and not the ignorance of the scribes of the DSS.

A decade later Flusser took this issue of the Trisagion again, but with another purpose, to show that the Christian Trinitarian argument was incorrect because the triplet usage was common in Jewish texts also. Looking just at the linguistic-textual arguments of Flusser,\(^{49}\)

---

49 Flusser explains that Christians used the triplet of Isaiah 6 as evidence for the Trinity but dismissed this theological case by showing that it was common to use triplet in Hebrew liturgy which was dependent on Isa 6. But for our study of textual preference all the cases he cites in favor of the triplet are post-biblical and post-Qumran, which cannot help much. David Flusser, "Jewish Roots of the Liturgical Trishagion," *Immanuel* 3, no. winter (1973/74).


nowhere did he mention the great Isaiah scroll variant and all the cases he cites to establish the usage of the triplet in Jewish tradition is post-biblical and post-Qumran.52

So evaluating all these previous studies of Walker, Leisler and Flusser, I could notice a couple things relevant for our study: Leisler and Flusser assumed that the MT is correct based on history of tradition (Flusser) and simplistic linguistic arguments (Leisler).53 Apparently most scholars dismissed Walker’s question of why the scribe of the great Isaiah scroll allowed (preferred) the Disagion when the Trisagion “was the rule”. Flusser in the end of his article criticized scholars for improper philological method, and considering the Held-Cohen dialectal distribution principle, it seems that those who discussed the issue ignored this step in the discussion of a preferred reading, and with it dismissed Walker’s valid question.

The closest one to present some data based on dialectal distribution was Walker actually. He noticed correctly that in the usages of קְדֵׁשׁ יִּשְׂרָאֵל with God as the subject only in Isaiah 6:3 the term is repeated thrice.54 Actually, only in Isaiah 6:3 the adjective is repeated at all (one after the other). One text that is frequently mentioned in this debate as the closest parallel to

52 Flusser. 38-39. Interestingly he mentions 1QS I.12-13 which has three terms (קדושה יתומים) which is later explained by the scribe of Qumran. What he does not notice is that in the text the terms are different and repeated twice each. And using the arguments above, of the repetition of terms in Isa 6:2, the rule in the HB is that the terms are repeated when there is explanation to do about each term. So it does not help to establish the case of how many holy in Isa 6:3 is preferred.

53 And with their conclusions most biblical commentators went. Here is just a sample of how the issue is tackled by biblical commentators. Smith. 189,190. The author adopted the view that triplet is a superlative, but the only case he mentions is II Kgs 25:15 which repeats the noun twice. He also refers to Ps. 99 as support evidence for triplet (p.190); Wildberger. 249, 265. Wildberger is the boldest of all – “without a doubt, the Trisagion was part of the liturgy in the Jerusalem cult” based on Ps. 99 and Rev 4:8 (p.265). Watts. 69. Watts affirms that Wildberger is correct arguing that the Trisagion is a consistent liturgical formula (Ps.99, Jer 7:4, 22:29 and Ezek 21:32 – he used the same texts of Leisler); Blenkinsopp. 223. To him the strongest argument in favor of the Trisagion is textual and religious tradition (he gives especial weight to the Targum). Interestingly Blenkinsopp argued that 1QIsa³ double usage is influenced by Ps 99 when most of the authors since Leisler used Ps.99 to support the Trisagion. Two other authors alluded to the Trisagion by explaining it as a superlative construction. Otto Kaiser, Isaiah 1-12: A Commentary, ed. P. R. Ackroyd et al., The Old Testament Library (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1972). 77. Herbert. 59 –the text he gives to support superlative usage in Hebrew is Jer 7:4 which also repeats 3x a phrasal construction and not an isolated word like in Isa 6:3 (text also used by Leisler). Some did not even alluded to this issue assuming tradition and the triple usage in Rev 4: Grogan. Oswalt. Tull.

54 Walker came up with 16x because it seems that he isolated the cases where קדושה qualifies God as the subject, but without the expression קדוש יתומים – as designation for God. If other indirect cases or different names for God is considered the numbers goes to 38 appearances. In bold the occurrences with קדושה as the subject, underline are the verses which has the expression קדוש יתומים for God. Lev 11:44,45; 19:2, 20:26, 21:8; I Sam 2:2; || Kg 19:22; Job 6:10; Ps. 22:14, 71:22, 99:3, 5, 9, 110:9; Isa 1:4, 5:19,24, 6:3, 10:20, 12:6, 17:7, 29:23, 30:11, 12,15, 31:1, 37:23, 40:25, 41:14, 43:3, 14, 45:11, 47:4, 48:17, 54:5, 60:14, Jer 50:29, Ezek 39:7, Hos 11:9.
Isa 6:3 is Ps 99, and to support both sides of the debate. It is true that the adjective יָדוֹשֶׁת is used three times, but the repetition occurs in the whole Psalm and not in sequence as in Isa 6:3. So it does not help. Also, even when nouns/adjectives or phrasal constructions are repeated sequentially the data seems inconclusive because the repetition in Hebrew is common both in couplets or triplets.55

Based on the reception of the text and the interdialectal distribution one cannot give a conclusive answer and the question raised by Walker, about the double usage in 1QIsa uncorrected by scribes, remains. Chaim Cohen suggested in class that the metrics of the text sometimes might help to solve some problems when orthography, syntax and distribution do not point to a clear solution.56 The metric in focus here is of the pronouncement of the seraphims, and not the whole verse. In the MT version with three יָדוֹשֶׁת the phrase has nine words in total, five in the first clause and four in the second. In the 1QIsa version with the Disagion the phrase has eight words with four in each clause, a perfect balance.

Summarizing the evidences: tradition prefers the MT version which has been interpreted theologically by both Jewish (e.g. Targum) and Christian tradition; most scholars follows tradition without further textual analysis; both are possible grammatically and syntactically speaking, but the study of superlatives already suggests that adjectives rarely occurs in triplets but very common in pairs; metrics of verse are more balanced with double


56 Wildberger p.256 talked about metrics in Isa 6 but just descriptive and nowhere close to consider a solution to the variant problem. The suggestion of Cohen remains and is supported by the studies of Hebrew poetry. Freedman for example, developing on Gray’s The forms of Hebrew poetry shows that metrics are important for the understanding of Hebrew textual patterns. This is done by counting words and syllables (p.31). This method, he warned, is not a fixed system and it is hard to evaluate. However, metric studies in Hebrew when properly done points to trajectories (p.7), which I think is the case here with Isa 6:3. Metrics was applied only after investigating other venues to solve the problem. David Noel Freedman, Pottery, Poetry, and Prophecy : Studies in Early Hebrew Poetry (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1980).
adjective. So in my opinion, like the previous case of repetition scrutinized above (Isa 6:2), the DSS version is preferred over the MT.

- Plural forms against singular (as noun v.7 MT–שִׁפְחָה; 4QIsa\textsuperscript{f} as verb v.3 MT–שִׁפְחָה, 1QIsa\textsuperscript{a}–ишָׁמֵע; v.10 MT–יִשְמַע; 1QIsa\textsuperscript{a}–יִשְמַע)

The issue in three variants is the plural reading of the DSS against the singular forms in the MT. Kutscher, commenting on this issue, has notice that the tendency in the DSS was to harmonize texts more frequently to the plural form both in nouns and verbs.\textsuperscript{57} He gives a couple reasons for such tendency: (a) scribal harmonization based on context to fit patterns of number;\textsuperscript{58} (b) harmonization of nouns or verbs when subject or object related seems to intercalate in number in the MT – DSS prefers smoother reading;\textsuperscript{59} (c) agreement with parallel noun;\textsuperscript{60} (d) harmonize verbs when they have more than one subject.\textsuperscript{61} This harmonization should not be consider necessarily as a correction of the text to a “better reading” because as he recognized, many times the DSS changes do not make sense or follow any linguistic rule.\textsuperscript{62} So each case need to be treated separately with Kutscher’s discovery in mind - the DSS tendency is to harmonize normally into the plural based on context.

The case of v.7 is about the noun שִׁפְחָה. To start it is important to notice that the DJD presents the text with a note that the fragment of 4QIsa\textsuperscript{f} is cracked right in the last letter which is under discussion. And since the other DSS fragment that presents this verse agrees with the MT, one wonders if the interpreted cracked letter is a variant at all.\textsuperscript{63} But let us consider the

\textsuperscript{57} Kutscher. 394-400. Although there are some few examples that the MT has the plural and the DSS has the singular (p.400-401).

\textsuperscript{58} ibid. 394.

\textsuperscript{59} ibid. 395

\textsuperscript{60} ibid. 396. Notice that in Isa 6:7 the DSS probably rendered שִׁפְחָה as dual most most probably because in v.5 there is a pure dual (without any suffix). For more on 6:7 see below.

\textsuperscript{61} ibid. 394, 397-398

\textsuperscript{62} ibid. 398

\textsuperscript{63} Ulrich and Skehan, eds. 103.
DJD variant reading and seeing if it makes sense. Having Kutscher’s indication of scribal harmonization one should look first into the context. In Isa 6 the context shows: (a) v.5 also have same noun in its dual form as 4QIsa\(^{f}\) spells in v.7 (harmonization?); (b) the term under discussion is followed by two nouns with the same suffix as in the MT and in 1QIsa\(^{a}\) (in this portion the fragment of 4QIsa\(^{f}\) has a lacuna); (c) syntactically speaking the 4QIsa\(^{f}\) phrase in v.7 would lack a nominal complement (*touched the tongues of whom*). So the context supports the MT reading.

Some other things to consider; when Kutscher discuss variant readings of the DSS in Isaiah regarding pronominal suffixes he does not refer at all to this kind of change,\(^{64}\) but elsewhere he noticed the interchangeable usage of ב and ג around the 2\(^{nd}\) Temple period.\(^{65}\) Later discussing pronominal suffixes and number shifts he gives two examples with the same word (*מעוז*), where the MT has ב and DSS has ג.\(^{66}\) This is significant because in these two instances the DSS seems to change the pronominal suffix but here from plural to singular. And who knows even if the DSS scribe may have read a ג (which could easily be ב because of interchangeable usage in period) for ג since in 2\(^{nd}\) temple handwriting they look very similar. Based on all the data above the MT seems preferable here.

Now it is consider the two verbal usages in contention. In the case of v.3 (קרא), first of all, both possibilities are grammatically correct.\(^{67}\) One important factor here is that the MT has a following verb in the singular (וְא מַָּ֔ר),\(^{68}\) agreeing with the first one (קרא), while the 1QIsa\(^{a}\) omits the second verb (אמ) all together to make better sense of the plural verb (קרא) in the

---

\(^{64}\) Kutscher. 45-52-59.

\(^{65}\) ibid. 61

\(^{66}\) ibid. 209, 398. The variant is from Isa 23:14, and in the second time he commented on this (p.398) he added a note, “was the mem erased after the kof?”

\(^{67}\) Some scholars have taken this difference and tried to explain that plural rendering of 1QIsa\(^{a}\) should be understood as multiple seraphims talking to each other while the singular verb in the MT restrict to just two heavenly beings (e.g. Watts.68; Wildberger. 249). This does not have to be so because despite the demonstrative pronoun be in the singular taken together they express plural (one to another = they).

\(^{68}\) By the way the only time this pronominal construction (זִֶֽ֤ה אֶל־זֶּ֥ה) occurs is in Exod 14:20 with the verb in the singular to explain that the camps of the Egyptians and Israelites did not approach “each other”.
beginning. So it seems that based on the tendency of 1QIsa\(^\text{a}\) to fit phrases into plural construction (also in v.7 and 10), here with a double “emendation” (suppressing verb and change to plural), that the MT is a preferred reading.

The other verbal change is found in v.10 with שָׁמַע. There are two readings, the LXX and 1QIsa\(^\text{a}\) have the verb in plural while the MT and 4QIsa\(^\text{f}\) in singular. Comparing the MT with the LXX version it is clear that the Greek version is quite different than the Hebrew counterpart, having almost everything in plural while the MT in singular.\(^{69}\) Not only that, the first verb in Greek is an aorist instead of a Hebrew imperative which change the meaning of the text.\(^{70}\) The document of 1QIsa\(^\text{a}\) as already noticed above by Kutscher follows a tendency of harmonizing to plural forms but this harmonization process was not always successful.\(^{71}\) While in Isa 6:10 the LXX changed rendering almost the whole verse into plural the 1QIsa\(^\text{a}\) changed only one verb and not the other elements of the phrase.

So it seems that in all the three cases where the MT renders singular and the DSS have a plural the harmonization process described by Kutscher took place. Strengthening this conclusion the internal variants among the DSS mss and context help indicate that the preferred text in all of them is the MT.

\(^{69}\) Highlighted in blue are the terms in singular and in red the terms in plural.

\(^{70}\) In Hebrew the imperative indicates that the hardening of the hearts will happen, while the LXX aorist (past) is a description of the condition of the people as it is spoken. Interpreters have tried to solve which one is a better reading mostly based on theology/message and not based on textual criticism. Some argue for the MT without mentioning textual problem with LXX or DSS: Block. 189; Franz Delitzsch, Biblical Commentary on the Prophecies of Isaiah, trans., James Martin (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1949). 199-201; Grogan. 57; Tull. 146-147. Other also side with the MT but referring to the tension with the LXX: Wildberger. 250; Blenkinsopp. 224. Watts somewhat tried to harmonize both, not textually but theologically, by saying that in the end “the message remains the same: there is no turning back.” (p.75) Smith is the only one I found who mentions a differing reading also in the DSS. He prefers the MT, using the example of Ezek 2-3, and points that the DSS points to a positive command all together in contrast with the MT and the LXX. (p.194). This data is important, not for the particular problem discussed here, but for the other variant problems of Isa 6:10.

\(^{71}\) Kutscher. 395 – He gives another example (Isa 37:14) where the DSS changed only partially the verse - which strengthens the argument he made about the scribal tendency to put in plural.
• Article or no article: (v. 12 MT - עֲזוּב; 1QIsa$^a$ - עֲזוּב; v.13 MT - קֵֹ֖דֶש; 1QIsa$^a$ - קֵֹ֖דֶש)

The next set of variants presents an article in the MT which is absent in two cases in 1QIsa$^a$. In v.12 the feminine participle works as a noun following the verb.\(^72\) In the case of v.13 the noun is in \(smihut\) (construct-absolute). As a noun it can receive or not the article. So grammar or syntax here does not help, as the distribution in Isaiah also demonstrates.

Looking at קֵֹ֖דֶש it occurs both with and without article in the construct-absolute combination as in Isa 6:13.\(^73\) The rare term עֲזוּב occurs in the HB 4x as a name of a person, not as a proper name and without the article this feminine participle occurs in Isa 54:6, 60:15, 62:4; Jer 4:29, Zeph 2:4 and with article only in Isa 6:12 (MT). So the DSS goes with the majority of the occurrences. Should \(lectio difficilia\) decide the first case (עזובה)\(^74\)? Kutscher commenting on the phenomena of variants using the articles between the MT and 1QIsa$^a$ says that since the definite article in Hebrew

"\(follow no rules, it is practically impossible to determine superior reading\)...[However] One phenomenon in particular points to the [DSS] scribe’s being the author of the changes in the vast majority of these cases: of the 72 instances of substitution, 40 – i.e. 60% - are in words with either pharyngeal or laryngeals; hence this cannot have been simply a matter of chance. Since the scribe did not pronounce these consonants, but only the accompanying vowel – he could not of course tell offhand whether the vowel he pronounced was spelled with one or two gutturals".\(^74\)

Already noticing that grammatical rule is not the way to help answer this quest, Kutscher adds one important data, that 1QIsa$^a$ has a tendency of not distinguishing the guttural sound in the beginning of the word, especially with the article, so a \(ה\) was normally added. But in the two cases, in Isa 6 this rule does not apply because they are opposites - when there is a

\(^{72}\) For participles function as a noun which can take or not the article see Gesenius, Kautzsch, and Cowley.357-359; Jouon and Muraoka.385,388


\(^{74}\) Kutscher. 412. In p.411 he has a list of the 72 occurrences with the words changed. 26x the MT has the article and 1QIsa$^a$ do not have, and 46x is the opposite. The changing of gutturals he mentions is further explained in 507-510. For our study this data is relevant only for the first case which starts with an \(ו\). Notice also the on method Kutscher also does not allow \(lectio difficilia\) to decide the case but the internal distribution of a term is primary than any other linguistic investigation to decide a case as the Held method points.
guttural the DSS *lacks* the article and when it does not it has the article. Since there are two opposite cases so close in Isa 6, it is hard to judge which one is preferable, like Kutscher said.

- The ending **ה** (v.2 MT – ממעל, **1QIsa**

  The first variant where the DSS has an extra **ה** in the end of the word is in v.2 ממעל (**1QIsa**). Kutscher based on the three instances that this occurs in Isaiah (6:2, 14:13 and 45:8) argued that the change is evidence of progression of the language since later in the Mishnaic Hebrew (MH) it is used exclusively the form ממעל.

  Looking carefully the distribution of both forms the data is suggestive. With the exact same spelling as in 1QIsa there is only one instance in the MT – Jdg 1:36. Looking for the noun-adverbal root ממעל in all its forms it occurs 140x and mostly with paragogic **ה** and prefix ל like in Isa 37:31, from these instances only 27x it does not have the final **ה**. So the 1QIsa prefer the common spelling with the suffix. Since the data shows that the ending of 1QIsa is more common than that of the MT of Isa 6:2 should this decide the case?

  The problem with the 1QIsa reading is that when the cases are analyzed one by one it clearly shows that in all instances that the prefix מ is attached (instead of the common ל) then it never has the final **ה** like in the 1QIsa. In all three instances it occurs in Isaiah, with the prefix מ the 1QIsa opted to go with the final **ה** against the “rule” in the MT. The 1QIsa choice to have the **ה** ending most probably is because it occurs mostly in the Bible, but what the scribe(s) probably missed was the rule of the מ prefix. Because of this fact and the notice of Kutscher

  _________________

  75 Kutscher. 391. An explanation here is needed from Qimron. Although the DSS commonly used forms with final **ה**, the locative syntactical function was absent and words were “rather perceived as a locative termination without any syntactical function.” (Qimron. 69)

  76 The same geographic place is also mentioned in Num 34:4 and Jdg 15:3.

  77 Most of them occurs in pre-exilic context: Exod 20:4, 28:27, 39:20, Deut 5:8, Josh 2:11 (God in heaven above like Isa 6), I Kg 7:3, 20, 29, 8:23; Job 3:4, 18:16, 21:34, 31:2, 28; Ps 78:23; Prov 8:28; Isa 6:2, 14:13, 45:8, Jer 4:28, 43:10, 52:32; Ezek 1:22; Dan 12:6,7; Am 2:9. As a pure noun it occurs 71x in the MT, but 5 is qetiv-qereh, so 66x. Looking at the distribution, though most is pre-exilic the numbers are quite even and the frequency is spread through the Bible. E.g. Num 34:4, Josh 10:10, Isa 15:5; 38:8. By frequency it occurs 28x in Exod, Num, Josh, Jdg, I-II Sam, I-II Kgs, Isa and Am (pre-exile); 13x in Jer-Ezek (exile); 10x in Chronicles-Ezra-Nehemiah (post-exile) and 15x as titles of the Ps 120-134.
that in MH the form without the n is absent, which shows a tendency of 2nd Temple Hebrew, I would suggest that the preferable reading should be of the MT.

**Conclusion**

**Chart 3 – Significant variants analyses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verse</th>
<th>Original (MT; DSS)</th>
<th>MT (1QIsa°)</th>
<th>DSS yqtl form frequently replaced the wyqtl but not consistently while MT is consistent within context</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Isa 6:1</td>
<td>וַאֲרֵא</td>
<td>“In the year of the death of king Uzziah I SAW…”</td>
<td>DSS yqtl form frequently replaced the wyqtl but not consistently while MT is consistent within context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:2</td>
<td>משלי</td>
<td>“Seraphims stood from above him…”</td>
<td>Adverb with prefix מ never used with n ending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:3</td>
<td>וַיְהַרְאוּ</td>
<td>“six wings, six wings to each…”</td>
<td>Repetition of terms never occur in the HB in case of מ + number + object</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:4</td>
<td>ויֵשֶׁנֶּה</td>
<td>“And one called to another and said holy…”</td>
<td>DSS tendency to harmonize to plural deleted the next verb (double emendation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:7</td>
<td>יָמֵם</td>
<td>“behold, this has touched upon your lips and turned your iniquity…”</td>
<td>Adjectives is normally repeated twice as superlatives metrics of double is balaced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:9</td>
<td>וַיְהַרְאוּ</td>
<td>“and said to this people [they] hear indeed and do not understand; [they] saw see indeed and do not know”</td>
<td>DSS yqtl form frequently replaced the wyqtl but not consistently while MT is consistent within context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:10</td>
<td>וַעֲשָׂנָה</td>
<td>Not done</td>
<td>Not done</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

78 Color coded: Green are the preferred texts; Blue are marked significant differences but not marked significant variant since it is hard to establish which one is preferable.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MT: 4QIsa</th>
<th>(1QIsa)</th>
<th>DSS tendency to harmonize to plural was not consistent like the LXX and left some in singular and some in plural, MT makes better sense</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;lest [the people masc. sing.] see (sing.) with their eyes and hear (sing.) with their ears&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;lest [the people masc. sing.] see (sing.) with their eyes and hear (pl.) with their ears&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>בִּֽלְבַּ֥ב (1QIsa); wbblbw (4QIsa)</td>
<td>בִּֽלְבַּ֥ב (1QIsa)</td>
<td>Not done</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usage of article is not clear</td>
<td>Usage of article is not clear</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:12</td>
<td>&quot;...and the forsaken places are many in the middle of the land&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;...and many forsaken places in the middle of the land&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>קֵֹּ֖דֶש</td>
<td>הַקֹּ֖דֶשׁ (1QIsa)</td>
<td>Usage of article is not clear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:13</td>
<td>&quot;...a holy seed is its stump&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;...the holy seed is its stump&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Out of the 16 distinct significant differences I could solve in this paper 10 of them (because the sake of time and space). From those (a) two cases of the same issue (of the presence-absence of the article) is not possible to affirm which one is preferable; (b) four cases the MT seems preferable against 1QIsa; (c) once the MT is preferable together with 1QIsa against 4QIsa; (d) once the MT is preferable together with 4QIsa against 1QIsa; (e) twice 1QIsa is preferable – regarding the same issue of repetition of terms.
Bibliography


Bibleworks 9.


