An Examination of the problem of Particularism and Universalism within the writings of Deutero-Isaiah

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Summary of Contents

The thesis comprises five chapters in which an examination has been carried out of the question as to whether we are presented with a particularist or universalist intention within the message of Deutero-Isaiah.

The first two chapters are taken up with a summary of modern scholarship in relation to the question. Chapter One examines the views of the proponents of a universalist thrust and Chapter Two similarly considers the views of those scholars who take the opposite position. The result of this examination is to conclude that the linguistic analytic approach by itself does not provide clear enough ground for definite conclusion and that this method of approach to the problem seems to have reached an impasse. The survey highlights the fact that so many of the judgements made in relation to translation and interpretation within the text are coloured significantly by the presupposition with which the investigation is approached.

Chapters Three to Five proceed with an examination of two major theological motifs which occur within the writings of the prophet, namely the theme of creation and the tradition of the renewal of Jerusalem coupled with the tradition of patriarchal promise through Abraham. This is carried out in an attempt to provide a wider backcloth against which discussion of the question in hand may be carried out and to see if any direction is given within these strands which may assist towards a more helpful conclusion.

The thesis has been undertaken with two main objectives in mind. First, to present systematically the main views on both sides of the discussion. This has been undertaken by reviewing the main streams of a pro- universalist position in Chapter One and by looking in particular at the work of eight specific scholars who take a different position in Chapter Two. The result of this has been to provide a summary in which the main points of discussion and dissension can be clearly perceived.

The second objective has been, in the light of the obvious limitations of the linguistic analytic approach, to examine the two above-mentioned theological strands within the writingsiin the hope that further light may be shed on the problem. Such conclusions as can be drawn from this exercise seem to indicate that support is gained for those scholars who want to see a universalism of a limited nature within the message of the prophet. However, outside of the more explicit references within the Servant Songs which, if they stood by themselves, might lead one to a more extrovert universalist view, this universalism falls short of an explicit call to missionary endeavour on the part of the renewed people of God.

Chapter 1

The greater number of scholars who write about the message of Deutero-Isaiah take the view that with him the universal implications of God's activity within Israel's experience are made explicit. The ground of his message lay in his realization of the fact that Yahweh alone is God and that apart from him there are no gods. This explicit monotheism gives rise to the thought that if God be One then He must be the God of all men. R Martin-Achard has rightly pointed out the distinction between speaking thus of universalism within Deutero-Isaiah, and making the claim that the people were thereby called to a task of extrovert missionary endeavour.

> Universalism, for instance, asserts that the God of Israel is the Lord of all the earth, but does not propose that the Chosen people should take any particular action towards converting the nations to Him. (1)

Achard sums up his view in the words of A Gelin:

> Thus in the Bible we perceive a concept of universalism that does not precisely develop into a missionary attitude. (2)

It is precisely at this point, however, that a large number of scholars would disagree. Their view could be summed up by saying that the call of Deutero-Isaiah to the people of God was not only to a task of conservation but of conversion. If monotheism gives rise to universalism, the affirmation that Yahweh is God of all, then universalism must in turn give rise to universal mission. If Yahweh be God of all then it follows that His will is that all men should consciously live under His rule.

> Divine salvation will not be confined to Israel. Yahweh who could be worshipped in Babylon as well as in Jerusalem (Jer 29.10ff) invites the homage of all mankind (Isaiah 45.22). Universal salvation is indeed the logical goal of creation itself and is the climax of the divine purpose. Heaven and earth and the cosmic activity as a whole (Isaiah 45.8, 41.18-20) are thus regarded as forwarding the process of deliverance. (3)

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(1) R Martin-Achard: A Light to the Nations: 1959 p3
(2) A Gelin: L'Idée missionaire dans la Bible: 1956 p2
(3) C F Whitley: The Genius of Ancient Israel: p172

According to this view it is true that the call to the people of God was first to live as God's chosen people, and to demonstrate in their corporate existence the benefits and responsibilities of the rule of God. This was only the prelude, however, to the ultimate task of exhibiting that rule to the world at large with the purpose that all men would be included within the divine kingdom.

> The nation furnished the necessary shelter and fellowship for personal religion:it gave to the spiritual a habitation upon earth, enlisted in its behalf the force of heredity and secured the continuity of its traditions. But the service of the nation to religion was not only conservative, it was missionary as well. It was only through a people that a god became visible and accredited to the world. (4)

I

Just what the nature of that mission to the world was, or what the relation of God's people to the other nations of the earth was meant to be, has been interpreted very differently by a large number of scholars. It is sufficient, for the moment, to note the view of a significant number that it was the intention of the prophet of the exile to impress upon the people of God, not only a word of hope, but their responsibilities in the light of that to the other peoples of the world. To this end many see a text like Isaiah 43:11, 12 as a neat summary of all that Deutero-Isaiah is attempting to say:

> I am the Lord, and besides me there is no saviour.
> I declared and saved and proclaimed, when there was no strange god among you, and you are my witnesses, says the Lord.

There has been no greater English proponent of this missionary view of Deutero-Isaiah than H H Rowley. In almost every one of his major writings he mentions the theme, and it is explicitly dealt with in three of his books: Israel's Mission to the World: 1939, The Missionary Message of the Old Testament: 1944 and The Biblical Doctrine of Election: 1948. Each of these works is a development of the others and in them Rowley expounds the same basic theme, the sum of which is presented in words from another of his works:

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(4) G A Smith: The Book of Isaiah XL-LXVI p239

> With him [Deutero-Isaiah] universalism was the corollary of monotheism, and the worldwide mission of Israel the corollary her election. (5)

For Rowley this universal thrust finds its highwatermark in the experience and commission of the Servant. He sees a fluidity of identity in the person of the Servant which serves to underline the extensiveness of the task to which God's people are called and which gives some clue as to the means by which this task will be fulfilled.

> The Servant is Israel, the whole community called to be a missionary community, the Servant is also the individual Jew who is called to make that mission his own, that through him it might be fulfilled, the Servant is also, and especially One who should supremely in Himself embody that mission, and who would carry it to a point no other should reach. (6)

This progression from monotheism to universalism, and from universalism to a call to mission is expressed by A Lods:

> From the clearly expressed conviction that Yahweh is the only God, Deutero-Isaiah draws the conclusion that He must be the God of all nations, and the religion of Israel must become the religion of the whole earth (XLV.22-4) ...Deutero-Isaiah is a universalist as resolutely as he is a monotheist. Through all the upheavals of history he sees Yahweh working out His purpose, which is to establish 'justice', that is to say, true religion, in the earth. And Yahweh has entrusted this task to Israel and has destined this particular nation to be 'for a light to the Gentiles' (Is.XLII.1ff XLIX.6). This brings us to the third and most original of the essential elements of the prophet's thought: Israel has a divine mission to accomplish in the world, viz to be a true witness to the true God in the presence of other peoples; Israel is 'the servant of God' ...His point of view may be summed up in these words: Yahweh is the only God; Israel, His only servant, is entrusted with the task of making Him known to all the Gentiles. (7)

S H Blank connects the vision of Deutero-Isaiah with those prophets who went before him, but also underlines the distinctive note that was sounded by him.

> The Second Isaiah reaches the same conclusion but the route he takes is more attractive. It is his view that God desires the homage of all men. The goal is the same: universal acceptance of a universal god; but the motivation is different.

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(5) H H Rowley: The Faith of Israel p185
(6) H H Rowley: The Missionary Message of the Old Testament p53
(7) A Lods: The Prophets and the Rise of Judaism pp243ff

> Whereas in Ezekiel it was "so that not" - so that God's name would not be profaned among the nations, in the Second Isaiah it is "in order that" - in order that his salvation may reach to the ends of the earth. Any idea in Ezekiel of personal injury...is replaced in Second Isaiah by a different urge: it is because God has something to offer the nations, something for their welfare, that he covets their recognition. (8)

Most scholars connect their interpretation of the missionary intention of Deutero-Isaiah with the historical events of a return from exile brought about under the good offices of Cyrus, son of Cambyses, the Persian monarch who overthrew the power of Babylon. This explains those parts of the text which appear to make direct reference to Cyrus and to his role on behalf of Yahweh in the deliverance of His people from their bondage. But even some scholars who would refute this identification and make little of any supposed Babylonian return see within the writings of Deutero-Isaiah this forceful universalist thrust.

C C Torrey (9) is an outstanding example of this. He rejects completely a Babylonian background for the writings. He excises all reference to Cyrus and Babylon/Chaldea and regards them as interpolations into the text by the hand of a later redactor. Nevertheless, he sees universalism as one of the most significant advances in theological understanding by Deutero-Isaiah over his predecessors. For Torrey a significant insight of the prophet is to be found in his use of the phrases "the former things" and "the new things". These are used in contradistinction to each other at times, for example, in a text like Isaiah 42:9: "Behold the former things have come to pass, and new things I now declare." There has been some discussion as to what precisely (10) is meant by this phrase "the former things", but Torrey takes it to mean "the beginning of Israelite history and especially the choice and call of Abraham" which are laid out in Chapter 42, particularly verses 5-7.

> In this instance, unquestionably, the prophet's new message, the gospel note before proclaimed, is the announcement of salvation for the Gentiles, through the ministration of the Servant. The God of Israel is the God of all the earth. He is accordingly represented as saying, in verse 8, that he will not share his praise with any other. In him only is the hope of all races and peoples.

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(8) S H Blank: Prophetic Faith in Israel A&C Black:1968 p141
Blank sees the Sitz im Leben of DI as Palestine not Babylonia.

(9) C C Torrey: The Second Isaiah:1928

(10) cf C R North: "The Former Things and the New Things in Deutero-Isaiah: in Studies in Old Testament Prophecy: ed HH Rowley:1950

> It is therefore not by mere chance that the lyric interlude, which constitutes the next division of the poem, begins with the words: Sing unto the Lord a new song, his praise from the end of the earth. (11)

Torrey places his own delimitation on the idea of universalism. While, for him there is no question that Deutero-Isaiah's vision included the Gentiles within its purview, and that the rule of God wo would extend far beyond the borders of Israel, nevertheless that blessing was not extended to those who continued as recalcitrant opponents of Yahweh or His people. This, for Torrey, is the explanation of those vitriolic passages which call for the destruction of the enemies of Yahweh.

> The Second Isaiah was not a universalist. He did not believe that a blessed future was in store for the wicked. His conviction, resembling that of the most of the great teachers, Jewish and Christian, who followed him, was that the incorrigible enemies of God should at last be destroyed. He drew his mighty picture of carnage and conflagration in chapter 34, not because he gloated over bloodshed and the devastation of war, but as one who felt that the time had come for him to portray the day of the wrath of God. It is a terrible theme, but a legitimate one, as many of the world's great painters and poets have agreed. (12)

J L McKenzie claims that it was this concept of mission which was the overriding interest of the prophet. His message was one of a promise of deliverance but also one which went far beyond that; to ask the question as to why the people had beenddelivered. One finds echoes in his claim of Rowley's insistence that "election is for service".

> The dominant theme of Second Isaiah is not salvation, but the mission of Israel for which the nation is saved. Israel is the Servant of Yahweh (xli 8-9, xlii 19, xliv 1-2,21) and the witness of Yahweh (xliii 10, xliv 8, xlviii 6,20). This office is shared with the Servant. The entire people pass over to Israel and acknowledge its leadership, it is to confess, people will run to Israel (lv 5). Yahweh's revelation and righteousness will go forth as a light to peoples (li 4). Yahweh has made Israel for his glory (xliii 7), that they may declare his praise (xliii 21); through Israel his holiness will be manifested, and the nations shall recognize that Yahweh alone is God. (13)

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(11) Torrey: op.cit.pp112ff
(12) Torrey: op.cit. p124
(13) J L McKenzie: The Anchor Bible: The Second Isaiah p LVII

To put it as McKenzie does is, of course, to admit nothing more than what some scholars see as the primary sense of the word "universalist" in this context. That is, the fact of God's people living in the midst of the world under the obvious and discernible rule of Yahweh which will have a correlative effect in the lives and thinking of those people who observe that rule. This is very different from proposing that Deutero-Isaiah lays down a remit to God's people which will involve them in an extrovert and aggressive mission to the Gentiles.

This view is expressed in the commentary of A S Herbert:

> The prophet's mind is focussed on the new thing that God is about to do. This is in contrast with the existing state of affairs. It will bring about a complete change, not only for man but for the natural world. For the prophet there was an intimate relationship between them for good or ill. But it is not suggested that this will take place outside the world or at the end of history. It is rather that history will continue under new conditions, those in which the people of God will come to their divinely appointed maturity, in which therefore all men, and nature itself will be involved. Thus it is hardly suggested that Israel will engage on a work of world-wide evangelism, but that Israel will be so manifestly the evidence of the rule of God that she will fulfill her true priestly task of teaching the ways of God with men.(14)

There are a number of scholars, however, who would take issue with Herbert on both counts. They recognise the universalistic intention of the prophet but would dislocate it from any supposed historical context. On a number of historical and theological grounds they suggestthat what is envisaged by the prophet goes far beyond anything that can be found to have happened after the Exile, or indeed anything that could reasonably be expected to have been deduced by others from the events of the restoration. For them it is not simply a matter of history continuing but of something that transcends the historical and enters the field of eschatology.

C C Torrey and J Muilenberg (15) have both emphasized the eschatological nature of Deutero-Isaiah's teaching and have sought to interpret it

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(14) A S Herbert: The Cambridge Bible Commentary: 1975 p130
(15) J Muilenberg: Isaiah 40-66 : The Interpreter's Bible Vol I(V)

independently of the historical circumstances usually connected with the Cyrus liberation movement. Their views have been summarised, and to a large extent accepted, by J D Smart in his 'History and Theology in Second Isaiah' (Epworth:1967). In his work Smart follows Torrey and Muilenberg on a number of points. He follows Torrey in his rejection ofthe place given to Cyrus in usual interpretations of Deutero-Isaiah. He also rejects a Babylonian mitieu for the prophet and places him with the Palestine Jews who were left in the land at the time of the exile. He argues that the attention which has been attached to such questions for the purpose of understanding the theological message of the writings has, in fact, led to a vitiation of understanding with regard to the real message and intention of the prophet. (16)

For Smart the secret to understanding the apparent universalism of the prophet is to be found in the realm of eschatology. Earlier interpreters had failed to take this into account and, as a result, had lost the tremendous import of the imagery employed by Deutero-Isaiah. As a result of an over-historicising process that has taken place much of the eschatological language has been treated as though it were poetical hyperbole, fantastic in its imagery, but actually intended to refer to prosaic historical occurences.

> Beginning in Ch.41:22 the prophet uses the terms "former things" and "things to come" to refer to God's acts in past history and his new action anticipated in the future. Again and again he announces the impending action that is to bring salvation and a glorious new day not only to Israel but to the whole world. God's universal sovereignty is to be recognized by all nations and established as a just order everywhere. It is to be nothing less than a new heaven and a new earth. Israel will be expanded by converts from the nations so that its population will overflow a reconstructed Jerusalem and it will be God's instrument in both his judgement and his liberation of the nations. But this picture of the future seemed too fantastic for most commentators. In their confidence that the prophet was among the exiles in Babylon, they made his eschatology little more than an exuberant idealization of what was going to happen when once the Babylonian exiles got back to Palestine. (17)

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(16) J D Smart: op.cit p30
(17) op.cit p38

Other commentators, of a more conservative school, come by other means to a similar conclusion. For them the answer to understanding the message of Deutero-Isaiah lies beyond the circumstances of the immediate period of the prophecy. This is characterised particularly in the works of J A Alexander (18) and E J Young (19). They both maintain the traditional unitary view of Isaiah and view Chapters 40-55 as wholly prophetic. Although perhaps capable of some application to the return from exile the complete fulfillment of the mission and person of the Servant, and subsequently of the people of God, is to be seen in the person and work of Jesus Christ and all that accrues from it. This explains also the vacillation in the picture of the Servant as it is presented within Deutero-Isaiah.

> The servant is the Messiah (Jesus Christ) conceived as the Head of His people, the Church (or the redeemed Israel). At one time the body is more prominent, at another (e.g. Ch 53) the Head. That the Servant points to the Messiah is seen in that his work is spiritual in nature, the redemption of his people from the guilt and power of their sins. That the Messiah is not exclusively intended is seen from the fact that (1) imperfection is attributed to the Servant, 42:19. (2) he is designated Israel, 41:8, 44:1, 49:3. (3) other passages of scripture apply these passages to the Church, Jer. 11:19, Acts 13:47, 2 Cor. 6:2. (20)

For some scholars 'theological universalism' is one of the most important contributions of the Hebrew religion and for them Deutero-Isaiah is its most eloquent exponent. He is seen as not only gathering up threads of thought and tradition that had grown up before his day (cf Rowley: The Biblical Doctrine of Election et al), but he is seen as the watershed from which flowed a greater movement towards openness and whose influence can be traced in a number of places and ways after his day. This view has been propounded and expanded in an article by H G May (21) who has attempted to trace this movement to and from Deutero-Isaiah.

> The pre-exilic Hebrews had achieved an insight into the nature of Yahweh as the God of the Hebrews, his moral attributes and cosmic scope, and his will for the Hebrew community. It remained for the later Hebrews, beginning with Deutero-Isaiah, effectively to universalize this belief; Yahweh demanded the allegiance and worship of all peoples of all nations.

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(18) J A Alexander: The Prophecies of Israel:1848
(19) E J Young: ~~NICOT~~: The Book of Isaiah Vol III 1972
(20) E J Young: footnote 1, p109: op.cit
(21) H G May: Theological Universalism in the Old Testament; JBR:16, 1948 pp100-107

> But Hebrew universalism went beyond proselytism; it comprehended the conversion of the entire earth to the worship of Yahweh... Deutero-Isaiah looked for the complete conversion of the pagan nations to the worship of Yahweh (cf Is. 45:22). Israel was to be Yahweh's witness to the pagan nations. Israel was the Suffering Servant, whose pain and suffering had been on behalf of the Gentile nations, and whose restoration would convince the Gentiles of the validity of Israel's God and convert them to become loyal devotees of that God (see Is. 53:1ff). The influence of Second Isaiah was greater than is often assumed, for the conversion of the Gentile nations is a recurrent theme in the eschatology and psalmody of the postexilic period. (22)

II

There are a number of texts and phrases which stand at the centre of the discussion that has taken place in the universalist/particularist debate in Deutero-Isaiah. Of particular importance are those phrases which are employed by the prophet to describe the mission of the Servant in Chapters 42 and 49. Much of the argument that has taken place has been about the precise meaning of these phrases. Those scholars who perceive a clear universalist intention in the prophet's message find themselves in broad agreement over the use of these terms. The two phrases of special importance are ברית עם and לאור גוים .

C R North (23) provides a useful survey of the possible interpretations of the first of these two ברית עם . Assuming that b^{e}rit means "covenant" (cf Akkadian: biritu :"fetter") there are three possible ways of translating the phrase:

a) to mean "covenant-people", and by that to relate to Israel
b) to mean "a covenant with the people", and by that to mean that the people are Israel, and the mediator of the covenant to them the Servant
c) to mean "a covenant with the peoples", and by that to mean that the peoples are the nations of the earth to whom Israel is sent as mediator of the covenant.

Of these three North himself favours c). This finds precedent or at least analogy with the rainbow-covenant made with all mankind in Genesis 9:8-17. And, "even if it had not, DI's attitude to the nations does not preclude but rather supports (xlv 22, xlix 5f) such an idea".(p112: op.cit).

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(22) May op.cit: p103

(23) C R North: The Second Isaiah: Oxford 1964

However North apparently favours a different understanding of "covenant" in this context anyway. He refers to a derivation of the word בְּרִית from a root "brr" = "baran" = "shine out", which would provide some such translation as "vision" (24).

> This would relate the word to the Akk. baru, "see", birutu, "vision", and would give a perfect parallel to "a light to the nations", "peoples" and "nations" both being genitives of object. (25)

North recognizes that this would contradict the common occurences of b^{e}rit which means "covenant" on about 300 occasions.

> It would hardly be obvious even to a contemporary that in this one instance it meant "vision". But DI lived in Babylonia and used occasional homonyms. The word may convey a double entendre and it is possible that "A light that will be a revelation (apokalypsis) to the heathen and glory to thy people Israel" (Luke 2:32) is reminiscent of b^{e}rit = vision.

It is interesting to note that the New English Bible translation reflects this view. The rendering of 42:6 reads: "to be a light to all peoples, a beacon to the nations". In 49:8 the phrase is deleted from the text and relegated to a footnote which again reflects this possible Akkadian derivation: "I have formed you, and appointed you to be a light to all peoples".

C Westermann (26) takes note of the view of Torczyner in a footnote to page 97 of his commentary. But he is careful to draw attention to the difficulty of establishing a clear meaning of the term by itself:

> We do not know what is meant by b^{e}rit 'am, "covenant of the people", and the expression "give as a b^{e}rit", occurs nowhere else. Thus, until now the interpretation of the clause has been no more than conjecture. One thing is certain: the words "I make you as", mean that the person addressed is destined to become a tool or means whereby God effects something in others. The interpretation of b^{e}rit 'am must rely on what the next phrase means "a light to the nations".

Westermann sees a parallel between the two phrases, and concludes,

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(24) H Torczyner JPOS 16:1936 pp1-8 was the first to suggest this possibility and translates the phrase "brilliance of the people" - "light of the heathen"

(25) North: op.cit p112

(26) C Westermann: Isaiah 40-66: The O T Library: SCM 1966

> Then, taking the two phrases as parallel, b^{e}rit 'am supposedly means, "I make you the covenant-salvation (that is, the salvation given in the covenant) for all mankind. (27)

Westermann is at pains elsewhere to make it clear that he is not interested in taking exegesis beyond its limits in trying to discern who the Servant is (p93ff). He is content to try and discern the movements within the Songs, that is, what transpires between God and Hisservant, and between the servant and those to whom he is sent. The exegesis of the Songs must not be made to rely on a firm identification of the person of the Servant for this the text never makes clear to us. However, he is clear about one thing in relation to 42:6:

> If it is the people Israel that is addressed on v.6, then the 'am in v.6b (b^{e}rit 'am) cannot possibly also refer to it. Since, however, as all editors agree, in v.5 the same word 'am designates the human race, it should be presumed to have the same, or at least a similar, comprehensive sense in v.6 as well. (28)

Whilst admitting many difficulties of interpretation, Westermann suggests that the above understanding of b^{e}rit 'am would be in line with what he sees as the one certain conclusion that can be drawn from the second Song in 49:1-6.

> On certain points there is no doubt. First, there is the proclamation of a change in the Servant's office. Its scope is extended to include the Gentile world. Secondly, this is preceded by a ministry to Israel aimed at bringing her back to God...God showed his approbation of his servant by giving him a new and greater task. (29)

J L McKenzie (30) underlines the universal mission of the Servant when he comments on 42:6:

> The same verse 6 makes much more explicit the universal scope of the mission of the Servant...These phrases בְּרִית עָם לְאוֹר גּוֹיִם really indicate more than a "mission" but it is hard to define them too closely. The Servant is called a covenant: the force of the figure means that the Servant mediates between Yahweh and peoples, that the Servant becomes a bond of union. That he is also a "light" does not refer to his revealing mission; the light is explained in the following verses as the light of joy and deliverance. The blindness and captivity, in view of the general context, must be taken as figurative rather than literal; it is the blindness and captivity of ignorance of Yahweh and service of false gods.

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(27) Westermann: op.cit p100
(28) Westermann: op.cit p100
(29) Westermann: op.cit p212
(30) J L McKenzie: The Anchor Bible: Second Isaiah:1967 cf.p40

Here McKenzie finds some agreement with E J Young:

> The language in striking, for the servant is actually identified as a covenant...That the servant is identified with the covenant of course involves the idea of his being the one through whom the covenant is mediated, but the expression implies more...To say that the servant is a covenant is to say that all the blessings of the covenant are embodied in, have their root and origin in, and are dispensed by him. (31)

Young, of course, goes on to identify the Servant as Jesus in whom all these blessings find their focus. In the light of his understanding of the intention of the passage McKenzie translates the phrase "b^{e}rit 'am" as "people-covenant".

> "Covenant for a people" is literally "covenant of a people", an obscure phrase. But just as a "covenant of eternity" means "eternal covenant", so "covenant of people" means "people-covenant", a covenant large enough to encompass peoples. In spite of the singular, "people" here does not refer to the people of Israel. (32)

E J Kissane (33) understands that the Servant in the first two poems is to be identified with the nation of Israel, in the third poem with the prophet himself, and in the fourth poem with a figure beyond both of them. In the light of this he interprets these two phrases which are related to the mission of the Servant. He rejects the parallel which is commonly drawn between the occurence of 'am in v.5 and that of v.6.

> Verse 5 is merely an introductory clause to emphasize the omnipotence of Yahweh, and like other clauses of this character to be interpreted independently. (34)

He finds a solution to the problem of interpretation by teasing out the significance in the parallel use of the phrases in Ch.42 and 49.

a) The clause describes the destiny which Yahweh has planned for his servant. Now according to xlix. 5-6...this destiny is twofold: the restoration of the national life of Israel, and the conversion of the nations through the agency of Israel.

b) The two expressions which are combined here are used separately in xlix, the first in a context which deals with the restoration of Israel (xlix 8), the second in a context which deals with the mission to the nations (xlix 6). From this we conclude that the first expression here refers to the restoration of the national life of Israel (b^{e}rit 'am).

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(31) Young: op.cit p120
(32) McKenzie: op.cit p39
(33) E J Kissane: The Book of Isaiah Vol II: Dublin 1943
(34) Kissane: op.cit p37

Kissane accepts the view of Volz and Vaccari that b^{e}rit can mean something like "constitution", so giving a rendering "I have designated thee for the constitution of the nation" for b^{e}rit 'am, so making the expression equivalent to Ch.49:5 (35). The second phrase would then relate to the second phrase of the Servant's mission, to be a light to the Gentiles.

Torrey (36) interprets the phrase so that it serves to emphasize the grace of God. He finds it significant that b^{e}rit is used at least twice within Deutero-Isaiah, as well as other texts outside the prophet, as a parallel to "chesed" (cf Isaiah 54:10, 55:3).

> By the phrase here used, the prophet means to say, that in Israel is embodied God's gracious provision for the nations; this chosen people is the manifest token, or pledge, of his purpose for all mankind.

According to Torrey the following phrase "a light to the nations", understood in the light of v7 and Ch.49:8ff, only serves to underline the universal dimension of the task of the Servant in relation to the nations. The word 'am likewise underlines this universality, its occurences in Chs. 42 and 49 ought to be taken in a plural or collective sense even though they occur in a singular form. Torrey finds a parallel to this in the use of ארץ in 42:4 and 49:8:

> Similarly, ארץ means here just what it meant in 42:4; namely, "the inhabited world" ἡ οἰκουμενη ... The necessity of interpreting ארץ in correspondence with גוים is of course obvious; but there is a reasonffor taking them both in this broad way far stronger than the mere fact that they were so taken in Ch.42. The Second Isaiah must be allowed to interpret himself. He has said twice over, with emphasis (verses 6 & 8) that Yahweh now promises to "rescue" not only the children of Israel, but the Gentiles with them. It is evident that he is leading the way to some picture or description of the glad time, such as he gave, for example, in 42:7. And the picture now comes, in verses 9ff.

J D Smart sees these two phrases as being central to the development which he sees as taking place from one chapter to the next in Deutero-Isaiah. 42:6 re-iterates the theme of Ch.41 where the choosing of the Servant Israel is highlighted.

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(35) Kissane: op.cit p37
(36) Torrey: op.cit p327

> Then comes the daring new assertion: "I have given you as a covenant of mankind, a light to the nations". The phrase "a covenant to the people" (RSV) is obscure, but the parallel phrase makes clear what is intended. "People" signifies the whole of mankind. That Israel is a covenant of mankind can only mean that through Israel a covenant relation is to be established between God and all mankind... Here all narrowness in the interpretation of Israel's relation with God is destroyed. The covenant between Yahweh and Israel is recognized as having been Israel's only that his people might one day reach out and draw all men into the relationship. (37)

For S H Blank (38) the meaning of b^{e}rit 'am is only to be understood when seen in the light of another important term in Deutero-Isaiah - "salvation". This word is often used with no more than the sense of "deliverance" or "saving from" and often does not carry any theological overtones, "one man may save another from danger, one army may save another from defeat."

> But, for the Second Isaiah and his followers, God is the source of salvation and in addition to its negative connotations; deliverance from, it has achieved a positive sense: a bestowing, a giving to. It includes all that a man may wish - all that one may expect from a benevolent God, whose generous will is unopposed.

It is in these terms that we first have to understand the use of the word by Deutero-Isaiah. However, the thought of the prophet goes beyond the realm of the material and of well-being.

> God'sssalvation is these things and it is something more - something on a larger scale, commensurate with the expansive spirit and broader horizons of the Second Isaiah and with his characterization of God as the one world God - universal in time as well as in space. Salvation is the goal God has set for mankind, the realization of the divine purpose... Eventually the family of man must again be united. Their reunion is the goal: it is salvation - a b^{e}rit 'am, a covenant uniting men.

The above review serves the purpose of demonstrating that, although the problem of interpretation with regard to these phrases has been approached from a variety of directions, nevertheless in the studies of scholars who support a universalist understanding of the prophet's message, the terms unanimously support that view. It becomes extremely difficult to discern whether these terms are interpreted in the light of a previously determined presupposition, or whether their interpretation lends any real weight to the conclusion arrived at. They seem

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(37) Smart: op.cit p85
(38) Blank: op.cit p150ff

capable of bearing, within limits of reasonability, whatever meaning the interpreter wishes to impose upon them.

I I I

The tendency noted above is also demonstrated by the way another important word in Deutero-Isaiah has been handled by various commentators. This is the term משפט.

C R North provides us with a brief but useful survey of a number of possible interpretations:

> Skinner interpreted this in the sense of "ethic"... but that is too moralistic in the present context... other suggestions are "religion" (HW Robertson) and "true religion" (Moffat)... Volz's Wahrheit ("truth") is too intellectual. (39)

Robinson

North confesses that he is himself unhappy with the EVV such as "judgement" or "justice".

> In Exodus xxi.1 the plural mispatim is used of the moral and ritual judgments (RSV -ordinances) of the Book of the Covenant. Such collective judgments or legal pronouncements would shape the mispat (custom, manner of life) of the people who acknowledged their value.
> All things considered we may opt for the SOED (i.115a) definition of divine as distinct from human laws "The body of commandments which express the will of God with regard to the conduct of His intelligent creatures."

J L McKenzie wants to extend the meaning of the word beyond its merely juridicial content, however. He suggests that in the context here where the word stands coupled with "torah" (which he translates: instruction) there must be a wider sense of "revelation".

> "Judgment" and "law" together convey the idea of revelation, the revelation which in Israel's history is initiated in the patriarchal period and takes form in the covenant of Sinai. The Servant is the mediator of the revelation of Yahweh, and this is his mission. (40)

In this McKenzie seems to go towards von Rad's identification of the Servant with a "Moses redivivus". He continues,

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(39) C R North: op.cit p108
(40) McKenzie: op.cit p37

> It seems that we encounter the idea of covenant law, a tradition which went back to the premonarchic period of Israel. Just as Yahweh by the revelation of covenant law established the people of Israel and the Israelite way of life, so the Servant will make Yahweh known beyond Israel. In this poem, the Servant, it is suggested, is another Moses rather than another prophet.

Kissane is vague in his definition of the term but seems to concur to some extent with McKenzie. He characterizes the mission of the Servant as bringing forth "the knowledge of the true God to the nations".

> In Ps. cxix it is one of the synonyms of the "law"; but it includes much more than mere legislation. It embraces the whole revelation of God to His people... The context indicates that it refers to the knowledge of the true God, and in 4b-c it seems to be different from "law". Thus the term is less comprehensive than in Ps cxix and refers to the knowledge of the true God - that which is right, in contrast to the worship of idols (xli 29) which is wrong. (41)

J D Smart translates the word in line with his interpretative thesis of the book as a whole. For him the word must have a broader and more eschatological reference than many of the definitions already suggested. So he takes issue with Duhm (religion) and Volz (truth) simply because these convey the idea of a pedantic activity of education and propogation compared with the catclysmic revelation of Yahweh's rule that is to occur in the eschaton. For that the word needs to contain cosmic dimensions and carry with it a universal implication.

> The clue to its meaning here is the fact that Second Isaiah uses it directly parallel to "righteousness" and "salvation" in his depiction of the coming age. (42) "Justice", as in the RSV, or "just order" is more likely its meaning, and by this the prophet intends to describe the order of life that will prevail when God's universal rule is established through the instrumentality of His servant Israel. It is parallel, therefore, to what in the New Testament is called the Kingdom of God. There is a vast difference between this and Duhm's universal propagation of the laws of religion or Volz's teaching the truth. The essential point missed by both is that God's universal sovereignty is no longer to be hidden but is to be visible to all as he rules in the person of the Servant... When God comes to reign...the total order of things will be different from what man has ever known. Justice will prevail everywhere, not in a limited fashion, but for all men regardless of race. (43)

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(41) Kissane: op.cit. p35ff
(42) cf also SH Blank: Prophetic Faith in Isaiah p150ff where he draws precisely the same connection between Deutero-Isaiah's use of "salvation", "righteousness", and "justice".
(43) Smart: op.cit p83

Chapter 2

Since 1950, when N H Snaith contributed an article to the Theodore Robinson Festschrift, (1) the views of the previous chapter have been increasingly challenged and the question has been raised as to whether such a liberal view of Deutero-Isaiah's message can be justified or upheld from the text. Antoon Schoors has stated the present position:

> It is usually stated that the Second Isaiah is the greatest universalist, that is, his message and his promises extend to all mankind on a fully liberal scale, and he looks forward to the spread of Israel's faith throughout all the world. According to N H Snaith there are but three exceptions to this general opinion, namely himself, PAH DE BOER and R MARTIN ACHARD. We could add to them now HM ORLINSKY, DE HOLLENBERG, and C STUHLMUELLER. (2)

The work of Schoors himself can be added to the above list, and this has recently been added to by the publication of a commentary by R N Whybray in which he has worked through a particularist viewpoint. (3) This chapter will examine the contributions of these scholars to the discussion, noting how they relate to each other, and at what, if any, point they add new dimension to the discussion.

I

N H SNAITH was the first to raise any real question against the widely accepted view that Deutero-Isaiah was the universalist par excellence of the Old Testament. His approach was first propounded in the article already cited, (1) and was expanded in a later study in 1967. (4)

His conclusions are drawn for us in his own words:

> We find this prophet to be essentially nationalistic in attitude. He is actually responsible for the narrow and exclusive attitude of post-exilic days. The so-called universalism of Deutero-Isaiah needs considerable qualification. (5)

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(1) NH Snaith: The Servant of the Lord in Deutero-Isaiah: in Studies in Old Testament Prophecy: Edinburgh 1950 p187ff
(2) A Schoors: I am God Your Saviour SVT xxiv 1973
(3) R N Whybray: The New Century Bible: Oliphants 1975
(4) N H Snaith: The Second Isaiah SVT xiv 1967 p139ff
(5) Snaith: The Servant of the Lord op.cit p191

According to Snaith, the interpretation of a number of vital texts as universalistic is coloured by a mistaken presupposition taken over from a Christian viewpoint and based on inordinate stress which has been laid upon the importance of such themes as monotheism and the role of the Servant of Yahweh in the writings. These themes, says Snaith, are not the main features of the prophet's message.

> The Second Isaiah had what is known in these days as a one track mind. He was the prophet of the Return. He was an intense nationalist, and he looked forward to a resurrection, to abounding prosperity and world dominion for the exiles in Babylonia. (6)

> Many writers have emphasized the prophet's insistence on the uniqueness of the God of Israel and his strong emphasis on a true monotheism...nevertheless, this theme is also subservient to the declaration of the coming Return. The prophet did not set out to state his doctrine of the Servant, nor did he set out to write a treatise on monotheism. He had but one theme on his list: the Return. (7)

For Snaith the opening words of Deutero-Isaiah (40:1) set the scene for all that is to follow. They are not to be read in the sense of proclaiming consolation in the midst of tribulation, "comfort in sorrow", but rather with the stronger sense of "comfort out of sorrow". In that sense they serve to underline the nationalistic enthusiasm of the prophet of the exile.

> Apart from the characteristic repetition of an opening imperative which arises out of the prophet's sense of urgency, it is important from our point of view to realize clearly the precise meaning of this root. Especially it is important to understand that this root does not mean "comfort" in the ordinary modern use of the word - soothing words which may help in the midst of sorrow and trouble which continue... The word involves a complete, a definite and a decisive change. As used here... the word is part of the vocabulary of a confident, urgent resurgent nationalist. (8)

The nature of the problem for anyone attempting to reach an objective judgment on the question is highlighted in a reply given by Snaith to J Lindblom. Lindblom had accused Snaith and P A H DeBoer of founding their conclusions about the text on preconceptions which they carried with them in their approach to it. They had prejudged the issue by

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(6) SVT.xiv.p137
(7) SVT.xiv.p149
(8) SVT.xiv.p151: For further discussion of the Hebrew term see Expository Times, xlix; January 1933.D. Winton Thomas, and lvii: November 1945. N H Snaith.

deciding that the prophet was a "consistent nationalist" and all their interpretation and exegesis had been coloured by this.

> This, of course, is quite right. Everything does indeed depend upon the categories of judgment which the exegete brings to his material. All that can be done is to put forward interpretations of the various sections of Chapter 40-55, 60-62, based on the assumptions that the Servant is primarily the 597BC exiles, and that the prophet is a convinced, persistent, and consistent nationalist. The reader must judge which set of assumptions is the more likely to be those of Second Isaiah. (9)

Nowhere is the effect of the exegete's presuppositions felt more strongly than in the interpretation of Isaiah 41:1-5. It is widely held that these verses relate to the raising up by Yahweh of Cyrus to fulfil his purpose.

> Who stirred up one from the east
> whom victory meets at every step?
> He gives up nations before him,
> so that he tramples kings under foot. (v 2)

Snaith comments:

> It is generally maintained that 41:2ff refers to Cyrus. The adjectives used are "unquestionable", "obvious", "no further argument" - all of which create suspicion. (10)

There are at least three cogent reasons, in Snaith's view, why this text need not be taken to mean Cyrus. He argues that such an interpretation depends on a universalistic assumption. First, there is the fact that elsewhere in Deutero-Isaiah's literature (cf 53:12, 52:15, 49:23) the new Israel is represented as marching home victorious with the foreign rulers licking their boots. Secondly, ancient interpreters and the Targum did not find here an allusion to Cyrus. They saw it as a reference to Abraham and in view of the allusion to "Abraham your father" in 51:1-3 Snaith thinks that such an understanding is worthy of consideration. Thirdly, a difficulty is raised for him by the other reference in the chapter that is normally applied to Cyrus, namely, 41:25. There the text says that "he shall call on my name", but in 45:4,5 Cyrus is expressly said not to have known Yahweh.

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(9) SVT. p175
(10) SVT. p163

> But if we can establish from other passages the existence of a nationalist prophet who is looking forward to Israel's victory and triumph over the Gentiles, and if we can show that we have separate pieces everywhere and no main body of prophecy, then the identification with Cyrus in 41:2f is neither obvious nor necessary...
> A more natural explanation is that the "one from the east" roused by the Lord to be a conqueror of kings is the new Israel. (11)

He deals with the phrase in 46:11 "a bird of prey from the east" in a similar manner, recognizing that, from one point of view it could be Cyrus, but preferring to see it as referring to "triumphant, victorious Israel."

There are three phrases which are of crucial importance to our understanding of the message of Deutero-Isaiah. These arise within the context of the first two of those four sections which are generally regarded as "Servant Songs". (42:1-5, 49:1-6). As we have already noted, the Servant is to be identified with the 597BC exiles as far as Snaith is concerned.

a) 42:1-5

Here the important phrase is found in v1.

RSV - "he will bring forth justice to the nations"

v 3 - "he will faithfully bring forth justice"

משפט לגוים יוציא
לאמת יוציא משפט

The RSV follows the Massoretic Text in rendering the second occurence לאמת faithfully, i.e. with/in truth. Some have seen here a reduplication of the total idea of the first phrase as is witnessed by the Kittel margin where a suggested alteration is לאמתו. Snaith takes the text as it stands but renders the phrase "true justice", in keeping with his conception of what משפט is in both cases. He also regards verses 3 & 4 as a second stanza of the piece reduplicating the thought of the first two verses. So he translates it:

> a bruised reed (i.e. describing the Servant Israel) (yet)
> he will not break,
> (although) a dimly burning wick he will not go out.
> He will neither burn dim nor be bruised
> until he has established "mishpat" in the earth. (12)

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(11) SVT. p163
(12) cf R. Marcus: ZAW: 1938; "A crushed reed he may be but one that no one shall break."

He comments on the meaning of "mishpat":

> He will dispense justice to the Gentiles. It is customary to assume a special meaning here for משפט analogous to the Arabic "din", which means both a system of customs and true religion. This interpretation depends upon the acceptance of a Deutero-Isaianic universalism, but if he is seen to be an essentially nationalistic prophet, then the word means the execution of justice, לאמת משפט (true justice) as the piece itself says almost in the sense of strict retribution. (13)

It is in the light of this interpretation for "mishpat" that Snaith wants to take the root יחל from verse 4 to mean "to wait in dread", rather than with any sense of expectant hope.

b) 42:6 and 49:6-8

Snaith deals with the relationship between these two passages which contain the other two important phrases ברית עם and אור גוים in three stages: (14)

1) ברית עם occuring in 42:6 and 49:8 are parallel to each other. 49:8 gives the clue to the proper meaning of the term since there it is clearly intended to apply to the Servant's work in relation to the people of God.

> I have kept you and given you as a covenant to the people, to establish the land, to apportion its desolate heritages..."

As to the precise meaning of the term, Snaith says:

> We think that here the word ברית retains something of its original meaning: the root ברה means "bind together". The Servant is to bind together the old Israel, and this is to make them once more the people of God, the new people of God... There is no possibility of 42:7 referring to the Gentiles. "Blind eyes" means the exiles in Babylonia. The phrase "covenant of the people" has nothing to do with the Gentiles, but everything to do with the people of God.

2) However Snaith has some difficulty with אור גוים in 42:6 and with לברית עם in 49:6.

In his earlier work (15) he suggested that if אור גוים were

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(13) The Servant of the Lord: op.cit p193
(14) SVT xiv. p155ff
(15) The Servant of the Lord: op.cit: p194

deleted from 42:6 לְעַם בְּרִית could then be read with Codex Sinaiticus לְעַמִּי "my people". This would make the Servant's role in relation to the people of God the same as in 49:8. This would also accord with the general use of the singular עַם which is used to denote the people of God whereas the plural form usually means "mankind" (16). The LXX (Codd.A.B) does not have "light to the nations" in this verse and in this Snaith finds grounds for deletion. However in his later work in SVT xiv he contradicts this earlier standpoint and sees no grounds for such a deletion:

> The phrase "a world-wide light"...is found also in 42:6, but not in Codex B of LXX, nor in the original hand of ℵ. The first corrector of ℵ has "a covenant of my people to a light of Gentiles" γενους μου εἰς φως ἐθνων though the other correctors and other MSS do not have "my". There seems to be no sound reason for regarding "for a light of gentiles" as an interpolation in 42:6. The structure of the verse demands the inclusion of the phrase in spite of its omission by two leading LXX manuscripts. (17)

He accepts the Massoretic Text as "probably right as against the LXX" in omitting לְעַם בְּרִית from 49:6 as a gloss from 42:6.

3) He is left to find a suitable translation of the terms that will fit his case.

> The usual translation is (RV): I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation (margin: that my salvation may be) unto the end of the earth. Largely on the basis of this, other passages are interpreted and translated as being universalist in intention and content. Without this particular translation of 49:6, the universalist element in the Second Isaiah is much more meagre than many realise...
> A strict translation of 49:6 is: It is far too small a thing for you to be a servant to me to restore the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved of Israel. I will set you as a light of Gentiles for my salvation to be to the end of the earth... That this world-wide salvation is God's salvation of Israel can be seen from 43:6: "bring my sons from afar, and my daughters can be from the end of the earth". (18)

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(16) SVT xiv. op.cit p157
(17) SVT xiv. p156ff
(18) SVT xiv. op.cit p155ff

Snaith's approach is further explicated when his interpretation of some texts outside the Servant Songs are noted.

45:11-13 - particularly v13 - I have aroused him in righteousness, and I will make straight all his ways; he shall build my city and set my exiles free.

This verse has traditionally been interpreted in relation to the person of Cyrus, particularly in the light of the verses which precede this section. Snaith refuses this identification on the grounds that it arises out of a false rendering of a verse in the previous chapter, 44:28, "saying of Jerusalem, She shall be built..." In the Hebrew text לאמר follows a reference to Cyrus of whom Yahweh says, "He is my shepherd, and he shall fulfil all my promises" Kittel margin suggests an emendation to read with the LXX and Vulgate ואמר . This is the opening word of the two preceding clauses and Snaith accepts the change. The words in relation to Jerusalem are then made to be spoken by Mahweh as a promise to the city independent of the foregoing reference to Cyrus.

45:18-25 - particularly v22 which has traditionally been seen as a universal appeal by Yahweh to all the nations of the earth to find their salvation in him. Snaith refuses this identification of the appeal with all the inhabitants of the earth:

> The call is to those "that are escaped of the nations" and the conclusion of the piece is that "in the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified." (19)

He sees the phrase "all the ends of the earth" as a lyrical geographical extension.

49:22-23 - Here especially we have the complete abasement of the heathen before Israel. Gentile kings and queens shall be their nurses and carry them home, and shall lick the dust of their feet. (20)

Snaith's view of Deutero-Isaiah's national thrust is underlined by his comment on 49:26:

> If the Second Isaiah is the great universalist that many allege...then either he has fallen very short of his great ideals, or we must say that this verse belongs to a later time, say, the times of Nehemiah and Ezra.(21)

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(19) The Servant of the Lord: p196
(20) op.cit: p199
(21) SVT xiv. op.cit p159

51:4 - Listen to me, my people,
and give ear to me, my nation;
for a law will go forth from me,
and my justice for a light to the peoples.

This gives too much room for the idea that the people may have a mission on behalf of Yahweh to the nations, asffar as Snaith is concerned. So he accepts the emendation that Kittel proposes and reads the plural form of "people" and "nation" with 12mss and the Syriac. This turns the verse into an address by Yahweh to the nations.

52:15 - "he shall startle many nations"

The crucial word is נזה. Snaith follows B D B 11 and finds the root in נזה "to leap up". But he refuses any extension of the meaning and quotes Job 29:8ff in support:

> The young men saw me and hid themselves,
> and the aged rose and stood.
> The princes refrained from talking
> and laid their hand on their mouth.
>
> This is what we have in Isaiah 52:15. The word הזה means "cause them to leap to their feet". No change is involved in the Hebrew, neither of consonants or vowels. Further, the root קפץ in the next half-line does not mean merely "shut their mouths", but, "place the hand over the mouth and clutch it, grasp it in the closed hand". (22)

He further refuses any allusion that may be seen even in a translation such as "startle" and even more so in "sprinkle" to a universal mission other than the amazement that will be caused by God's saving activity in the experience of His people. (23)

54:3 - For you will spread abroad to the right
and to the left,
and your descendants will possess the nations,
and will people the desolate cities.

Snaith here sees a recall of the occupation of Canaan after the first Exodus, The sense of the verb ירש involves the driving out of the enemies of the people of God before them.

> It is not universalism, nor anything like it. It is the Joshua invasion all over again, for much of Deuteronomy and virtually all of Second Isaiah is a second occupation of Canaan. (24)

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(22) SVT xiv. op.cit p161
(23) Note should be taken of the discussion on the meaning of this term by EJ Young: "The Interpretation of נזה in Is. 52:15; in Studies in Isaiah pp199-206. Young provides a useful survey of the attempts that have been made to understand the term. He would disallow change in text or meaning and sees נזה "to sprinkle" as relating to the expiatory work of the Servant, Jesus Christ.
(24) SVT xiv op.cit p162

I I

Snaith was followed in 1956 by P A H DeBoer in a monograph in Oudtestamentische Studien: Deel XI:1956: "Second Isaiah's Message". The important chapter for our purpose is Chapter V, "The Limits of Second Isaiah's Message", in which De Boer comes to very similar conclusions to Snaith, but with a slightly different emphasis.

1) He takes issue with Snaith over his view that the prophet's interest is not only in the redemption of exiled Israel, but also in Israel's exaltation at the head of the Gentile nations. (25) (cf 45:14, 46:1ff, 51:23, 48:14, 49:22-23).

> Only the foreigner Cyrus, and his successful campaigns, xliv.28, xlv, and probably xli.1ff, xlviii.14f, are depicted with favourable traits. But neither he nor his people belong to the missionary task of Israel. Cyrus is anointed by Yahweh himself to be his weapon to break in pieces the doors of the prison of his people. Second Isaiah does not show any further interest in him or in his people.
>
> No other conclusion can be drawn from our texts than the statement: Second Isaiah's only purpose is to proclaim deliverance for the Judean people... Foreign nations are but mentioned as peoples to be conquered, in whose hand the cup of wrath will be put (li.23), or as the instrument of Yahweh to deliver his people; or, in rhetorical manner of speaking, to be witness of Yahweh's glory. (26)

2) It is in relation to this last point that DeBoer interprets such expressions as "end of the earth", "coastlands", "peoples from afar". They are nothing more than phrases which are used to express totality, that is, all the world is called to witness Yahweh's victory, the judgment of the court, or the justice of the sentence. (27) He concurs with Snaith's judgment on 45:22 that it is the remnant of Israel that is meant here qualifying his acceptance with a guarded footnote:

> If the whole earth is meant here and not the scattered Jewish people, the emphasis of the sentence remains on Israel's God, Yahweh. The Judean country is the only place of salvation.

3) He argues that the context of all the disputed texts gives rise to only one interpretation, namely, a nationalistic one. For

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(25) The Servant of the Lord op.cit: pp 191, 192, 199, 200
(26) O T S xi. p89ff
(27) O T S xi. p90

example: 42:1-6 is governed by v7.

> is evidently a picture of the dispersed and oppressed people, now on the threshold of liberty... It is evident that foreign nations are out of the question here. Interpreters who start from the idea of a world-wide missionary task of the servant come to very distorted explanations here. (28)

4) The main interest of DeBoer's exegesis lies in two linguistic notes that he makes.

i) On the occurence of משפט in 42:1ff

Unlike Snaith, he accepts the parallel of "mishpat" with the Arabic "din" on the grounds of its usage in such passages as I Kings 3:28 and the parallel with תורה in Isaiah 42:4. He translates it:

> a judgment, sentence, a decision given by an authority... But not only the sentence, the decision, but at the same time the observing of the regulations, manner or course of life... A judgment is much more than finishing a difference of opinion or making up a quarrel. It is a decision about the future, a prescript and determination of the manner of life. (29)

He draws particular attention to the words which are connected with "mishpat" in the text, namely

> In our place, Is.xlii, thewwords "bring forth for the nations" can mean: he brings judgment out for the nations to receive as their judgment, their law. (30)

It is clear from what has already been said that such an understanding of the phrase would be unacceptable to DeBoer. He refuses it for three reasons:

- the verb in the Hiph'il (as here) often means: "to bring out, cause to appear"
- when used in the first of these two senses it is usually followed by לאר (He does note two occurences in Kings where the preposition ל is employed as here but makes his judgment on the ground of the most frequent occurence).
- the nations in Second Isaiah are not people addressed by Yahweh or His Servant, but are mentioned now and then to be witnesses of Israel's prosperity after a period of humiliation and slavery.

On these grounds he concludes,

> I prefer an interpretation of our passage in line with the trend of the whole book. The redeemed people makes appear,

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(28) O T S xi. op.cit p93
(29) op.cit p91
(30) op.cit p92

> shows to the nations Yahweh's judgment, i.e. their new life from death... Everyone who sees the redemption of the new life of the Judean people, even great nations, kings and princes, will be astonished and will respect it as a wonderful salvation. (31)

ii) On the phrase מִן קָטֹן in 49:6

In a fairly involved discussion (32) DeBoer tries to show the full import of this term.

> The main problem of the Hebrew text is the meaning of the expression מִמִּקְטֹן, an expression not without parallel in the Old Testament, but as far as I know not yet convincingly explained. In particular the comparative character of the expression does not appear to full advantage in the usual translations and explanations.

The parallels of which he speaks are 2 Samuel 6:22 and Ezekiel 8:17. According to DeBoer in both cases the traditional translations fail to bring out the comparative force of "min". So he translates Ezekiel 8:17: "Is there anything more dishonourable for Judah's house than committing the abominations which they commit here."
On the same grounds Isaiah 49:6 ought to carry a similar comparative intention: "There is something more dishonourable than to be for me a servant, to raise up Jacob's tribes and to bring back Israel's shoots, so that I make you a light to the nations."
But the question remains even then: what does it mean?

> The meaning seems to be recognizable if we read the passage in connection with its context. The servant, called by Yahweh, is described as fainthearted in verse 4. His situation is very bad, his labour seems to be in vain. But Yahweh encourages him. He says: You think that you are despised, abased...but the tables shall be turned... The passage is, in my opinion, an encouragement.

DeBoer summarizes his conclusions on the texts:

> Summarizing we must state that the texts, understood far and wide and from old as containing a world-wide missionary task of Yahweh's servant, do not allow us to maintain this view... There is no question of a message, starting from one point and swarming off in the whole world. On the contrary. In Second-Isaiah's message we see all relative to one event. The whole surrounding world, nations, beasts, plants, mountains, and hills and depths, heavens and the ends and depths of the earth, relative to the experience of the exiles. (33)

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(31) O T S op.cit p92
(32) op.cit p.97ff
(33) O T S op.cit p100

I I I

In 1959 R Martin-Achard published his book, Israel et les nations: la perspective missionaire de l'Ancient Testament, which was subsequently translated and published in English in 1962 under the title 'A Light to the Nations'.

While not adding a great deal to the discussion which had taken place in the two works already cited this book was important for a number of reasons. For one thing it was written out of a real concern about the place and work of mission among God's people today. For another, Martin-Achard extends his examination of material outside the traditions of Deutero-Isaiah. The important chapter for our consideration is Chapter 2: The Missionary Message of Deutero-Isaiah. Martin-Achard covers the ground in the text which DeBoer and Snaith had already considered, and, in the main he concurs with their exegesis and handling of the various texts. For example:

On משפט - We agree with Zimmerli in believing that mishpat must keep its primitive juridicial sense. For what is involved is not a general or universal truth but God's judgment in favour of His people. Yahweh's mishpat is quite simply a decree of pardon for Israel his decision granting forgiveness and life to the exiles. (34)

On אצי - He is in agreement with DeBoer: "to bring forth", "cause to appear", whence "to manifest".

On ברית עם - Whatever may be the exact meaning of this expression, even if the prophet were referring, as is quite possible (contra Snaith and DeBoer), to the role of the Servant with regard to the nations, these terms do not necessarily imply missionary activity by Yahweh's chosen.

On אור גוים - after alluding to the Apostle Paul's use of these words in Acts 13:47 and 26:23, he concludes:

> But the shining of the light of the Servant, as seen by Deutero-Isaiah, does not necessarily mean something like the evangelization of the Hellenistic world in the first century of the Christian era. The radiance reflected by the Servant which dazzles the eyes of the heathen is nothing other than the work of Yahweh, His judgment pronounced in favour of the exiles. (35)

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(34) A Light to the Nations: p25
(35) op.cit. p28

Martin-Achard also sees a contradiction between a thorough-going universalist claim for Deutero-Isaiah and the role that is played by the nations within the writings. These, far from being the object of a mission with conversion as its aim, are seen within the writings as being anything from the object of divine disfavour (cf Is.47:1ff, 51:11f, 51:23f) to the servants of God's people whose task is to "labour for the enrichment of the people" (cf Is. 44:28, where Cyrus is cited as having the task of rebuilding Jerusalem). The nations will ultimately render obeisance not only to Yahweh, but also to Israel. (cf Is. 49:23, 43:3ff, 45:14). He concludes:

> These various observations prompt us not to exaggerate Deutero-Isaiah's universalism. The chief concern of the prophet of the Exile is not the salvation of the Gentiles but the liberation of his own people and its triumphant return to Jerusalem, the heathen are scarcely more than an instrument in the hand of Israel's God.

He further argues that themes such as monotheism and universalism, which have been rated so highly by H H Rowley et al, are not the crux of Deutero-Isaiah's message. These and other themes are subservient to what he sees as the main concern of the book, that is the declaration of comfort from Yahweh to the people. At the outset of his study he makes the observation quoted at the beginning of the first chapter of this thesis.

> We must distinguish the concept of mission from other apparently kindred ideas. Universalism, for instance, asserts that the God of Israel is the Lord of all the earth, but does not propose that the Chosen People should take any particular action towards converting the nations to him. Deutero-Isaiah's message is not a missionary message in the usual sense of the term; there is no question of proselytism in his preaching. The prophet does not invite Israel to scour the globe in order to call the heathen to conversion. The Chosen People's business is to exist: its presence in the world furnishes proof of Yahweh's divinity; its life declares what He means for Israel itself and for the universe.

I V

Alongside the article by N H Snaith in SVT xiv is a fairly extensive study by H M Orlinsky (36). The section that is pertinent to our study is in Appendix A Light to the Nations pp97-117.

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(36) 'The So-Called "Servant of the Lord" and "Suffering Servant" in Second Isaiah': SVT: xiv 1967

Orlinsky claims that all universalist interpretations of Deutero-Isaiah arise from a reading back of Christian pre-suppositions into the text and he charges scholars who take this viewpoint with committing eisegesis. His arguments rest mainly on contextual observations. He is interested in the semantic problems relating to the text, for example, in 49:6 he suggests that ישועה can best be rendered as "triumph". He criticizes traditional views in which the Christian connotations of "salvation" have been carried back into the text and have coloured the understanding of it.

His conclusions are in sympathy with those of Snaith but his main arguments are based on context, for example, on 49:6f he argues from the context of the surrounding verses 5a, 7, 8, 9, 13, that

> far from bringing "salvation" to the heathen nations, the prophet's task in the service of the Lord is to lead exiled Israel to redemption and thereby cause the nations and their leaders - who until then held the exiles in contempt - to acknowledge abjectly the omnipotence of Israel's faithful God. (37)

On 55:1-3 he draws attention to the occurence of ברית in Deutero-Isaiah, here as ברית עולם , an everlasting covenant.

> The same picture of ברית is painted in chapter 55 where the "eternal covenant" involves God and His people Israel: if only they will heed Him, He will make them an everlasting covenant and fulfil the promise made to David to establish a powerful dynasty of his seed.

He goes on, however, to reject the insistence of J Lindblom that in the two verses which follow (vv 4,5) we are presented with a parallel between the experience of David appointed in a special relation of leader to the people, and that of the New Israel appointed in special relation to the nations of the earth.

> I suspect that the author of our passage and his audience were more realistic, and less concerned about post-biblical theology and messianism and eschatology, than the interpreters of the post-biblical era have been. (38)

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(37) Orlinsky: op.cit p100ff
(38) Orlinsky: op.cit p109 footnote 1

V

A fresh approach to the problem was proposed by D E Hollenberg in an article in Vetus Testamentum: 19:1969. (39)
He recognises that there is an apparent tension within the text between nationalism and universalism and that the answers so far purveyed leave something to be desired by way of satisfactory resolution of the problem. He suggests that his own approach to the subject may have some advantages over the previous attempts. At the same time he admits that it involves an analytical method which might have been quite foreign to the prophet or his day. Hollenberg's general conclusion is nationalistic but the difference in his approach is that it does not rest on linguistic analysis.

> Unlike Snaith and DeBoer, no special translations are required. The question of syntax in the offending phrases becomes irrelevant. We are proposing a semantic solution based upon an understanding of Second Isaiah's use of "the nations", "coastlands", "ends of the earth" etc. as a holistic category which may conceal as much as it reveals. (40)

The thesis is basically simple: neither the term "Israel" nor the term "nations" can be taken at their face value. In each case they contain at least a double meaning and both must be looked upon as "holistic categories". This means that when Deutero-Isaiah speaks of "Israel", at times he may mean the whole of Israel and at others only the Servant within Israel (cf 49:3 and 49:6 where the Servant is described as Israel and yet is given a mission to Israel). Likewise, /8
when Deutero-Isaiah speaks of "nations" or "coastlands" there are instances where he is speaking of "the foreign nations as such", and others where he is speaking of Israelites within the nations who have associated themselves with the nations and have worshipped foreign gods. (41)
He agrees with Snaith in identifying the Servant as "the righteous remnant", the prophetic nucleus of Israel, and in his suggestion that this group may have been given a mission to enlarge itself within the exiled (scattered) people of Israel. (42)
Hollenberg admits that this is a thesis which it may be difficult to prove but he proceeds to test it out on some of the crucial texts.

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(39) Nationalism and "the Nations" in Isaiah XL-LV
(40) Hollenberg: op.cit p25
(41) For a full discussion see Hollenberg: op.cit p27
(42) op.cit p28

a) 41:21-24 In some of the well-known court scenes of Deutero-Isaiah where the nations are challenged it may be that the prophet is really addressing Israelites within the nations. He draws attention to the concluding words of the section of 41:21ff:

> An abomination is he who chooses you.

Hollenberg suggests that these words may provide the clue as to who is actually being challenged in these verses.

> Who has chosen Bel Marduk, Babylonians or renegade Israelites? (43)

b) 42:1-7 Hollenberg equates the nations "who are awaiting mishpat" and "torah" with the bruised reed and the smoking flax which will neither be broken nor put out. (Contra Snaith who sees these words as applying to the Servant Israel.) But the equation does not mean that he views this as a universal mission. It is to the Jews within the nations.

> Who are "bruised" and "dimly burning" but the exiled Israelites?... The fact that the recipients wait expectantly for "mishpat" and "torah" would seem to imply that they are Israelites.

c) 42:10-13 Hollenberg admits that at first sight this seems to be an instance of universalism. But he argues that the references within it are not to be taken literally, but rhetorically. At any event to speak of "the coastlands", "the villages that Kedar inhabits", "the inhabitants of Sela" as here is to describe in a poetic way the Jews who actually live there, and not the whole spectrum of inhabitants. (44)

> In any case we do not have to read the passage as expressing salvation of foreigners.

It seems to us that Hollenberg is right on these two counts, first, that a universal salvation oracle is not necessarily involved here; and secondly, that there is an obvious element of rhetoric present. However, neither of these seems to provide justification for his narrower interpretation of the references. The passage is much more in line with that strand in the writings that calls the whole earth to witness what Yahweh is doing in the experience of his people. Awe, amazement and joy are the correlatives in the experience of the heathen

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(43) Hollenberg: op.cit p31

(44) op.cit: p33

of what Yahweh does in salvation in the experience of his people as far as Deutero-Isaiah is concerned/ (cf Is. 49:7 et al). /8

d) 45:20-25 Here Hollenberg spells out his theory in detail. He refers to the address in v20 to "you survivors of the nations" and describes them thus: "we may interpret "survivors of the nations" as survivors among the nations, or crypto-Israelites (a favourite term of his) who have fled away into the nations and escaped the crisis which befell Israel". (45) He notes that the challenge is addressed in the second person in the first part of the verse (which he takes to apply to crypto-Israelites), but changes to the third person in the second part which refers to those who "carry about their wooden idols". On the strength of this Hollenberg concludes that Deutero-Isaiah is not addressing foreigners as such. These "p^{e}litim" make up the third category which Hollenberg identifies within the writings, "the foster children or people of uncertain identity within the nations." When he turns to 49:1-7 these are contrasted with the "n^{e}sirim (preserved) who have not been lost within the nations but have been identified with the Servant in maintaining their identity as worshippers of Yahweh.

V I

C Stuhlmueller touches briefly on the question of universalism in an important study on the theme of creation/redemption in Deutero-Isaiah. (46) His work takes into consideration the Book of Consolation excluding the Servant Songs. This means that on some of the texts already noted he has nothing to say. He takes the view, indeed, that within these Songs there is a move towards a more explicit universalism which, if at all, is only hinted at within the rest of the Book of Consolation. (47) Stuhlmueller thinks that the broadening of the mission of the Servantaat this point can be traced in the development of the theological insights of Deutero-Isaiah within the Book of Consolation with regard to the creatorial activity of Yahweh.

When this development is joined with Dt-Is's ideas on

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(45) V T: 19:1969: p31ff
(46) Creative Redemption in Deutero-Isaiah: 1970: Biblical Institute Press, Rome
(47) Stuhlmueller: op.cit. p206

> cosmic-creative redemption, the following steps come to light:
> in 45:9-13, Dt-Is reasons from Yahweh's creative redemption of Israel on a world-wide scale, to the role of Yahweh as world-creator.
> in 42:5-7 (Servant Song A), Dt-Is begins with world-creation, in order to describe the vocation of the Servant.
> in 49:8-9a, 5a, 6 (Servant Song B), the Servant's vocation is directly expressed to the Gentiles, i.e. to the redemption of the world. (48)

It is thus clear that to describe Stuhlmueller as an opponent of universalism in Deutero-Isaiah (49) is only correct if we are taking his views on a limited section of the text into consideration, i.e. the Book of Consolation apart from the Servant Songs. As far as the Book of Consolation is concerned there are only three texts worthy of interest from a possible universalist point of view according to Stuhlmueller.

44:1-5 (with particular reference to v5) Stuhlmueller rules out a universalist intention on the ground of context.

> Taken by itself, 44:5 would indicate the conversion of individual gentiles to the community of Yahweh's chosen people: zeh...w^{e}zeh...w^{e}zeh. The larger context, however, of the Bk Con raises doubts about anything more extensive here than scattered proselytes. (50)

Later in his discussion he faces the possibility that this might indeed be a reference to the conversion of individual gentiles.

> if an incipient universalism is present in 44:5, then the verse would be one of those exceptional statements in the Bk Con, a germ of thought which will be developed more fully in the Servant Songs. (51)

51:3-8 The difficult phrases lie within verses 4, 5 and 6. These would seem to imply the involvement of all peoples. But Stuhlmueller circumvents the problem by deleting the offending phrases on the ground of style and metre:

> Once we eliminate from ch51 verse 4b, 5 and 6b, we arrive not only at a smoother flowing poem but also one in which the salvation of Israel is the sole concern. (52)

45:22 With this excision of ch 51 there is only one reference which could bear explicit universal overtones, namely 45:22.

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(48) Stuhlmueller: op.cit p206
(49) cf A Schoors: I am God Your Saviour: SVT xxiv: 1973
(50) Stuhlmueller: op.cit p129
(51) op.cit p130
(52) op.cit p130

Stuhlmueller again appeals to the total context of the Book of Consolation, and in particular to the place given to the nations within it. The foreign people are only tools in the hand of Yahweh who are to be conquered or used as barter in exchange for Israel.

> Because of the otherwise overwhelming number and even violent forms of expressions against the Gentiles, the force of445:22 pales into insignificance. (53)

In such cases Stuhlmueller's arguments appear to lean heavily on the studies of DeBoer whom he credits in a footnote with "having argued firmly that Second-Isaiah's only purpose is to proclaim deliverance (exclusively) for the Judean people". In the light of this accepted presupposition Stuhlmueller is bound to re-interpret or reject any text that appears to carry undertones of universalism within the Book of Consolation.

V I I

10 The work of Anton Schoors (54) was originally intended to be a complete study of the pericopes of Deutero-Isaiah based on the Form Critical method. However, although it is extensive in size, it is limited in scope and considers only two of the types of literature within chapters 40-55. These, as far as Schoors is concerned, are the two main genres of the prophet, namely, the words of salvation and the polemical genres. The only universalism to be found in these sections is in the sense of the recognition of Yahweh as the cosmic creator, but there is "no expectation of salvation on behalf of the gentiles".

> The salvation announced in the genre of salvation words is meant only for Israel. The fact that the nations will "see" or "know" that Yahweh delivers his people, does not involve their own salvation or conversion (xlix 7). On the contrary, Israel's enemies will be destroyed (xli 11-12, 15-16, li 13, 23), the nations will be given as a ransom for Israel (xliii 3-4), the idol worshippers will be confused (xlii 17), the nations with their kings will be in Zion's service (xlix 22-23). Even inlly 5, "a nation that knew you not shall run to you", does not involve a conversion; it only expresses Israel's authority over that nation. Is li 4-5 is most probably not authentic. (55)

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(53) Stuhlmueller: op.cit p130
(54) A Schoors: I Am God Your Saviour: SVT xxiv 1973
(55) Schoors: op.cit p302ff

In this he is following closely the arguments of R Martin-Achard and P A H DeBoer. In the polemical genres, by which he means the trial speeches and the disputations, Schoors sees only one verse which could require a universalistic interpretation, namely 45:22-23. He eliminates this, however, by appeal to "the general trend of Deutero-Isaiah's prophecy and the immediate context of the phrase which do not favour such an interpretation".

Schoors recognizes that for consideration of the problem of universalism/particularism his study is limited inasmuch as it does not take within its scope many of the most important texts and phrases. He alludes in particular to אור הגוים (56) which occurs in 42:6,

> Is.xlii 5-9 is directed to Cyrus (following Mowinckel: He That Cometh, p245), through whom Yahweh will show his glory, for he will be the liberator of the chosen people. This way he will be a light to the nations.

By such an identification he immediately removes the necessity to see a call to universal mission addressed through the Servant to the people of God.

He treats Isaiah 45:14-17 in the light of the principle enunciated above for the genre of salvation words and so sees in them not only the humiliation of the nations but the salvation of Israel. His conclusion to the whole study is:

> The form critical analysis of his prophecies has convinced me that they are not universalist at all. (57)

V I I I

The final work to be looked at within the scope of this review is that of R N Whybray in his commentary on Deutero-Isaiah in the New Century Bible: Isaiah 40-66: Oliphants, 1975. He supports a particularist interpretation of Deutero-Isaiah and works it through his interpretation of the text. He argues strongly against two claims that are sometimes made with regard to Deutero-Isaiah. First,

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(56) Schoors: op.cit p303
(57) Schoors: op.cit p302

he argues that in no sense is this prophet "eschatological" as commonly understood within discussion on Old Testament Apocalyptic. Second, that in no way is he "universalist in relation to any mission to which the people of God are supposedly called. Whybray supports his argument by appeal to the role playedbby the nations within the writings:

> The nations are depicted by the prophet in a number of somewhat different roles - as oppressors, as deluded worshippers of idols, as destined to become Israel's captives, suppliants, and slaves; as seeing with astonishment Yahweh's marvellous acts on behalf of his people, as future vassals recognizing the universal rule of the God of Israel. Their role should not be exaggerated: they are rarely in the forefront of Deutero-Isaiah's thought, which is centred entirely on what Yahweh will do for Israel. The rest of humanity, together with mountains, hills, and trees of the forest, remain in the sidelines agape at Yahweh's irresistible power and love for his own people... This is the only possible interpretation of the great majority of references to them in the book. There remain a number of passages and texts (esp. 42:1-4, 5-7, 45: 6, 22-24; 49:6; 55:5) which, if they stood alone, might be interpreted as envisaging a free acceptance by the nations of the cult of Yahweh and their admittance to the same privileges as those enjoyed by Israel; but in no case is this the only possible interpretation, and the general context of Deutero-Isaiah's otherwise extremely consistent line of thought makes it most probable that nothing more than the submission of the nations to Yahweh's universal sovereignty is envisaged. (58)

A brief scan of some of these texts will demonstrate how Whybray interprets them in the light of the above understanding and presupposition.

a) 42:1-4 Here he follows A Bentzen and others who have interpreted the figure of the Servant in relation to the prophet himself. He sees this identification being supported within the writings on a number of occasions. For example, in every place where a clear identification with "Israel" is intended this is explicitly stated (cf Is. 41:8, 44:2, 21; 45:4; 48:20) and where "Israel" is portrayed as the Servant of Yahweh in every case she is presented in a passive role. However, where the Servant is not clearly identified, that is, in the Servant Songs, the figure takes on, not a passive role, but an active one. For another thing, these Songs speak of personal experience and in every other prophetic work this is the case when the prophet is speaking about himself. He concludes,

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(58) Whybray: op.cit p31ff

> it is remarkable that this identification should have been contested in this case by so many commentators. (59)

This identification obviously affects his interpretation of the text. In relation to vv 2 & 3 of the First Song, for example, he suggests that here it is the prophet's own role among the exiles that is viewed in contrast to that of the earlier prophets of doom. (Here Whybray is following a line of interpretation suggested by such scholars as Volz, Fohrer, and Elliger.) He comments on the text of 42:3:

> This verse confirms the above interpretation of v2. In contrast to the work of destruction of the earlier prophets, Deutero-Isaiah's work will be to handle the bruised reed with great care and to keep the dimly burning wick from going out. (60)

On משפט :

> Is a word of many meanings, but it may probably be assumed that it has the same meaning in all three places (cf 42:1, 3, 4). In determining the meaning of this crucial word account must be taken of the fact that in v4 it stands in parallelism with "his law" (torato), but torah also has more than one meaning. The context in which mishpat is used here implies that it is something which the exiles will welcome (v3) but which will be applied to all nations. The narrow sense of "judgment" therefore appears to be excluded. On the other hand vague renderings like "revelation" and "true religion" are hardly justified. The most probable meaning is Yahweh's sovereign rule or order (cf 40:14), which will mean salvation for Israel but submission for the other nations. (61)

b) 42:6 ברית עם

Whybray favours an interpretation of the phrase that will make it allude not only to Israel as a nation but to mankind as a whole. He gives two reasons in support of this view:

> First, the phrase "a covenant to the people" is parallel with "a light to the nations"; and although it might be argued that two separate spheres of work are here referred to, one with regard to Israel and the other with regard to the nations, there is no indication of this, and it is therefore more probable that both phrases refer to one and the same work. Secondly, although "mankind" is a most unusual translation of 'am, the word is used in the previous verse in this very sense. (62)

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(59) Whybray: op.cit p135
(60) op.cit p73
(61) op.cit p72
(62) Whybray op.cit p74

This does not mean that he is suggesting that any universal mission by Israel to the world is involved. The difficulty lies in determining what the sense of "b^{e}rit" might be. He rejects the efforts of those scholars who have suggested either emendation of the text, or linguistically dubious translations of the phrase to make it say "covenant-people" instead of "covenant to the peoples", or indeed, those who have suggested a different meaning for the term than it carries within the Old Testament as a whole. Whybray suggests that the traditional translation of "b^{e}rit" by "covenant" may be totally wrong anyway.

> It has recently been convincingly argued (E Kutsch: ZAW 79: 1967: pp18-35) that its proper meaning is not a mutual relationship, but an obligation, imposed by a person either upon himself or upon others. The person addressed here, then, is to "become an obligation" to the nations of the world: that is, he is to be the agent who imposes Yahweh's obligations upon them". (63)

Whybray started his quest by posing the question as to how one man could become "a covenant to the peoples". The above interpretation makes the answer no clearer until we understand that he intends us to apply the words, not to the lowly suffering exiles, or to the humble Servant, but to the aggressive might of Cyrus the Persian.

> While the rather generalized language of v 6 might apply either to the prophet Isaiah or to Cyrus, the action of the release of the peoples held in exile by the Babylonians is par excellence the work of Cyrus, and it is therefore most probable that it is he to whom this oracle is addressed. (64)

He supports this interpretation by appeal to the use of the same imagery of light/darkness in 47:5 and 49:9. In the former it is to be the fate of the Babylonians who now hold the people of God in exile to "sit in silence" and "go into darkness". In the latter the Jewish exiles are called "the prisoners" and "those who are in darkness". So, he argues, it must be the physical release of the exiles from their captivity that the prophet has in mind.

In the light of this identification with the person and work of Cyrus in 42:6 Whybray finds himself in certain difficulties in relation to the occurence of the phrase in 49:8. He regards the text as misplaced anyway, v 7 ought to come at the end of v 12. He wants to

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(63) Whybray: op.cit p74
(64) op.cit p75

excise the personal reference "I have kept you...to the people" and regard the pericope as an address directly from Yahweh to the people. In the light of this he also regards v 8 as an interpolation taken directly from Ch 42:6.

> If a covenant to the people means (one who imposes) an obligation on the nations...this is quite irrelevant to the main tenor of this oracle, which in this central section is wholly concerned with the restoration of Israel. (65)

He sees his interpretation of the text in relation to the work of Cyrus as being supported by the phrase "a light to the nations" which occurs also in 42:6.

> This interpretation is confirmed by the phrase "a light to the nations". Most commentators see here a commission to convert the nations to the worship of Yahweh. But in 51:4 where the similar phrase "a light to the peoples" occurs, it is associated with God's expressed will (torah) and universal rule (mishpat). The two lines therefore probably mean that the nations of the world will be obliged to accept Yahweh's sovereignty, of which they will now become aware for the first time (hence "a light"), and thus will be forced to accept the obligation (b^{e}rit) which he imposes on them. (66)

When he turns to the occurence of the phrase in 49:6, however, Whybray is constrained to admit that in this context it must refer to the work of the Servant of Yahweh, a figure distinct from Cyrus, and in Whybray's view, the prophet himself. He sees no contradiction in this, both men are dedicated to the same purpose, the universal recognition of the rule of Yahweh, but equally both are called to fulfil that purpose in their own way. He disallows any notion of a preaching mission or "the inclusion of the nations in a world-wide community of faith". This is confirmed for him by the parallel phrase "my salvation".

> The word y^{e}suah generally in Deutero-Isaiah denotes not spiritual blessings but Yahweh's coming victory over Babylon: it is this which will convince the other nations that submission is their only possible course of action. (67)

He appeals to Isaiah 52:10 in support where "in a context which can only be interpreted as a triumphant cry of victory it is said that 'all the

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(65) Whybray: op.cit p140
(66) op.cit p75
(67) op.cit p139

ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God".
One does not need to disagree with Whybray's main thesis to feel uncomfortable with his handling of these texts.
1) It seems to call for an unnecessary division of the text of Ch 42:1-7 to suppose that vss 1-4 speak of the work of the prophet/servant, whereas vv 6-7 speak of Cyrus. It seems more reasonable to suppose that the one addressed in the first section is being supported in his task by confirmation of the call of Yahweh in the second section.
2) Whybray's reference to Ch 51:4 far from confirming his understanding of berit and his identification with Cyrus, seemsrather to provide a parallel with the sort of language that is used in relation to the work of the Servant in both Chs 42 & 49. Whybray himself notes the association of such terms as "torah" and "mishpat" with the "light to the peoples" in Ch 51. These are the very things alluded to in Ch 42:1-4 in regard to the mission of the Servant. The interpretation of the phrase "a light to the nations" is something that will have to be decided on other grounds, but it seems of little help to understanding to connect it with the person of Cyrus.
3) It is difficult in any case to see how the work of Cyrus in liberation would cause such an understanding of Yahweh's power to dawn upon the surrounding nations simply by virtue of the event. Scholars who take this line never provide us with the clue as to how this might be. The liberal policies of Cyrus, in contrast with his Babylonian predecessors, are well-known in history. The Jews were not the only exiled peoples to be allowed their return to their homeland. How the nations are to come to such a conclusion regarding the power of Yahweh as a result of these historical events is none too clear. There is no doubt that it is questions such as this that have constrained some scholars (e.g. J D Smart) to look for the key to understanding within an eschatological framework.
4) If the words are consistently applied to the figure of the Servant in all the quoted texts then there is a uniformity about their occurence. We are saved from the need to sub-divide sections and strain after applications and meanings which introduce more difficulties than they relieve.
c) 45:20-25 Whybray sees the purpose of this oracle as being the same as other "trial speeches", that is the encouragement of the Jewish exiles and nothing else.

> Only v 22 is susceptible of a universalist interpretation. Yet even here there is no clear reference to the nations of the world. Nowhere does Deutero-Isaiah use the phrase "the ends of the earth" unequivocally in this sense. It is more probable that the whole created world is addressed here not only its human inhabitants. Yahweh's "salvation" is cosmic in the sense that it will be recognized by the whole creation 42:4,6; 52:10) but "be saved" in Hebrew does not have the soteriological connotations of Christian theology. It means simply that the whole world will acknowledge Yahweh's triumphant vindication of his people Israel. (68) (69)

The survey of the foregoing two chapters highlights certain important points:

1) That it is now almost impossible on linguistic grounds alone to draw any clear conclusion regarding the question of the intention of the prophet in relation to missionary extension on the part of the returned exiles. The conclusions of scholars on both sides of the divide are coloured by the presuppositions with which they approach the study. On the one hand, the evidence of the text is interpreted to fit the universalist viewpoint (so for examply H H Rowley p53 'The Missionary Message of the Old Testament'), and on the other in such a way as to make no universalist interest possible. (For example, in the claims of H M Orlinsky, a writer who makes his own bias abundantly clear.)

2) This difficulty is heightened by the fact that much of the controversy ranges around words and phrases the precise menning of which seems lost to the modern scholar. The number and variations of interpretations seem to be infinite. This is particularly the case with such phrases as בריתעם which is of universally admitted difficult translation. Such alternatives as are offered (see e.g. C R North p10 of this thesis) seem to fit the particular understanding of the problem suspiciously well. On both sides of the divide it seems that special pleading is necessary to support the extremes of either case.

3) It is for this reason that we feel there may be cause to be uneasy with either extreme. The most acceptable case would seem to be that which rests on certain straightforward principles of interpretation. For example:

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(68) Whybray: op.cit p112
(69) cf own arguments against such a "materialist" interpretation of the phrase in Ch 4 of this thesis.

a) That which requires least textual emendation or special translation. A case in point is that of Snaith who concurs with Kissane in his understanding of ברית עם in 42:6 and 49:8 as applying to the role of the Servant in relation to the people of God but who, on finding himself embarrassed by the same phrase in 49:6, then pleads for its deletion from the text on what are other than strong grounds.

b) That which allows for the greatest consistency of understanding within the text itself. It is in this relation that we find attraction in the interpretation of E J Kissane in relation to the two phrases ברית עם and אור גוים. Here there is a consistency of understanding that leads to the expectation that the answer to the problem may not lie within one extreme or the other.

c) That which rests on a plain understanding of the text without recourse to complicated or obscure theories of exegesis. On these grounds the approach of D E Hollenberg deserves to be challenged. In his attempt to circumvent the very problems which are highlighted here he falls back on an exegetical method which is subjective in the extreme. This 'semantic solution' is, on his own admission, probably quite foreign to the understanding of the prophet himself and is very much coloured by the presuppositions with which the interpreter approaches the text.

4) The limitations of the linguistic analytic approach which have been highlighted in the foregoing survey lead to the conclusion that direction needs to be sought in a wider study of the writings of Deutero-Isaiah. Are there any hints within the broad reaches of the prophet's theological insight which take us any nearer an answer to the problem?

This question leads us to the second part of our study, a consideration of two of the major theological motifs of Second Isaiah within which such direction may be found.

Chapter 3

C Stuhlmueller's argument (1) that the key to understanding the message of Deutero-Isaiah lies in paying close regard to the theme of Yahweh as cosmic creator leads us to examine again the role of this theme within the writings of the prophet of the exile.

A great number of studies on the theology of Deutero-Isaiah have been undertaken and nearly all the commentaries include some of the results of these within their Introductions. Attention has been drawn time and again to the emphasis which the prophet places upon the creation motif within his writings. A cursory reading of the text makes it clear that the prophet alludes many times to the creative activity of Yahweh, and that he does this within a variety of contexts for a number of different reasons.

The first chapter of the Book of Consolation contains strong evidence which seems to presuppose a knowledge of the subject on the part of the hearers, and which seem to indicate in which direction traditional answers to the questions might lie. At the very outset we are presented with evidence that would suggest that Deutero-Isaiah was not the first person to reflect on the question of creation and its place in the faith of Israel.

> who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand
> and marked off the heavens with a span,
> enclosed the dust of the earth in a measure
> and weighed the mountains in scales
> and the hills in a balance?
>
> (Chapter 40:12)

and again,

> Have you not known? Have you not heard?
> Has it not been told you from the beginning?
> Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth?
> It is he who sits above the circle of the earth,
> and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers,
> who stretches out the heavens like a curtain
> and spreads them out like a tent to dwell in.
>
> (Chapter 40:21ff)

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(1) Creative Redemption in Deutero-Isaiah: 1970: Biblical Institute Press, Rome

In words that are either part of the Second Servant Song, or a continuation of it, the commission is set out against the backcloth of the creative work of Yahweh.

> Thus says God, the Lord,
> who created the heavens and stretched them out,
> who spread forth the earth and what comes from it,
> who gives breath to the people upon it
> and spirit to those who walk in it:
>
> (Chapter 42:5)

The theme is emphasized in the ascriptions and titles which are often given to Yahweh within the book, or by what is self-predicated by Yahweh.

> I am the Lord, your Holy One,
> the Creator of Israel, your King.
>
> (Chapter 42:15)

Sometimes this creative activity of Yahweh is spoken of directly with relation to the people of God themselves. Just as the cosmos owes its origin to the power of Yahweh so the people have been brought into existence by him and owe their life to him.

> Thus says the Lord who made you,
> Who formed you from the womb and will help you
>
> (Chapter 44:2)

Later, in this same chapter, these two affirmations are brought into proximity and, in some way, are made to relate to each other.

> Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer,
> who formed you from the womb:
> "I am the Lord, who made all things,
> who stretched out the heavens alone,
> who spread out the earth -
> who was with me?"
>
> (Chapter 44:24)

The omnipotence of Yahweh in relation to other gods and in the realm of human affairs is paralleled by his omnipotence in nature.

> I am the Lord, and there is no other,
> I form light and create darkness,
> I make weal and create woe
> I am the Lord, who does all these things
>
> (Chapter 45:6, 7)

It is this God, who is the source of all that is, and the sustainer of the cosmic order, who makes overtures of love and comfort to His people in their distress.

> For your Maker is your husband,
> the Lord of hosts is His name;
> and the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer,
> the God of the whole earth he is called.
> (Chapter 54:5)

However Yahweh's power to bring into being and to uphold all things is not limited either to the past or to the present. In that same power lies all the hope for the future.

> You have heard, now see all this;
> and will you not declare it?
> From this time forth I make you hear new things,
> hidden things which you have not known?
> They are created now, not long ago;
> before today you have never heard of them,
> lest you should say, Behold I knew them.
> (Chapter 48:6, 7)

This sense of the universal power of Yahweh, manifested in the original creation of the cosmos, in his sustaining power of all that is, and in his continual acts of creation and re-creation in the experience of His people, forms the basis of the message of hope that the prophet has for his hearers. It is because of the strength of this emphasis within the book that many scholars have seen it as a prime mover towards the universalizing of the message of the prophet and the role of the people of Yahweh in their return from exile.
A Gelston has underlined the importance of this emphasis to the purpose of the prophet. After highlighting what he regards as a main theme of the book, that is, the derision of the 'no gods' and the demonstration of Yahweh's superiority over them, he continues,

> But there was all the time another line of thought, leading him in the same direction. This was his emphasis on Yahweh as Creator of the heavens and earth. The vastness of the creation was some indication of the transcendence and majesty of the Creator. The prophet was not slow to set the nations in perspective against the incomparable majesty of God: 'Behold the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as small dust of the balances; behold he taketh up the isles as a very little thing'... Nor was he slow to set the idol gods in perspective against the almighty power of the Creator: 'To whom then will ye liken me, that I should be equal to him?', saith the Holy One. (2)

T Boman sees a direct connection between the creation theme and universalism.

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(2) A Gelston: The Missionary Message of Second Isaiah: Sc.J.Th. VI 18 1965: p308ff

> Belief in creation and universalism are thus correlates. This fact you may study in Deutero-Isaiah, for there both ideas come to full expression simultaneously. (3)

It is significant that when the New Testament exponents of the Christ event come to give expression to the full significance of it they present their Gospel within the same framework.

> In the beginning was the Word... He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men.
>
> (John, Chapter 1:1-3)

> He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; for in him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities...all things were created through him and for him.
>
> (Colossians, Chapter 1:15-16)

In the Apocalypse of St John the Divine the praise that is rendered to the One in whose hand lies the power of ultimate victory and triumph, finds its source in the same theme.

> Worthy art thou, our Lord and God,
> to receive glory and honour and power,
> for thou didst create all things,
> and by thy will they existed and were created.
>
> (Revelation Chapter 4:11)

The ongoing significance of such an insight, even in terms of modern Christian witness, is made clear in the words of a famous twentieth century missiologist. (4)

> The fact of Christ must be understood in the context of the biblical understanding of creation. The authority of Christ is the authority of that sovereign will to which we and all things owe our existence.
> The importance of this becomes clear when the gospel is preached in a pantheistic or polytheistic context. The Hindu world of today, like the Greek world of the first three centuries, easily and naturally understands Jesus as one of the many divine beings, perhaps the supreme one, to whom men turn in time of need...
> The context of the Bible is wholly other. Here there is no place for devas, for gods to help us against the mysterious and dangerous forces of the universe. There is one God who alone has sovereign authority. Jesus comes with that authority...

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(3) T Boman: Ch Q R:165 1964 p104ff
(4) L Newbigin: A Faith For This One World? R B C 145: S C M 1961 p56ff

> This fact has several important repercussions for the Christian mission. In the first place, it means that in making the Gospel known to any race of men anywhere we bring them nothing strange, we bring them the secret of their own being, the revelation of the true source of their own life.

It is significant that in the study quoted Bishop Newbigin chooses the doctrine of creation, out of the three main presuppositions of Christian mission which he deliniates, as being of first importance to the universal relevance of the Gospel. (5) It is clear that Deutero-Isaiah put a great deal of stress on this insight and for that reason many scholars have seen it as the presupposition to universalism within his message. (6)

I

In the light of these two facts, the strong emphasis which the prophet places on this theme of creation, and the hints that he is appealing to a known tradition, the question is raised as to where such an idea came from. It would seem strange that such a concept, expressed in such fullness as it is within the prophecy, should surface suddenly without any previous hint of its presence or development. It seems reasonable to suppose that the prophet's message of deliverance would be embodied in terms and ideas which would find a ground of appeal with its hearers.

This is not to say that Deutero-Isaiah did nothing new with the idea. It seems fairly clear that he did new things with most of the ideas which he handled. What seems clear is that he took certain themes from the main traditions of his people and re-cast them to meet the demands of the moment. (7) The view of Von Rad has almost become orthodoxy as far as Deutero-Isaiah's use of the creation motif is concerned. He sees it as an important, but always subservient theme, within the book.

> Even a quick glance at the passages in question shows that the allusions to Yahweh as Creator are far from being the primary subject of Deutero-Isaiah's message. Thus in, for example, Is.XLII.5 or XLIII.1 he uses, in subordinate clauses, hymnlike descriptions of Jahweh such as "he who created the

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(5) The other two are the doctrines of election and sin.
(6) cf e.g. H H Rowley: Israel's Mission to the World: 1939 and his other publications on the same theme
(7) cf e.g. Deutero-Isaiah's development of the exodus motif among others. BW Anderson: Exodus Typology in Second Isaiah: in Israel's Prophetic Heritage: SCM 1962. GR North: The Former Things and the New Things in Deutero-Isaiah: Studies in Old Testament Prophecy/HH Rowley 1950

> heavens", "he who created you, who formed you", but only to pass over in the principal clause to a soteriological statement, "fear not, I redeem thee". Here, and also in Is.XLIV. 24b-28, the allusion to the creator stands in a subordinate clause or in apposition - obviously it has a subordinate function in the prophet's message and does not anywhere appear independently. (8)

Even scholars, such as Ph.B Harner, who take issue with Von Rad's approach, would admit the primary importance of the redemptive emphasis.

> We need not question the assumption, so prevalent today, that Israelite faith was primarily oriented towards Yahweh's deeds of salvation in history. Nor need we question that II Isaiah was primarily concerned to announce the good news that Yahweh was about to act anew and restore Israel to her homeland. (9)

We will notice later Harner's contention that for Deutero-Isaiah creation does, in fact, figure more than once as an independent entity unrelated to the facts or promises of the new exodus.
The importance of creation to the whole range of Deutero-Isaiah's message has been demonstrated more than once. (10) A straightforward reading of the English text will show how closely it is tied to the main emphasis of his message. Indeed, the whole message of hope and encouragement to the exiles finds a basis on this great theme. Yahweh, through the prophet, promises deliverance and recovery, and affirms his ability to bring it about. But,

> the exiles are not confident of this and, impatient of their captivity cry: "My way is hid from Yahweh and my right hand is disregarded by my God." The prophet accordingly informs them that God is not only mindful of their particular lot, but since the beginning of time He has been cognisant of the circumstances and designs of all the races of the earth. For Yahweh initiates and controls history "Have you not heard Jahweh is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary." (11)

Yahweh is the One who is in control of history, of the movements of men, nations and events. And his purpose in using the nations as his instruments, in raising Cyrus up as his servant, and in dealing with his people as he has and will, is governed by his absolute sovereignty over history and nature. In this also lies the hope of

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(8) G Von Rad: Old Testament Theology: Vol 1 p136ff
(9) Ph.B Harner: Creation Faith in Deutero-Isaiah: VT 17: 1967 p298ff
(10) C F Whitley: The Exilic Age: London 1957
(11) op.cit p116ff

the future.

> Cyrus and his place in history were also in the providence of God. All peoples of the earth were alike made by God, and, although Israel was called by him for a special reason, he may use any nation for the furtherance of his purpose as a potter may fashion to his will the clay in his hand. Israel can therefore hardly question the designs of her Creator and Sustainer: "Woe to him who strives with his maker...does the clay say to him who fashions it, What are you making?" (Isaiah 49:5f) (12)

This creative power of Yahweh, which extends back through time to the very beginnings of creation (45:18), and to which the people of Israel owe their own existence (44:2 et al), and which is at work in raising up Cyrus as an instrument of the divine will (45:1), is the principle that determines the absolute sovereignty of Yahweh over all other gods. Prophets before Deutero-Isaiah had been certain of Yahweh's rule beyond the bounds of Israel, but here is an extrovert declaration of the non-being of other gods, as far as Yahweh is concerned they do not exist. In the passages in which Deutero-Isaiah's words are directed against idols (e.g. 44:9ff) this is made clear, but nowhere is the idea of creation and sovereignty more closely linked than in chapter 46:

> Bel bows down, Nebo stoops,
> their idols are on beasts and cattle:
> these things that you carry are loaded as burdens
> on weary beasts
> They stoop, they bow down together,
> they cannot save the burden,
> but themselves go into captivity...
> even to gray hairs I will carry you,
> I have made, and I will bear,
> I will carry, and I will save...
> for I am God, and there is no other;
> I am God, and there is none like me.

The same idea is linked closely with what in Deutero-Isaiah has come to be described as ethical monotheism. There is no doubt that Deutero-Isaiah declares in a unique way the truth that God is One. The view of H H Rowley sums up much that has been said about monotheism and its development in Israel. In Rowley's view it is not until the time of the exile and

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(12) C F Whitley: op.cit. p135

> the great unknown author of Deutero-Isaiah do we have any solid evidence of a universalistic thrust. It is with him that monotheism becomes explicit, and from his assurance of the uniqueness of Yahweh in being 'the only one and true God', grew certain corollaries. (13)

For all the inconclusive arguments that have taken place about the development of monotheism (14) there can be little doubt that for Deutero-Isaiah that idea is closely linked with his view of Yahweh as cosmic creator.

> I am the Lord, and there is no other,
> besides me there is no god;
> I gird you, though you do not know me...
>
> I am the Lord, and there is no other,
> I form light and create darkness,
> I make weal and create woe,
> I am the Lord, who does all these things
> (Isaiah Chapter 45:5-7)

In the very same way creation takes on a future aspect in Deutero-Isaiah. Just as Yahweh is the One who was there at the beginning and who brought all things into existence by the word of His power, and just as it was He who called Israel into existence (particularly in the act of salvation that was the first exodus according to the ancient traditions, cf 43:16 et al), and as it is He who now works in the movements of nations and rules, so He will be at work in a new act of creation when He delivers His people from their bondage and brings them home.

> Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer,
> who formed you from the womb:
> I am the Lord, who made all things,
> who stretched out the heavens alone,
> who spread the earth -
> who was with me? ...
> who confirms the word of his servant,
> and performs the counsel of his messengers;
> who says of Jerusalem, She shall be inhabited,
> and of the cities of Judah,
> They shall be rebuilt,
> and I will raise up their ruins,
> who says to the deep, Be dry,
> I will dry up your rivers,

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(13) H H Rowley: The Missionary Message of the Old Testament: 1944
ibid The Biblical Doctrine of Election: 1948

(14) cf W F Albright: From Stone Age to Christianity pp196-207, for the view that Moses conceived of Yahweh in terms of exclusive monotheism and T J Meek: Monotheism and the Religion of Israel: JBL 61: 1942 pp21ff for a contrary view.

who says of Cyrus, He is my shepherd,
and he shall fulfil all my purpose,
saying of Jerusalem, She shall be built,
and of the temple, Your foundation shall be laid.
(Isaiah ~~ch~~ 44:24-28)

Second Isaiah understands the "New Exodus of salvation" to be a new creation, comparable to the event of the creation of Israel in the first Exodus. Yet while the "new things" - the events of the New Exodus - correspond to the "former things" - the events of the Heilsgeschichte, chiefly the Exodus - they are not the same. The New Exodus will be the climax of Yahweh's work, and, in a profound sense, something never heard of before:

From this time forth I make you hear new things,
hidden things which you have not known,
They are created (nibre'é, from bara') now, not long ago;
before today you have never heard of them,
lest you should say, "Behold, I knew them"
(Isaiah 48:6b-7) (15)

It is evident, even on the grounds of a brief search through the writings, that creation figures to a large extent within the message of Deutero-Isaiah, and that it relates to all the major emphases of his prophecy in one way or another. It is this fact which has caused many scholars to look upon Deutero-Isaiah as a point of departure, or at least as a shift of emphasis, from all that came before him. With him creation, instead of being something of a theological afterthought, has become a dominant theme which colours everything else he has to say. Before this Israelite thinking had been dominated by the Heilsgeschichte and had only taken a secondary interest in the theme of creation.

> But when finally this reluctance was overcome and a prophet appeared who moved in the realm of creation theology as his native habitat, the result was the most impressive body of theological discourse we possess in the Old Testament. It can be said of Second Isaiah that with him, for the first time, the belief in God as creator of heaven and earth became the first article of Israel's creed. The story of creation had long stood at the beginning of her historical traditions; it was now to become the point of departure for her thought as well. (16)

Dentan then goes on to quote Isaiah 45:7 and 45:18 which he regards as "the most exalted level attained by theological reflection in the Old Testament".

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(15) B W Anderson: Creation versus Chaos: Association Press 1967 pp129ff
(16) R C Dentan: The Knowledge of God in Ancient Israel: New York 1968

I I

T Boman claims that prior to Deutero-Isaiah and the prophets of the exile the concept of creation makes very little appearance within biblical literature.

> The idea of creation we find very seldom in the biblical literature written before the exile, almost never in the preachings of the great prophets. It seems that they avoided the concept. (17)

That statement (18) drew forth a reply in a later issue of the same journal by A D Matthews (19) who purposed to show that there is evidence to suggest that creation had figured to a fair extent in Israelite thinking before the time of Deutero-Isaiah. Indeed, a real part of the new religious movement which he sees as rising with Moses found its focus and impetus in the realization of Yahweh as creator.

> To say that Yahwism was a new religion different from paganism is not to deny the many threads that connect it with the culture in whose midst it grew. But it breathes a new spirit. If Moses taught a monotheism - and the evidence would suggest that he did - this monotheism was not an arithmetic diminution of the number of gods, but a new religious category - God is above nature, whose will is supreme. This is the idea behind all Biblical creativity.

Matthews would agree that creation-faith is indissolubly linked with redemptive-history but that is not only so in a reflective or retrospective sense, it is a fact of experience. The whole point is that whenever a faith, such as the monotheistic faith of Israel, confronts a polytheistic or animistic society, whose deities are at times barely distinguishable from the forces of nature with all their mysterious powers, then, by the nature of the case, questions of the relationship between Yahweh and nature are thrown up.
Most thinking subsequent to Von RAd has taken his views as its starting point.

> It has long been recognized that more comprehensive statements about the creation of the world by Jahweh are only found in texts of later times. Leaving the Jahwist out of account, since he does not in fact treat of the creation of

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(17) T Boman: The Biblical Doctrine of Creation: Ch Q R 165: 1964 p140ff
(18) cf C R North: The Second Isaiah: p13, who concurs with Boman's view
(19) A D Matthews: The Prophetic Doctrine of Creation: Ch Q R 166: 1965 p141ff

> the world at all, we are left in the main with Deutero-Isaiah, the Priestly Document, and a few psalms, the last of which are admittedly difficult to date, although there is no reason to regard them as particularly old. (20)

There now appear to be reasonable grounds for supposing that such statements require some modification in the light of subsequent studies. For example, it is by no means certain that we can be as specific as Von Rad was in claiming that there was no need to look upon the psalms he speaks of as being very old. Since widespread recognition has been accorded to the work of scholars such as Sigmund Mowinckel (21) in the psalms, and A R Johnson (22) on the place and importance of the cult in the formulation and preservation of tradition, it seems likely that there are good grounds for assigning much earlier dates to many of the psalms than was heretofore considered acceptable.

It should be noted, however, that Von Rad does not claim that there was no prior consciousness of creation or of Yahweh's role in it prior to Deutero-Isaiah. Indeed he states,

> it is hard to imagine that, in the environment of Canaan, whose religious atmosphere was saturated with creation myths, it would not have occurred to Israel to connect creation - that is heaven, earth, the stars, the sea, plants, and animals - with Jahweh. Probably the sole reason for the lateness of the emergence of a doctrine of creation was that it took Israel a fairly long time to bring the older beliefs which she actually possessed about it into proper theological relationship with the tradition which was her very own, that is, what she believed about the saving acts done by Jahweh in history. (23)

Such a connection between the Heilsgeschichte and creation-faith has been drawn by a whole line of scholars who have followed Von Rad's view. The idea of Yahweh as Creator is held to be a late development in the thinking of Israel and quite unconnected with a simple reflection on the wonders or manifestations of nature. The Israelites, according to this view, were a people who were totally, and solely, influenced in their thinking by the saving acts of Yahweh within their experience and history, particularly the deeds associated in tradition with the exodus from Egypt. It was by reflection upon these events that they were finally led to the realization of Yahweh-Creator. It is expressed thus,

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(20) G Von Rad: Old Testament Theology: Vol 1 p136ff
(21) S Mowinckel: The Psalms in Israel's Worship: 2 vols Blackwell 1962
(22) A R Johnson: Sacral Kingship in Ancient Israel: Cardiff 1955
(23) G Von Rad: op.cit p136

> Furthermore, Israel arrived at her creation faith through her meditations on history, not through the contemplation of nature. The story of creation did not arise because of Israel's attempt to penetrate the secrets of the natural world around her in order to discover the source of its mysterious powers, but through her attempt to trace back through history the meaning of her own historical existence. Her backward historical glance could not be satisfied until she had traced all the events she knew to their final origin. Back beyond Abraham, she finally came to believe, lay the figures of Shem, Ham and Japheth; their father Noah, the dimly perceived antediluvian patriarchs, Cain and Abel, Adam and Eve; and then at last the thought of Israel reached the ne plus ultra: "In the beginning God created the heaven and earth". So, out of her meditation on history and the fact of her own existence, Israel finally came to have a cosmology and cosmogony. (24)

When one looks at that view it seems plausible, and no doubt there must be an element of truth in it, because we are presented with literature in the Old Testament that seems to fit the facts. There is little doubt that the Priestly account of creation does serve a clear theological purpose and stands at the head of a larger corpus of literature whose purpose is soteriological. But just as some views of historical/theological development are too neat so may be this view of literary development. Surely it is stretching the imagination to have us believe that things developed in such a unilinear manner. (25)

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(24) R C Dentan: op.cit p64

(25) cf the criticisms made by one A N E scholar K E Kitchen against the concept of unilinear evolution both in a literary and theological sense in his Ancient Orient and the Old Testament: Tyndale Press 1966 p113 & 126. On the subject of advanced theological concepts he writes:

> These are often denied to the Israelites until during or after the Babylonian exile - however, this is merely a reflex of the fundamental error of unilinear development, and in fact many such concepts are explicitly known from written documents to have been the common property of the whole Ancient Near East in the second millenium B C. With this ubiquitous and inescapable background, there is no reason whatever for denying consciousness of such concepts to the Hebrews at any period in their history.

Kitchen proceeds to cite examples, including universalism and appeals to the work of W F Albright as evidence. He describes C R North's view that "the exodus took place in the morning twilight of the historical era" as "more than faintly ludicrous" recognizing the fact that a 13th century Moses came after seventeen centuries of literate civilization in Egypt and Mesopotamia since 3000 BC.

cf also U Simon: A Theology of Salvation: SPCK 1953 p9ff, who concurs.

Perhaps, although the high points of Old Testament theological reflection on the subject of creation, namely the Priestly tradition and Deutero-Isaiah, show a stylized and coherently presented theological schema made to serve the interests of a wider soteriological purpose, those parts of the Old Testament which seem to betray older traditions and less well formulated thinking reflect what must actually have been the case in a nation such as Israel. That is, there was a wide variety of understanding and tradition and a more staggered progress of understanding from one part of the society to another. If A D Matthews is right when he says that "the conception of the creatorship of God is the result of religious conflict" (26) then the need to be confronted by that question came upon the Israelites long before the time of the exile or later monarchy. Apart from the situation which Moses confronted within the polytheistic Egyptian state and the need to formulate the claims of Yahweh upon the people in that situation (27) the first major crisis which confronted the people when they came into the land was the confrontation with the baalim of Canaan.

> The Canaanites were a 'nature-oriented' people and there was no dearth of current explanations as to the source of all things to be found in the myths and legends of Canaan and ancient Mesopotamia. (28)

Although it is probably true that the compiler of the historical tradition did not have the apostasy of the people as his first interest his repeated notes about that apostasy remind us of the intensity of the struggle which must have taken place at times.

> And the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, and served the Baals; and they forsook the Lord, the god of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt; they went after other gods, from among the gods of the peoples who were round about them, and bowed down to them, and they provoked the Lord to anger. They forsook the Lord, and served the Baals and the Asheroth.
> (Judges Chapter 2:11ff)

B W Anderson is probably right when he says:

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(26) A D Matthews: op.cit p64
(27) see the discussion that has taken place about the significance of the tetragrammaton - W F Albright op.cit et al.
(28) J Gray: The Legacy of Canaan: Leiden: Brill 1965
D Winton Thomas: Documents from Old Testament Times: Harper ed 1961
cf W F Albright: From Stone Age to Christianity: p237-8 for the view that assimilation by Israel of foreign material required a long period of time and that traditions concerning primeval history, such as creation and flood stories, were brought into Palestine by the migrations of the patriarchs and blended at a later time with the traditions of Canaan.

> It must not be supposed that the "radical novelty of Israel's faith," which resulted in a shift from creation to history, burst upon the whole Israelite community like a lightning flash. The "religion of Israel" as practised in the early period was not coextensive with the "faith of Israel" as expressed normatively in the confessions or credos around which the traditions were eventually organized. If we knew more about the Israelite cult as practised during the period of the Judges, for example at the El Berith (Baal Berith) temple in Shechem (see Judges 9), we might discover that the celebration of Yahweh's kingship in terms of a dramatic struggle between order and chaos had an important place. It is hard to believe that the many allusions to the struggle with the dragon of chaos (Rahab, Leviathan, the Serpent, Sea, Floods) were only imported later to serve as poetic metaphors for the Yahweh faith. It is more plausible that the motif of the struggle with chaos was carried along on the stream of Israel's religion from early times and only gradually was absorbed into her historical faith. (29)

The Elijah cycle bears witness to the same sort of tension. (cf 1 Kings Chs 18 & 19) The incident in Chapter 18 sees Elijah in conflict with the prophets of Baal. In it the prophet of Yahweh confronts the prophets of the Canaanite deity who was worshipped as the controller and maintainer of order and rhythm within nature. (30) But it is Yahweh who at last is seen as the One who can command the forces of nature and bend them to His will. On the incident which follows in Chapter 19 Matthews makes an interesting note.

> In the theophany that followed it is strongly affirmed to Elijah that Yahweh is not only living, but also that he is not a nature god. He is not bound by place or circumstances. Yahweh may use the earthquake, and wind and fire, but his activity is not limited to them or by them, he is above them and can speak in the sound of gentle stillness. This theophany is of great importance for the understanding of Israel's conception of Yahweh and nature. (31)

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(29) B W Anderson: Creation versus Chaos p53
(30) L R Fisher: Creation at Ugarit and in the Old Testament: VT xv 1965 pp313-24
He distinguishes between El type creation and Baal type creation and argues that the latter was more influential in Israel.
J Gray: op.cit p30 He argues that the Baal myth is not a cosmology proper, "not the first stammerings of a scientific cosmology; but the means whereby the community sacramentally experience the triumph of their god over chaos, sustaining their faith in the power of Providence in the present and in the future with all its hazards".
(31) A D Matthews: op.cit p144

This emphasis on the other-ness of God to nature is one that can be traced in all the traditions which have to do with creation. For the Israelites there was no question either of pantheism or of Yahweh merely being identified as a nature god. Th. C Vriezen, in his Old Testament Theology, is at pains to make this clear, and yet at the same time to underline the close connection between Yahweh and nature.

> Everything in nature exists through God; He gives of His Spirit (=breath of life) to man so that he lives (Gen.ii.7). That also applies to the animal world; indeed to all that exists (Ps.civ.29f). This Spirit returns to Him again at death (Eccles xii.7). All life is from Him and in Him. We might even say that what we call creative natural force is to the Israelite - God. Therefore, wherever in nature exceptional forces reveal themselves God is seen acting. He speaks in the thunder and revealsHHis strength in the tempest, His life-giving power in plants and animals. Nature is the revelation of the fullness of His being. But in spite of the fact that all is from Him and has received life and existence from Him, we cannot speak of Deus sive Natura (32) or of an affinity between God and nature or God and man... Certainly it is true that all these things are from Him, but this does not make man or nature divine. They live through Him; it is His strength that enables man to breathe and live, and yet as the Holy One He is absolutely greater than these forces and quite distinct from them. (33)

The doxologies of Amos undoubtedly witness to a strong consciousness of Yahweh as creator and that affirmation is used to undergird the prophetic message and provides the foundation for the claims to universal sovereignty that are made by Yahweh. (cf Amos 9:6ff) These doxologies betray a well developed concept of Yahweh as Creator.

> For lo, he who forms the mountains,
> and creates the wind,
> and declares to man what is his thought,
> who makes the morning darkness,
> and treads on the heights of the earth -
> the Lord, the God of hosts, is his name.
>
> (Amos Ch 4 13: cf also 5:8ff and 9:5ff)

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(32) A term given precise currency by Spinoza as a composite name for the single, independent substance which is metaphysically possible.

(33) Th. C Vriezen: An Outline of Old Testament Theology: English Edition 1958 p191

Vriezen catalogues scriptural witness in support of his view. He further suggests that it was in reaction against Canaanite tendencies that the "vegetative life of the plants is not brought into immediate connection with the divine forces of life". The dying and rising gods of the Canaanite cults returned to life within the processes of nature.

Because of this they have often been viewed as later interpolations into the text. This mainly because Deutero-Isaiah has been seen as the start of a movement of theological appreciation rather than part of it or the high point of it. As we shall see in other connections this has led to the late dating of any part of scripture that appears to enunciate a doctrine of creation.

> They are theological supplements and originate in later reflections, but they contain no independent message. (34)

A D Matthews rejects this view as nonsense and we are inclined to agree with him:

> this is to misunderstand the nature of the prophetic books. He who would diligently search for the original work of the prophets and declare all else to be editorial material is open to the grave charge, "Your God is too small". Inspiration is not to be limited to one man, the school of the prophet must be taken into account, for it was the school that under divine inspiration compiled and interpreted the teaching of the prophet. Here in Amos the doxologies are not at all out of place, they are an integral part of his message, they serve to make explicit the references to Yahweh who controls the destinies of other nations, and who has sent natural disasters upon the erring nation. (35) (36)

There is evidence in the book of Jeremiah of the same consciousness. At least half a dozen times there is clear reference to the creative activity of Yahweh and this is used as the foundation of the prophetic message.

> Do you not fear me? says the Lord;
> Do you not tremble before me?
> I placed the sand as the bound of the sea,
> a perpetual barrier which it cannot pass;
> though the waves toss, they cannot prevail,
> though they roar, they cannot pass over it.
> (Jeremiah 5:22)

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(34) B D Napier: On Creation - Faith in the Old Testament: Interpretation 16: 1962: p21ff
(35) A D Matthews: op.cit p147
(36) E Hammershaimb: The Book of Amos: Oxford 1970.
He rejects also the view that these doxologies are later interpolations. His comment on Amos 4:13 is: "The concluding doxology which describes the might of Yahweh serves to assure the hearers that he will also be able to carry out what he threatens. It is therefore a complete misunderstanding that many commentators have wanted to explain both this doxology and the two in 5:8f and 9:5f as secondary because they do not fit the style of the context." cf p74 further.

Yahweh declares through the prophet that, because He has made the earth by His power and everything in it, so He has power to dispose of the land as He will (27:5:cf also 32:17). Likewise it is Yahweh who controls day and night by His creation of the heavenly bodies (31:35f). The clearest enunciation of the creative activity of Yahweh in the book of Jeremiah comes in a section (10:1-16) which has been commonly regarded as a later interpolation under the influence of Deutero-Isaiah. This, not only because of its emphasis on the creativity of Yahweh, but also because of its stress on other features that are prominent in Deutero-Isaiah, namely,tthe scorn that is directed towards the idols of heathen nations, and the hymnic celebrations of the power and uniqueness of Yahweh.

This assumption has been questioned recently by R Davidson. (37)

I I I

Davidson challenges the long-standing presupposition that any text that looks similar to Deutero-Isaiah in form or content, or which manifests a developed theological view, must be late in date and dependent on Deutero-Isaiah for its theological insight. The Amos doxologies are one case in point: the text of Jeremiah 10:1-16 is another.

C Stuhlmueller takes this view in a study of creation vocabulary in Deutero-Isaiah. Commenting on the text of Jeremiah 51:15 and 10:12 he states:

> The two identical Jeremian passages can be reduced to one (Jeremiah 10:12) which, "os almost universally admitted to be secondary, even by conservative commentators", and under "the influence of Second Isaiah". (38)

Davidson, however, sees the relationship between the Jeremiah passage and Deutero-Isaiah as coincidental and not intentional. He notes the consensus of critical opinion which is directed towards reliance on Deutero-Isaiah. (39)

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(37) R Davidson: Transactions of GUOS: 1970
(38) C Stuhlmueller: Creative Redemption in Deutero-Isaiah Rome 1970 p221
(39) Cf O Eissfeldt: Introduction to the Old Testament: p359

The grounds on which this judgment is made are that:

1) The passage is reminiscent of Second Isaiah and is probably the work of one of his followers.

2) The passage is the product of the exilic, perhaps even post-exilic age.

3) And consequently, the passage is non-Jeremianic.

Davidson disallows these conclusions in that they are drawn on what, in the main, are superficial grounds. Much of the similarity of thought, imagery and language finds its source, not so much in inter-dependence, as in the fact that the two authors are writing about the same subject/s. As he says:

> What is in fact noteworthy about Jer 10:1-16 is the extent to which it does not echo the vocabulary of Second Isaiah even in contexts where we might reasonably expect it to.

There are also form-critical reasons for rejecting the view that Deutero-Isaiah is reflected heavily in the Jeremiah passage.

> In Second Isaiah material involving God's self-predication and self-declaration in trial speeches predominates; in Jeremiah 10 it is the hymnic praise of Yahweh by the worshipper...so Jeremiah reflects the style of the Psalter rather than Deutero-Isaiah - cf. Pss. 86:8, 89:9, 113:5.

But the most important ground for a re-appraisal of the dating of this section of scripture is to be found when a linguistic comparison is carried out between Jeremiah and those passages in Second Isaiah that display similar characteristics. Davidson finds that rarely is there any linguistic correlation between the two, rather indeed, that as with form so with vocabulary, the parallel is with the Psalter. This is not true only in an isolated case but in almost every instance. Some important examples of this are -

- Jeremiah's use of גדול (great) as a description of Yahweh (cf v6) it "is a characteristic description of Yahweh in the Psalter". (cf Pss 86:10, 95:3, 96:4, 99:2, 135:5, 147:5).
- Jeremiah's use of מלך עולם (everlasting king), "the combination of melek and 'olam is only found outside this passage in the Psalms, e.g. Pss. 10:16".

Davidson makes a strong case which speaks against the accepted critical view and concludes,

> it would be difficult to find language celebrating the power of Yahweh which differs more from that of Second Isaiah than that which we have in this section.

If he is right then it raises anew the whole question of date and provenance and of the supposed dependence on Deutero-Isaiah. Davidson suggests that, rather than a late exilic or post-exilic text here we are presented with a text which provides evidence of connection with the cultic texts of the psalms, and which, if not from the hand of Jeremiah himself, then comes from "the ranks of the prophets who formed part of the religious establishment of Jeremiah's day".

The outcome of this for our own study is interesting. There is one phrase in the Jeremiah passage which does find a parallel at least five times in the writings of Deutero-Isaiah. (40) This is the reference in verse 12 of Jeremiah 10, "and by his understanding stretched out the heavens".

C Stuhlmueller notes the occurences of this verb along with other creation vocabulary in Deutero-Isaiah. (41) The verb is נטה, a common verb used in relation to a number of activities in the Old Testament (cf Gen 12:8, 26:25, Exodus 33:7, 1 Chron. 15:1, Isaiah 5:25, Ezekiel 6:14, Deut. 4:34, Ps 18:10 etc.)

The point of interest is that in Deutero-Isaiah the verb is used in a creation sense in relation to the heavens in precisely the same way as it is used in Jeremiah 10:12. This means, according to Stuhlmueller, that,

> There is reason to believe that Deutero-Isaiah is responsible for the first occurrence of noteh šamaim, or else for its place in later tradition. (42)

He notes further the connection of the occurrences in Deutero-Isaiah with the occurrence of the term in Psalm 104:2

> who coverest thyself with light
> as with a garment,
> who hast stretched out the heavens
> like a tent.

But he is uncertain of their relationship as far as precedence is concerned.

> We cannot be certain whether it was Deutero-Isaiah or the author of Ps 104 first to have made the application and invented the phrase, noteh šamaim; certainly Deutero-Isaiah used the phrase most often and thus popularized it. (43)

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(40) cf Isaiah 40:22, 42:5, 44:24, 45:12, 51:13 and 16
(41) Stuhlmueller: cop.cit.p209ff
(42) op.cit p221
(43) op.cit p221

There is a growing body of opinion that would place Psalm 104 in a pre-exilic setting, connected perhaps with the cultic practices of the sanctuary at Jerusalem. In noting the close parallels between Psalm 104 and the Priestly creation narrative, B W Anderson comments,

> Indeed, the sequence is so similar that probably we should assume that both passages reflect the liturgical practice of the Jerusalem temple. (44)

This view is shared by a number of scholars. (45)
We have already noted the close connection between Jeremiah 10:1-16 and the language of the Psalter, and the contention that this section of Jeremiah is indeed a pre-exilic witness. It is perhaps just as likely that we can postulate common ground between Jeremiah and Psalm 104 and be less in doubt than Stuhlmueller suggests about the question of precedence in relation to the occurrence of noteh šamaim in the Psalm and Deutero-Isaiah. Even if Deutero-Isaiah precedes Psalm 104 then in Jeremiah 10:1-16 we have a witness that the association of נטה with a cosmic creative act was made before the time of Deutero-Isaiah. This schema in no way invalidates Stuhlmueller's view that,

> the greater frequency and more varied use in Dt-Is indicates that the phrase, noteh šamaim, is more at home with the exilic prophet. (46)

Indeed, if Deutero-Isaiah found the phrase and coalesced its traditional senses to serve his greater purpose, as he undoubtedly did with other major motifs, then it further demonstrates his genius as a creative theologian. Stuhlmueller notes the more ordinary uses of נטה in the Old Testament, (47) and concludes that "a convergence of these various uses of nāṭâ appears in Dt-Is' appreciation of the cosmos".

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(44) B W Anderson: op.cit p91
(45) cf e.g. W O E Oesterley: The Psalms Vol II p440f
M Dahood: The Anchor Bible: Pss 101-150: p33
"it would be more prudent to envisage an indirect Egyptian influence (rather than the more direct influence suggested by Von Rad et al of the Egyptian Hymn to Aten) through Canaanite mediation, more specifically through Phoenician intervention... One may endorse, too, Nagel's statement that this influence was probably exercised during the period of the Israelite monarchy; the Psalm would be, then, of pre-exilic composition."
(46) Stuhlmueller: op.cit p221
(47) a) in the Qal - 1) to extend, i.e. to pitch a tent. cf Gen.12:8, 26:25, et al
2) to extend one's hand or arm - a phrase found not only frequently about man but also about Yahweh - cf Is.5:25, Ez.6:14 et al.
b) in the Hiphil: to stretch out, to turn outwards, to incline, to bend, cf. Ps.18:10, 144:5, et al.

In Psalm 104, the term is employed within a pure hymn of creation, and in Jeremiah 10, it is employed within the context of hymnic celebration of Yahweh's power in contrast with the worthless impotence of the heathen idols. In Deutero-Isaiah, however, natah šamaim is used within the broader context of salvation and is made to serve his soteriological purpose. Thus -

- in 40:22-23 the phrase is part of an opening hymn to the cosmic power of Yahweh which provides the basis for the message and promises of deliverance to the captives. The phrase, with others, is used to underline the universal lordship of Yahweh in a way not dissimilar to Jeremiah 10. But here the prophet's purpose is to form a basis for the proclamation of deliverance.
- in 44:24 the phrase is immediately related to the context of redemption by the words which precede it, "the Lord, your Redeemer, who formed you from the womb". Yahweh is the omni-creator who acts from first to last with creative purpose even in raising up Cyrus as the agent of his salvation.
- in 45:12 the argument is extended in contention with some who have expressed dissatisfaction with the way Yahweh works. He is not only "the Holy One of Israel, and his maker", He is the one by whose word all things came into being. That same creative power which stretched out the heavens is that which now rouses Cyrus to do his will. Therefore what right has anyone to question the Creator about his creation?
- in 42:5 where it forms the background to the call of the Servant and stands in closest association with any idea of universal mission.

> Thus says God, the Lord,
> who created the heavens and stretched them out,
> .....
> I am the Lord, I have called you in righteousness
> .....
> I have given you as a covenant to the people,
> a light to the nations.

Here, according to Stuhlmueller, we have the universal creatorship of Yahweh leading to its conclusion, "the universal redemptive role of the 'ebed Yahweh."

- in 51:13 & 16 reading verse 16 with the marginal correction. M T has נטע (plant) but Syriac and other occurrences lead us to expect נטה .
Here again the phrase is part of the message of comfort to the exiles. The might of Yahweh as "your maker, who stretched out the heavens", offsets their fear of any human oppressor.

Such a broad theological development would be more consistent with Deutero-Isaiah's employment of a previously occurring phrase than the other way round. It seems to us that the evidence leans towards a borrowing and extension of the phrase by the prophet rather than finding its initial use with him leading to the other supposedly later interpolations in other texts.

I V

The greatest single witness to a pre-exilic creation consciousness is the creation narrative found in Genesis 2:4b-25, widely considered to be the prologue to the 'J' or Yahwist material in the Pentateuch.
P Ellis echoes the bulk of critical opinion in assigning a tenth century B C date to this material. (cf also Anderson, Weiser, von Rad, Speiser, North, de Vaux, Jacob et al ad. loc) (48) He delineates the following reasons for such a move,

> First, it was in the era of David and Solomon that two of the concepts dominating the Yahwist's saga - the concept of a greater Israel and the concept of a universal God-given mission to rule the nations - pervaded the thinking of Israelite intellectuals. It was an era when hopes were high and optimism unbounded. (49)
> Second, the Davidic history in 1 Sam.16-31 and the Succession History of Solomon in 2 Sam.9-20, 1 Kings 1-2, both of which are dated to the Davidic-Solomonic period, betray similarities in mentality, interests, and psychological approach to the Yahwist's saga.
> Third, the texts foreshadowing the rise of the Davidic dynasty (Gn.49:8-12 and Num.24:7-9, 17-19) appear to have an ad hoc motivation which would be cogent at the time of Solomon, when the fate of the dynasty and the succession were still in question, but much less cogent in later centuries when the dynasty was taken for granted as fully established.

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(48) O Eissfeldt: The Old Testament, An Introduction: pp155-245
A Weiser: The Old Testament; Its Foundation and Development

(49) cf B W Anderson op.cit p56ff for discussion of the implications of the widening of Israel's political horizons under David and Solomon - 'the belief in Yahweh as creator represents the final extension of his historical sovereignty'.

> Fourth, Gen.27:39-40, which speaks of the subjection of Edom to Israel followed by an attempt to throw off that subjection, presumes that the author knows about David's conquest of Edom (cf 2 Sam.8:12-14) and the later revolt of Edom in the time of Solomon (cf 1 Kings 11:14ff). This would indicate a terminus a quo sometime in the reign of Solomon.
> Fifth, nowhere in the Yahwist's saga is there any allusion to the division of Solomon's kingdom after his death in 926. Nor is there any allusion to animosity between Judah and the northern tribes led by the sons of Joseph. In fact, in the blessing of Joseph (Gen.49)...both Joseph and Judah are singled out for praise. This would indicate a terminus ad quem no later than 926BC. (50)

According to this view, which agrees with von Rad's estimate of the Sitz im Leben of the Yahwist (51) we are confronted with the thinking of a theologian of a high and revolutionary order. The Yahwist worked under the pressure of great social, political and religious changes which called for a new and wider expression of the faith of his people. B W Anderson expresses it thus,

> So Israel, emancipated from the cultic limitations of the Confederacy, found her horizons widened as never before; Yahweh's sovereignty was experienced in more spacious ways. If we take our cue from this interpretation (52) creation too was 'secularized'. The creation-faith was taken out of the cult, so to speak, and was made part of the preface (Vorbau) to the Heilsgeschichte in order to show that all men are embraced within Yahweh's sovereign purpose and that secular history, from its very beginning, has its origin and meaning in his sovereign will. (53)

Von Rad's work on Hexateuchal criticism is well known (54) as is his theory of "Yahwist interpolation" into a basic structure expanded from older cultic expressions or affirmations of faith. The hand of the Yahwist is seen in three parts, the Vorbau, the Urgeschichte of the primaeval history, the Einbau, the incorporation of the Sinai material, and the Ausbau, the extension and elaboration of the patriarchal stories. B W Anderson rightly goes on from his words quoted above to note the fact that for the Yahwist/s to undertake such a work would require that the ethos, both culturally and theologically, be suitable for them to undertake it.

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(50) P F Ellis: The Yahwist: 1969 p41ff
(51) G von Rad: Genesis: S C M 1961
(52) cf Th C Vriezen: The Religion of Ancient Israel: Lutterworth: 1967 who argues for an 8th century B C date of compilation based on traditions which reflect a period of transition from a nomadic to agrarian culture: a period in which the city as yet does not figure prominently. He sees the source of the 'J' tradition as being the period of the later judges.
(53) B W Anderson: op.cit p57
(54) G von Rad: The Problem of the Hexateuch and other Essays: English edition 1966.

He further agrees with von Rad in noting that the earliest form of credo (cf Deut.26:5-9) contained, in its original form, no reference or allusion to creation at all. The traditions which do put stress on creation are those of 'J' and 'P', that is, both traditions which spring from a southern source. He adduces this as evidence that the development of creation-faith was closely linked with the cultic centre at Jerusalem, and concludes,

> There is mounting evidence that, as R E Clements puts it, "the Jerusalem cult in particular, with its own distinctive heritage, placed a quite exceptional emphasis upon the cosmic and supranational power of Yahweh as the King of the universe". (55)

It is in consideration of these suggestions that we can begin to see the relevance of the Yahwist as a precedent to Deutero-Isaiah. Although the Yahwist's prime aim was to give credence and foundation to the Davidic monarchy, nevertheless there are clear hints that his handling of the material carried with it the universal ramifications of his view. There are more than hints of a universalist thrust in the whole Yahwist corpus; the main features of the Yahwist pre-history; Adam and Eve, the expulsion from the garden, the confusion of the tower of Babel, and the account of the flood, are all universal in their dimension. (cf von Rad: Genesis: p152ff) B D Napier comments on the patriarchal covenant promises of Genesis 12.

> But the Yahwist, himself knowing, believing, and possibly reciting the ancient credo, himself probably inhabiting the Jerusalem of David and Solomon and having at least a near-witness to the acquisition of the royal city, the crowning gift in the giving of the land - the Yahwist was unable to escape the question "Why?"... Two answers - very congenial answers - were probably already a part of the patriarchal tradition as received by the Yahwist:
> 1 Abraham will be blessed and will become a great nation. (Gen 12:2)
> 2 Yahweh will give the land to Abraham's descendants. (Gen.12:7)
> But this does not exhaust for the Yahwist the meaning of Yahweh's call of Abraham/Israel. This is only the preliminary answer to the "Why?" Yahweh has called and created this entity in his character as Reconciler/Redeemer not simply of Israel but of mankind.
> 3 In you all the families of the earth will be blessed. (Gen.12:3) (56)

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(55) cf R E Clements: Prophecy and Covenant: S B T 43:S C M: 1965 p20
(56) B D Napier: op.cit p32

Most modern versions translate the verse in such a way as to understand a reflexive form of the verb:

> and by you all the families of the earth shall bless themselves. (R S V)

The Niphal form of the verb ברך used here (Gen 12:3) may and should be construed as a reflexive like the Hithpael in Gen 12:18 according to most commentators. Edmund Jacob summarizes the difficulty associated with trying to understand the original intention of the verse,

> The Yahwist presents Abraham's election as an episode which, standing out against the plan of universal history is to pour forth as a blessing upon it. Yet it could be that the promise, several times repeated, that all the peoples of the earth will be blessed or will bless themselves in Abram (Gen 12:3, 18:18, 22:18, 26:4, 28:14), is not so definite concerning the missionary duty as seems at first sight, for according to the similar grammatical constrictions of Gen 48:20, Jer 29:22 and Zech 8:13, the blessing of Abraham is to be understood in an exemplary sense as being among the peoples the prototype of blessing... But the solemnity of the formula and specially the general plan of the Yahwist's book provoke us rather to see between Abraham and the peoples a relationship of cause and effect and the assertion of the universal mission of the people of Israel. (57)

8/ Even those scholars who are loath to see any call to active mission on the part of God's people admit that the same dimensions are present in Gen 12:3. No matter what translation is accepted for the text it leaves us, at the very least, with a clear indication that the role of Abraham/Israel is to be significant for all the peoples of the earth.
We may accept the delimitations of Gelin upon the meaning of the word "universal" in such a context.

> This universalistic proclamation in no way imposes a missionary task upon Abraham, that is, participation in a human effort for the conversion of the families of the earth. (58)

This in no way detracts from the fact, however, that here, in an early corpus of literature, we have witness of a theological mentality that went far beyond the bounds of one people or nation, and which, whilst reflecting upon its own life as a people, saw purpose in that life which

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(57) E Jacob: Theology of the Old Testament: Eng ed London 1958 p217
(58) A Gelin: Lidee Missionaire dans la Bible: 1956. Quoted by R Martin Achard: A Light to the Nations p34

had repercussions for the life of all mankind. R Martin-Achard comments on this Genesis text.

> No matter what translation is proposed for Gen xii.3 the text shows that Abraham plays an important role for all mankind... Abraham is chosen, not just for his own glory, the good fortune of his descendants, or the misery of his enemies; rather, with him Yahweh begins a new chapter in the history of man. Abraham is the instrument for the redemption of the world. Gen xii.1ff marks a turning point - a beginning as well as an end: with it the history of the primordial period (Urgeschichte) - Gen 1-XI - comes to a close, and with it the age of promise (Gen xi f) begins. (59) (60)

It is easy to see that it is a short step from the affirmations of the Yahwist creation narrative and its extension/ to the high point of the 18
message of Deutero-Isaiah clothed in the words of the second of the Servant Songs.

> It is too light a thing that you should
> be my servant
> To raise up the tribes of Jacob
> and to restore the preserved of Israel;
> I will give you as a light to the nations,
> that my salvation may reach to the
> end of the earth
>
> (Isaiah Chapter 49:6)

Perhaps even more striking is the parallel between the Yahwist's pattern of creation - election - purpose, and that of Deutero-Isaiah as he presents it in Chapter 42:5-6.

> Thus says God, the Lord,
> who created the heavens and stretched them out,
> who spread forth the earth and what comes from it,
> who gives breath to the people upon it,
> and spirit to those who walk in it:
> I am the Lord, I have called you in righteousness,
> I have taken you by the hand and kept you;
> I have given you as a covenant to the people,
> a light to the nations.

Some scholars have gone so far as suggesting a direct link between the work of the Yahwist and that of Deutero-Isaiah insomuch as both were concerned to focus in on God's mighty acts summed up in three phrases; into...out of...into this place.

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(59) R Martin-Achard: A Light to the Nations: Oliver & Boyd 1962 p35
(60) cf the thesis of R E Clements: Abraham and David, who sees the Yahwist history in terms of "promise and fulfilment". The promises through Abraham are fulfilled in the Davidic monarchy and blessing accrues to other peoples under the hegemony of the Davidic dynasty.

> This is the ultimate meaning of Yahweh's rule demonstrated in his mighty acts - into Egypt, out of Egypt, into this place. It remains still the ultimate meaning of events a half a millenium later and no less demonstrating God's rule in mighty acts - into Babylon, out of Babylon, into this place. The "Why?" in both instances requires an articulated creation - faith, creation not removed nor speculatively apprehended, but grasped and confronted in the same historical plane as no less an event, as itself a mighty act explaining, giving meaning to, the mighty acts of Yahweh witnessed in Israel's history. (61)

V

The most outstanding parallels with Deutero-Isaiah's emphasis on Yahweh as creator, and with his use of the idea, are to be found in the creation narrative of Genesis Chapter 1:1-2:4a, the Priestly account of creation. Apart from similarities in the vocabulary employed there are also certain parallels between the theological patterns and motifs used by both. A S Kapelrud has drawn attention to the close parallels that exist between the two and concludes that there must be a close affinity between them. For example, in relation to the link that is found between Noah, the covenant, and the waters of the flood,

> It is also an important theme in P, that God created the first man who was the ancestor of Noah, with whom God made his first covenant, Gen 9: 1-7. P describes this as an "everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth" (Gen 9:16)... This combination of the covenant, Noah, and the flood waters is characteristic of the narrative of P and is not found in any other layers of the tradition... In SI, however, we find the same combination which is characteristic of P. This can be easily seen e.g. in Is. 54:9-10. "For this is as the waters of Noah to me, for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so I have sworn that I would not be angry with you, nor rebuke you..." (62)

It is Kapelrud's conclusion that the author of Isaiah 54 must have been familiar with the P story of the flood, or at least familiar with it in a form that is the same as that found in the Massoretic text.

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(61) B D Napier: op.cit p33
(62) A S Kapelrud: The Date of the Priestly Code: Annual Swedish Theological ~~Journal~~ Institute: Vol III 1964 pp58-64

> He alludes to the passages which came from the ancient traditions, as well as to the combination of covenant, Noah and flood waters, which was only found in P. (63)

This raises the question of the relationship between the Priestly account and Deutero-Isaiah, and whether one was dependent on the other, and if so, which on which? Such studies have been conducted at length and the results remain pretty inconclusive.

In terms of the general outline J E D Ezekiel P the words of H H Rowley reflect what has become almost critical orthodoxy.

> none of the rival views can accommodate so many of the facts, or can escape far more difficulties. (64) (65)

R H Pfeiffer spoke for many scholars when he wrote,

> The Priestly Code is a fifth century midrash, or historical commentary, on the embryonic Pentateuch (JED) including a series of narratives often illustrating legal precedents, and a codification of ritual laws based on earlier codes. (66)

Nevertheless, since the time of Pfeiffer's Introduction there has been a growing caution against developing too black and white a view of the sources. In relation to the Priestly code this has led to the recognition that, even if we are presented with a fifth century source, there is need to remember the history and process of development which must have lain behind the document as we know it. There is a need to recognize that a source like P is itself a composite work made up of portions which themselves issue from varying situations and times.

> The question of P's date is difficult to solve for several reasons. Numerous sections, especially in the other books of the Tetrateuch, have long been relegated by the critics to a relatively late age, after the Babylonian exile in many instances. Of late, however, there has been a growing sentiment - backed by a substantial amount of internal evidence - in favour of dating various portions of P to pre-Exilic times, and in some cases to the premonarchic period. This evidence embraces even certain passages in the ritualistic book of Leviticus... The assumption that commends itself in these circumstances is that P was not an individual,

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(63) op.cit p59
(64) H H Rowley: The Growth of the Old Testament : London 1950 p46
(65) See for a recent and detailed study of the Graf-Wellhausen position on the sources and their dating in the Pentateuch, and for a full review of modern treatments of, or challenges upon, the same - R J Thompson: Moses and the Law in a Century of Criticism since Graf : S V T XIX Leiden 1970
(66) R H Pfeiffer: Introduction to the Old Testament: New York 1948 p188

> or even a group of like-minded contemporaries, but a school with an unbroken history reaching back to early Israelite times, and continuing until the Exile and beyond. Such a hypothesis would readily account for the essential homogeneity of the underlying traditions, while not precluding such occasional discrepancies as, for example, in the lists of Esau's wives. (67)

R Davidson sounds a necessary note of caution against thinking that once a date has been decided for any corpus of material that the most essential questions have been answered anyway.

> The date assigned to a source does not decide the antiquity of the material within that source, nor is it a sure guide to the religious value of that material. It is demonstrable, for example, that P, the latest source, contains very old material, particularly in its description of religious rites which tend to be tenaciously conservative. (68)

It is becoming more and more evident that it is too simplistic a view, and a dangerous tendency for interpretation, to say that what is chronologically prior must therefore be theologically inferior. Or indeed, that the theologically inferior must, per se, be chronologically prior. It is just this tendency which has led C Stuhlmueller, who looks upon Deutero-Isaiah's handling of the creation theme as inferior to that of P, to give Deutero-Isaiah a firm date prior to that of P. (69) Against Stuhlmueller, A S Kapelrud would support the generally held outline of J E D Ezekiel P, but would insert the writings of P somewhere between Ezekiel and Deutero-Isaiah. (70) He notes the similarities in argument and terminology between P and Deutero-Isaiah; their view of God as the mighty creator is the same, the employment of the word bara' to describe God's act of creation is a central word for both P and Deutero-Isaiah. Further, the terminology used to describe the circumstances and purpose of the creative act ~~are~~ is similar, especially in the use of such terms as תהו and לא־תהו. On the strength of these, and other instances, Kapelrud argues that Deutero-Isaiah must have known at least the tradition which lay behind the Priestly document.

> The examples and passages cited from SI indicate very strongly that the prophet not only knew Gen 1-2 in the form these chapters have in the Massoretic text, but he also

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(67) E A Speiser: Genesis: The Anchor Bible New York 1964 pXXVI
(68) R Davidson: Genesis 1-11: The Cambridge Bible Commentary: 1973 p6
(69) C Stuhlmueller: Creative Redemption in Deutero-Isaiah: Rome 1970 p156
(70) A S Kapelrud, op.cit

> supposed that his audience knew the passages so that he could naturally allude to them in a few words here and there in his speeches. (71)

This leads him to the conclusion that P must have been in its present form not later than 550 BC and a terminus a quo of 585 BC is suggested by the fact that no traces of P are to be found in Jeremiah or Ezekiel.
It is becoming increasingly recognized that it is almost impossible, in the light of present knowledge, to give a precise date to the Priestly Document, or to see clearly what the precise reciprocity between it and Deutero-Isaiah might be. In relation to the difficulty in determining a precise meaning for the opening word of Genesis Chapter 1 בראשית on the grounds of linguistic usage or parallels in other witnesses, W Eichrodt comments,

> In addition the question as to whether a reciprocal influence exists among the witnesses established in Second Isaiah, Proverbs, and in P...scarcely permits an answer. Von Rad has rightly rejected the attempt to affix a precise date to the Priestly document of the Hexateuch, a work strongly rooted in the priestly tradition which was preserved and handed down through the centuries. (72)

The same might be said about the use of the creation motif in Deutero-Isaiah and the concept of creation presented in the Priestly narrative. It has been argued, on the one hand, that Deutero-Isaiah's concept and his use of creation vocabulary are less well developed and theologically inferior to that of P.(73) and on the other, that he takes an older, narrower concept of terms like bara' and transforms them into concepts that have to do with Yahweh's wider and continuing work of creation in the deliverance and re-creation of His people Israel. (74)
The difficulty of coming to any real conclusion in the matter is seen by the fact that Stuhlmueller (75) takes the same evidence as Kapelrud (76) and lays a very different interpretation upon it.

> For three separate reasons we are inclined to deny any dependency of Dt-Is upon the P account of creation as existing now in Gen 1:1-2:4a.
> a) The undeveloped and somewhat inconsistent form of Dt-Is' idea of creation places him theologically inferior to P and

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(71) A S Kapelrud: op.cit p61
(72) W Eichrodt: In the Beginning: Israel's Prophetic Heritage: ed. Anderson and Harreson: 1962 p6
(73) C Westermann: Das Reden von Schöpfer und Schöpfung im Alten Testament BZAW: 1967; pp238-44
(74) P Humbert: Emploi et portée du verbe bara(créer) dans l'Ancien Testament: TZBas 3(1947) pp401-22
(75) C Stuhlmueller: op.cit
(76) A S Kapelrud: op.cit

> and for that reason presumably chronologically prior as well. While P achieved a fuller theological presentation of creation as such, Dt-Is's attention centred on the person of Yahweh the creator. P is concerned with the cosmic dimension of creation; Dt-Is limited his interest to Yahweh as the creator of Israel...
> b) Gen 1:1-2 in some way associates chaos (tohu wabohu) with creation. In the P account, Yahweh gradually reduces chaos to an orderly, fruitful and peaceful universe. In 45:18, however, Dt-Is categorically denies any such association of creation with chaos: lo - tohu bᵉra'ah. Dt-Is is hardly writing to correct or clarify the ancient tradition of P, for he immediately appeals to Israel's traditions for support (45:19,21) Either the more advanced presentation of P did not yet exist, or else it did not impress Dt-Is.
> c) In Deutero-Isaian texts, other than 45:18-19, the prophet certainly associates Yahweh with chaos, but in a way different from P. In the Bk Con Yahweh struggles like a warrior against mahšak (42:14-16), violently entangles in a Chaoskampf (51:9-10; 44:27), and...liberates his people from chaos. In Gen 1:1-2:4a, on the contrary, Yahweh never engages in battle with tehom; and tohu wabohu are completely passive before him.

It is not necessary to the purpose of this paper to discover a precise connection between P and Deutero-Isaiah. What is clear is that for Deutero-Isaiah the creation-faith exemplified in his use of the word ברא was important to his task of rebuilding the hopes of the exiles and in giving them ground for expectancy in a situation when everything seemed to militate against it. What is also clear is that for him ברא was not only a word which denoted the work of Yahweh in primal creation, but also that work of new creation which Yahweh was about to do in the experience of His people. (77)

Perhaps we can go no further than a comment by Stuhlmueller,

> Around the time of the exile, however, bara' began to appear in the books of Deut., Jer., and Ezek., and after the exile in P (78)

However, another statement by the same writer, causes us to look more closely at how Deutero-Isaiah did employ the word, and at some of the statements which have been made about that.

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(77) cf B W Anderson: Creation versus Chaos: 1967 p124f, who lists the various creation verbs used by Deutero-Isaiah and shows their relative importance and occurence, and, in particular the way he employs bara'.
(78) C Stuhlmueller: op.cit p120
cf Deut 4:32, Jer 31:22, Ezek 21:35, 28:13, 15

In none of the pre'exilic passages do we meet bara' so impressively, and not even in P so frequently, as in Dt-Is.

The word ברא and its cognates is used some 16 times in Chapters 40-55 of Isaiah. It occurs only four times in the succeeding chapters (55-66), and within Deutero-Isaiah the term is used only once (54:16) outside Chapters 40-48. The occurrences within Deutero-Isaiah are interesting both from the point of view of context and frequency.

40:26 - Lift up your eyes on high and see:
Who created these?

The object of the verb is the heavenly host.

40:28 - the participle בורא is used.

The Creator of the ends of the earth

41:20 - the Holy one of Israel has created it.

The subject of the passage vv17-20 is the new exodus that Yahweh is about to enact on behalf of his people.

42:5 - Thus says God...who created the heavens and stretched them out.

Again the participle is used. The act of material creation is the background against which the call of the servant is set.

43:1 - he who created you, O Jacob

43:7 - every one who is called by my name,
whom I have created for my glory.

These words are spoken in relation to the recovery of all the peoples who are scattered in exile.

43:15 - the Creator of Israel, your King.

Again the participle is used.

45:7 - (bis)
I form light and create darkness
I make weal and create woe.

45:8 - let the earth open, that salvation may sprout forth,
and let it cause righteousness to spring up also;
I the Lord have created it.

Used in relation to the new work of salvation which Yahweh is about to do.

45:12 - I made the earth,
and created man upon it.

Here the reference to the primordial deeds of Yahweh forms the answer to those who object to His present working in the calling of Cyrus.

45:18 - (bis)
For thus says the Lord,
who created the heavens...
he did not create it a chaos,
he formed it to be inhabited.

Within the confines of this verse we have the occurrence of all three major creation words in Deutero-Isaiah, יצר עשה ברא. bara' and 'asah are the two verbs which recur often in the present P narrative; cf. Gen 1:1 et al and Gen 1:7 et al. yatzar is the verb which is used by the Yahwist in his description of the creation of man, cf Gen 2:7. (79)

48:7 - They are created now, not long ago;
before today you have never heard of them.
Used in relation to the new things that Yahweh is about to do on behalf of his people. (80)

54:16 - (bis)
Behold I have created the smith
who blows the fire of coals...
I have also created the ravager to destroy.

In a review like this certain things become clear:

1) Of the 16 occurrences of bara' in Deutero-Isaiah at least six relate to the work of Yahweh in primordial creation; eight, if the instances of 45:7 (bis) are taken as a reference to the role of chaos in the P narrative, although the verbs here do not so much relate to Yahweh's actions in the past as to what he does in the present. The others are 40:26, 28, 42:5, 45:12, 45:18 (bis).

Only three occurrences of the verb relate to the formation of Israel by Yahweh whereas eight out of the eleven occurrences of yatzar (the J term) relate to the forming of Israel by Yahweh (cf 43:1, 7, 21, 44:2,21, 24, 45:11, 49:5). The texts in which bara' relates to the creation of Israel are all found in the same section, namely 43:1, 7, 15 and the

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(79) cf the comments of B W Anderson: Creation versus Chaos p123ff. In this respect, the situation is similar to the Priestly creation story where the verbs "create" (bara') and "make" ('asah) are used interchangeably in the present form of the story. The reason for this is probably the fact that the Priestly story is the end-product of a long history of liturgical use.
(80) cf The Former Things and the New Things in Deutero-Isaiah, a study on the theme by C R North in Studies in Old Testament Prophecy: ed. H H Rowley: Edinburgh 1950 p111ff

last of these is the title given to Yahweh, the Creator of Israel. Three occurrences (five if the final usage is included which refers to Yahweh's sovereign power made available to His people: 54:16) refer to the eschatological deeds of Yahweh in the "new things" He is about to perform. These are 41:20, 45:8, 48:7.(81)

It is strange, in the light of all this, how Stuhlmueller can arrive at his opinion that,

> Dt-Is's attention centred on the person of Yahweh the Creator. P is concerned with the cosmic dimension of creation; Dt-Is limited his interest to Yahweh as the Creator of Israel.

It is quite true that Deutero-Isaiah made use of his concept of Yahweh as Creator in a different way from the Priestly writer but there are close affinities between the two.

a) They both used the term to describe the creation of the heavens and the earth, cf Gen 1:1 with Isaiah 40:26, 45:18.

b) They both use the term to describe Yahweh's activity in creating man/mankind. cf Gen 1:27 with Isaiah 45:12 And those passages in Ch 43 which relate to Yahweh's creation of Jacob (43:1) and "everyone whom I created for my glory" (43:7) are more reminiscent of Gen 1:27 than anywhere else - "So God created man in his own image".

c) Both use the word as a comprehensive term to describe the whole work of creation, cf Gen 2:3 "God rested from all his work which he had done in creation": Gen 6:7 where God repents for all the work he has done and promises to blot out all his creation. The term is made to include not only the heavens and the earth but, "man and beast and creeping things and birds of the air".

Deutero-Isaiah uses the term in the same spirit, this time to take in all God's acts of creation, which, for the prophet, includes all that he is about to do. B W Anderson is right when he says,

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(81) cf C Stuhlmueller op.cit p211, for a different categorization of the texts - "we thus see that in only three out of the sixteen occurrences of bara' is the material universe the immediate or principal object of the verb". Stuhlmueller makes 40:28 "the ends of the earth" mean not the entire world, but the "Gentile area where Israel has been driven into exile, far from her native land".
cf D Hollenberg: V T S 19: 1969 pp15ff for a similar interpretation.

> In Second Isaiah's prophecy creation is a broad conception which includes all God's saving actions, from the beginning of history to its consummation. (82)

2) It has long been recognized that, for Deutero-Isaiah, Yahweh's action as creator is closely interwoven with his action as redeemer. The prophet uses his statements about creation to bring actual meaning into the present. (83) Because of this it has sometimes been suggested that Deutero-Isaiah's use of bara' and his concept of creation is inferior, or at least very different, from that of the Priestly writers.
But two factors need to be borne in mind when making such a value judgment:

a) Their similarity in purpose. Because P employs bara' only in relation to the material universe the mistake can be made in thinking that his purpose in presenting a creation narrative was an end in itself. But there is a growing awareness that this was not so. Just as has already been noted in relation to the Yahwist with his theological/political motivation so it can be said that the Priestly writer had a wider purpose. W Eichrodt puts it thus,

> The dominant theme of the Priestly narrative is preparation of the salvation realized in God's people as a divine gift of fundamental importance to the world, one which takes form little by little in ever new divine ordinances and constitutes the deepest meaning of the course of history. The significance of Israel's salvation for the world finds reflection even in the choice of decisive manifestations in which P sees the divine revelation unveiled: creation, covenant with Noah, covenant with Abraham, revelation on Sinai... The primordial action of God, through which he has determined the basic order of the earthly world becomes in this way a permanent guarantee for the inevitability and eternal continuance of the salvation granted to Israel. (84)

If this is so then it is clear that the role of creation in the Priestly tradition fulfils a similar function to that of Deutero-Isaiah who also approaches and uses the theme with a soteriological purpose. The close connection between creation and history which is so easily perceived in the writings of the prophet is also highlighted in the writings of the Priestly authors/s by some words of E Jacob as he comments on the occurrence of בָּרָא in Genesis 1:1.

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(82) B W Anderson: op.cit p123
(83) R Rendtorff: Die theologische Stellung des Schöpferglaubens bei Deutero-Jesaja : ZTK 51 (1954) p3ff
(84) W Eichrodt: op.cit p6

> The word reshit (Gen 1:1) is a whole plan of action, because it shows us that God's plan in history has creation as its starting point. The same Priestly author uses the term toledot for the creation of the heavens and the earth (Gen 2:4) as well as for the genealogy of the patriarchs and still today the Jews express this unity of creation and history by dating their calendar from the creation of the world. (85)

b) Their dissimilarity in presentation. We have already noted with Kapelrud the striking similarities that exist even in the vocabulary of the two writers, butat the same time are constrained to take note of the differences. For example, although Deutero-Isaiah echoes some of the language of the Priestly writer he does so only partially at times. For instance, in 45:18 he uses the word תֹהוּ whereas it is used in a seemingly more developed way by the Priestly tradition as a couplet in the phrase tohu wabohu, a form only repeated in Jeremiah. (86) Again, while it is clear that the Priestly author presents a logical and progressive narrative in which the pieces fit purposefully together, it is also clear that Deutero-Isaiah is much less orderly in his use of the material. For example, the theme of creation is brought into his message time and again for a variety of purposes. In the light of such differences it has been presumed that Deutero-Isaiah must be prior to the Priestly tradition and inferior to it in thought.

However another factor must be borne in mind. It is important to try and recognize the context out of which the varying presentations arise and the purpose for which they were written.

As long ago as 1936 von Rad drew attention to the connection between Psalm 104 and the P narrative of creation (87) but he failed to see a deeper connection with regard to the context out of which both probably arose. Much more recently recognition has been given to the fact that Psalm 104 and P creation are connected, and probably closely, in at least two ways.

One. There is a remarkable similarity in the sequence of the material in the way it is presented in Psalm 104 and Genesis 1:1-2:4a. B W Anderson has laid the two side by side so that the correlation can be

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(85) E Jacob: Theology of the Old Testament, p138

(86) cf C Stuhlmueller: op.cit p155ff for a discussion of such terms and their less developed use by Deutero-Isaiah.

(87) G von Rad: Das theologische Problem des altestamentlichen Schöpfungsglaubens in Werden und Wesen des Alten Testament: 1936

examined. (88) He agrees with von Rad that it is strikingly like the ancient Egyptian Hymn to Aten but goes beyond him in agreeing with S Terrain by suggesting an almost direct inter-dependence between the two sections. (89)

Two. Both passages of scripture find their home within the cult at Jerusalem. Anderson concludes about the two pieces,

> The Psalmist is filled with a profound sense of wonder as he surveys the whole range of God's creation. The scope of thought is matched by the creation story of Genesis 1. Indeed, the sequence is so similar that probably we should assume that both passages reflect the liturgical practice of the Jerusalem temple. (90)

If these two suggestions are correct then we are presented with a clear indication as to why the authors use the material in the style they do. By the very nature of the case the Priestly narrative would have to be presented in a highly formalized style for cultic recitation or recollection. It was suitable to the needs of worship and didactic exercise. No doubt the very style of the presentation tells us something about the sort of people who may lie behind its compilation; those who were at home within the neat and ordered presentation of things with a ritualistic situation.

When one turns to Deutero-Isaiah, however, one is face to face with the appeal of an evangelist. His style is hasty, challenging, hortative, meant to engender hope and drive towards the realization of a commission. His word is both comforting and creative. It stands to reason that to meet such a purpose he would be less collected and orderly.

3) Deutero-Isaiah employs bara' as a leading motif within his message and this indicates a strong tendency on the part of the prophet to use the creation theme as a basis for his message of hope.

Von Rad has found a large following for his thesis that creation-faith plays only a relatively subordinate role within Deutero-Isaiah. He comments,

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(88) B W Anderson: op.cit p91ff

(89) S Terrain: Creation, Cultus, and Faith in the Psalter. Quoted by B W Anderson, footnote 18 p91: op.cit unavailable to the present writer.

(90) He quotes in support P Humbert: la relation de Genèse 1 et du Psalm 104 avec la liturgue du Nouvel - An israélite. Opuscles d'un Hebraisant: 1958 pp60-82. It may be that in the light of the close affinity to the Egyptian Hymn Ps 104 is relatively early and prior to Gen 1 in which case the P tradition may demonstrate dependence on it.

> Even a quick glance at the passages in question shows that the allusions to Yahweh as the creator are far from being the primary subject of Deutero-Isaiah's message. Thus in, for example, Is.XLII:5 or XLIII:1 he uses, in subordinate clauses, hymn-like descriptions of Yahweh such as "he who created the heavens", "he who created you, who formed you", but only to pass over in the principal clause to a soteriological statement, "fear not, I redeem thee". (91)

The tendency is to play down the significance of the idea of Yahweh as Creator in Deutero-Isaiah or to say that Deutero-Isaiah only came to that insight by way of the proclamation of Yahweh as Redeemer. Stuhlmueller (92), in an earlier article, goes to some lengths to argue that Deutero-Isaiah always starts from his use of bara' in relation to "God's personal historical acts of love and power towards his chosen people", and quotes 48:7, 41:20, and 45:8, as the starting points of that process. Only in the process of development does the word come to have real significance in relation to primordial creation.

> Even though the event surpasses all earthly powers (cf 45:8) still, the earth is the theater of action and men are the actors...the process of emphasizing material creation in the word bara' is now in progress. (93)

However an examination of the text would lead one to suppose that it may be more feasible to argue the other way round, that is, the prophet is employing traditional language about the earth producing and relating to an event that goes far beyond the events of primordial creation. This event is to bring forth the salvation and righteousness which are to accompany Yahweh's new work of creation. Stuhlmueller insists that redemptive creation is primary for Deutero-Isaiah, and that it is from his understanding of this that he moves back to statements relating to primordial creation.

> The historical act of recreating Israel unveils God's power in creating the universe out of primal chaos. (94)

He expands his thesis in a later article on the same theme,

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(91) G von Rad: Old Testament Theology: Vol 1 p137
(92) C Stuhlmueller: Creation in Second Isaiah: CBQ 21: 1959 p446f
(93) op.cit p447
(94) op.cit p451

> Deutero-Isaiah does not usually proceed from cosmic creation to the historical re-creation of a new Israel. Instead, he ordinarily reverses the process; he begins with historical redemptive acts which he enriches by ever more expansive references to cosmic creative acts. (95)

This view has been questioned by P Humbert (96) who suggests that, in fact, Deutero-Isaiah takes bara' with its older usage in relation to the creation of the material universe and expands it and develops it to comprehend the creation of Israel and the creation of the "new things".

Our previous study has tended to demonstrate that such movements between the historical and primordial applications of the term had already taken place widely within the liturgical and religio/political traditions of ancient Israel, especially in the Yahwist and Priestly traditions. If this be the case then there is little need to view Deutero-Isaiah as the originator of such a move. Likewise it means, that with a developed creation consciousness there was no reason why the prophet could not be free to make a direct appeal to Yahweh's prowess within creation as the ground for his message of hope and new creation. The uses of the term, as demonstrated in Part 1 of this section, tend to show that this is, in fact, what he did.

Ph. B Harner (97) takes a further issue with von Rad in the latter's view that creation faith is entirely incorporated into the dynamic of the prophetic salvation faith. He demonstrates how, in a number of passages, creation faith alone (without immediate reference to another tradition such as the exodus, for example) serves as the context and basis for the proclamation that Yahweh is about to restore Israel. (cf 40:27-31, 44:24-28, 45:11-13, 50:1-3, 51:12-16, 54:4-8). It is Harner's view that creation faith has a very significant role to play in Deutero-Isaiah and although it is not an "independent, self-contained article of faith", it nevertheless has a very important place within the writings.

> Creation-faith is not simply absorbed into the structure of salvation-faith. It plays a central role in the prophet's thought by serving as a fulcrum in balancing the Exodus tradition with the expectation of imminent restoration. Without a certain reality of its own, it could not perform this important function. (98)

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(95) C Stuhlmueller: Creation-Faith in Deutero-Isaiah: ~~V T 17~~ CBQ 29 495: 1967 p~~298~~ff
(96) P Humbert: op.cit
(97) Ph. B Harner: Creation-Faith in Deutero-Isaiah: V T 17: 1967 p298ff
(98) Harner: op.cit p305

Harner's point is that, while Deutero-Isaiah recalls the people to what Yahweh has done in the deliverance from Egypt in the first exodus (more than once,) his purpose is to take them forward to what Yahweh is about to do in the experience of the new exodus. And so a certain tension between these two builds up,

> Remember not the former things,
> nor consider the things of old.
> Behold, I am doing a new thing (Isaiah Chapter 43:18)

The link between the two is Yahweh's power as Creator:

Harner's second criticism lies in the area of our western tendency to look at things in a fragmented way, whereas the ancient Israelites had a "tendency to apprehend a totality and integrate details in the whole". He continues,

> The Israelites were less inclined than we are today to analyse cause and effect or to distinguish the primary from the subordinate. Perhaps this is why our categories of thought seem inadequate when we ask about the relation between salvation faith and creation faith for II Isaiah. It may indeed be true that the Israelites first came to know Yahweh as Lord of history, and their belief in him as Creator was never divorced from this primary context of meaning. But for II Isaiah creation faith, although still "subordinate", becomes so important that it can serve as the basis for his belief in Yahweh's imminent redemption of Israel. (99)

A straightforward reading of the texts in question would suggest that Harner is nearer the truth than those he differs from. Deutero-Isaiah seems to feel free to use the concept of creation to serve his purpose as necessary. On the one hand, he appeals to the theological affirmation of Yahweh's primal creative power as the ground of hope in his capability to perform his promises. On the other, he employs creation language to describe Yahweh's unique relationship with his people, particularly through creative acts such as the first Exodus. Likewise he resorts to the imagery of creation to impress upon the minds of his hearers something of the majesty of the creative work Yahweh is about to perform on their behalf. Yahweh's power over nature is used to portray the exultant gladness and joy that will accompany his great work of liberation.
The judgment of Stuhlmueller seems to us to sum up the case in relation to Deutero-Isaiah's employment of the creation language,

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(99) C Stuhlmueller: C B Q op.cit p446

> This "Great Unknown" did not hit upon bara' by chance. The poems of 40-55 reveal a master craftsman who carefully chooses his words and sings with exquisite beauty. Not only that, but he deliberately gives new resonance or meaning to older words. (100)

It is significant, we feel, that apart from the Priestly tradition (101) the other two older usages of which we can be reasonably sure, namely Psalm 104:30 and Psalm 89:11-12, both relate to Yahweh's activity in primordial creation with reference to the material universe. It would be natural that the prophet should find this term, and all its related ideas, so closely connected with the cultic liturgy, so suitable to his evangelical purpose.

4) As indicated at the beginning of this chapter, there are clear signs within Deutero-Isaiah of an appeal being made to a shared tradition and common theology. This is particularly so in consideration of the creation motif.

Apart from the numerous affinities which we have noted with many of the traditions of Israel that had preceded the prophet, Deutero-Isaiah poses his questions in such a way that would suggest a presupposed answer. They give a clear indication of the fact that the concept of Yahweh as Creator was something that had been heard of before in Israel, and indeed, that this had become an article of faith before the prophet's own use of the theme. The clearest examples of this tendency are found in Chapter 40,

> Have you not known? have you not heard?
> Has it not been told you from the beginning?
> Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth?
> (Isaiah Chapter 40:21)

> Have you not known? have you not heard?
> The Lord is the everlasting God,
> the Creator of the ends of the earth.
> (Isaiah Chapter 40:28)

These questions are posed in such a way as to make room for only one possible answer: of course they had heard, it was common knowledge, it belonged to their heritage. The answer to such questions was provided time and again within the great hymns of their liturgy. (cf Pss 19:1ff, Ps 102:25ff, et al)

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(100) C Stuhlmueller: C B Q op.cit p446

(101) cf A S Kapelrud: op.cit p61: who is certain that the frequent and important place given by Deutero-Isaiah to terms such as בָּרָא (cf Is 40:17, 23; 41:29; 44:9; 45:18, 19; 49:4) witnesses to the fact that the writer was dependant on the P tradition for much of his vocabulary.

Ph. B Harner: op.cit p298: who thinks that there may be a case for thinking that Deutero-Isaiah went beyond P in his conception of creation - "There can be no question that II Isaiah regarded Yahweh as creator of darkness as well as light, he may even go further than the P writer in Gen 1:1-5, where light alone is explicitly mentioned as the result of God's creative work."

The importance of the prophet's appeal to a shared tradition of such magnitude (i.e. that Yahweh is indeed creator of all things and Lord of the universe) has been highlighted by U Simon (102) in his comments on this section of Isaiah 40. He stresses the necessary connection between the first part of the chapter (verses 1-11) and the questions of verses 12 et al with regard to the creatorial activity of Yahweh.

The question of Yahweh's creatorial sovereignty is very important as far as the prophet's polemic with paganism is concerned. In Chapter 44 Deutero-Isaiah is about to take issue with those who fashion gods for themselves out of wood and stone. Here in Chapter 40:11 the prophet has just drawn an analogy between the activity of a shepherd and Yahweh's pastoral concern for His people, Israel.

But it is important to understand the limits of such an analogy. To speak of Yahweh as "feeding his flock like a shepherd" is very different from the employment of such analogical language to describe "those ridiculous projections from the temporal to the eternal of paganism".

> In other words the prophet's thought does not jump from the human shepherd to God the shepherd, but rather compares the dynamic of God's orderly creativeness with its reflection in the shepherding activity. (103)

This limitation on the use of analogy is ensured by the questions of verses 12 and 21 inasmuch as the implied answers to them stress the absolute transcendence of Yahweh, the Creator, above the material and temporal. It was important, in such an area, for the prophet to be able to make an appeal to an understanding of Yahweh that was commonly recognized.

> the prophet optimistically appeals to a certain fundamental knowledge in Israel which should reject these absurdities that come tumbling down with the slightest breeze. (104)

These brief interrogative hints therefore serve to further strengthen our view that Deutero-Isaiah is dealing with theological coinage that had been minted in earlier ages in Israel's religious history. They also enable us to understand even more clearly the important place that such traditions had in the ongoing development of the people's understanding and experience of God.

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(102) U Simon: A Theology of Salvation: S P C K 1953 p56ff
(103) op.cit p59
(104) op.cit p57

Such comprehensive use of the creation idea in Second Isaiah leads to certain reflections:

a) It is clear that if the prophet were working with theological coinage that had already been minted in the ages which preceeded him then it is unlikely that he would have received the creation idea without taking into his thinking some of the major developments associated with it. We have noted how both the Yahwist tradition and the Priestly tradition made use of the creation motif to serve a wider soteriological purpose and it is clear that this was true to a large extent of the prophet of the exile as well. The promise of the Abrahamic blessing which is so central to the understanding of the Yahwist's purpose, and the Priestly 'plan of action' enunciated in his very opening word in Genesis Chapter 1, are both reflected in the concern of Deutero-Isaiah to connect the power of Yahweh the Creator with His salvific purpose through His servant people.

b) The evidence presented by every strand in our study suggests that it was the habit of Deutero-Isaiah to take ideas and material which he encountered within older traditions and consistently to enlarge and broaden these ideas until they became comprehensive in their range. This is demonstrated, for example, in his employment of the term ברא in comparison with the use of it by his forerunners Jeremiah and the writer of Psalm 104. Not only does he, like them, connect it with the act of primordial creation and with the supremacy of Yahweh over 'no gods', but he goes on to use it in connection with Yahweh's saving acts of re-creation in the experience of his people. There is no limit in his thinking to the power of the omni-creator. This very term is used in conjunction with Yahweh's commission to his servant in relation to the nations (42:5).

c) Therefore, without defining too closely what is meant by 'universalizing' the message, support could be given to the view of such scholars as Boman and Rowley who view the creation motif in Second Isaiah as of the utmost importance for our understanding of the prophet's message.

Chapter 4

I

One of the most important events in the later history of Israel was that complex of circumstances connected with the fall of Jerusalem and the captivity into exile of the leading members of its society. The agony of heart that overtook many of those exiles as they contemplated their position and the fate of their beloved city can be heard in psalms like 137. A mixture of intense loyalty and fierce venom, it expresses what must have been the inner feelings of a great number of those deported Jews.

> Remember, O Lord, against the Edomites
> the day of Jerusalem,
> how they said, "Rase it, rase it!
> Down to its foundations."
> O daughter of Babylon, you devastator!
> Happy shall he be who requites you
> with what you have done to us!
> Happy shall he be who takes your little ones
> and dashes them against the rock!
>
> (Psalm 137:7-9)

The place of Jerusalem in Hebrew tradition was a fact of unique significance to the prophets, particularly those who, like Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Deutero-Isaiah had to wrestle with realities with regard to its demise. The latter particularly had to take the traditions concerning the city very seriously if there was to be any hope of his being able to speak a message of hope and encouragement. It is clear that, before its overthrow, the city of Jerusalem had become, for many, a symbol of security and divine power. (1) When it fell, the power of Yahweh and His care for His Chosen People, was immediately called into question. This fact needs to be taken into consideration if we are to come anywhere near the truth as far as the essence of Deutero-Isaiah's message is concerned. It is clear from the text that many of his promises are couched in terms of wellbeing for the future of Jerusalem. He, more than any other prophet, connects the promises of Yahweh with the city beyond disaster. The fact that he does this is important to the theological development of the Old Testament's understanding of the relationship that stood between God and His people.

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(1) N W Porteous: Jerusalem-Zion: The Growth of a Symbol in Living the Mystery: Collected Essays: Oxford 1967

The important place which Deutero-Isaiah gives to Jerusalem in his writings is underlined by G von Rad in his discussion of the use, by the prophet, of the exodus tradition.

> Besides what he owes to this (the exodus tradition), the oldest and most important of all election traditions, Deutero-Isaiah is also indebted to the Zion tradition; for the Exodus, of course, leads to a city destined to be rebuilt, guaranteed by Yahweh...and the future home of God's scattered people and even of Gentiles...Deutero-Isaiah's thoughts dwell continually on Zion... In his predictions about a pilgrimage to be made by the nations to the holy city, it is easily seen that Deutero-Isaiah took up traditional matter of a peculiar kind. (2)

The major occurrences of the theme within the writings are:

40: 1-9 - In the opening poem of the announcement of the good news the message is addressed to the desolate city whose period of service is over, who has been forgiven, having endured the burden of Yahweh's judgment because of her sin. Her suffering is to be reversed and the word of consolation is addressed to her. In the latter part of the poem Jerusalem is called to be the herald of the good news to all the other cities of Judah. (cf 41:27; 44:26, 28)

45:13 - Where the task of rebuilding the city is associated with the call of Cyrus to fulfil the divine will. In the verses which immediately follow there is reference to the obeisance of the nations to the people of God. This is perhaps reminiscent of the old Zion theology and is certainly central to the prophet's vision for the people and their future relationship with other nations.

46:12-13 - The message is addressed to those who are not, in themselves, ready or fit for salvation. The word play seems to indicate that what God is doing is out of His grace alone and not due to any merit on the part of the people.

> you who are far from deliverance:
> I bring near my deliverance, it is not far off.

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(2) G von Rad: Old Testament Theology Vol II p239

48:1-2 - There were obviously those who had false dependence both in the cultic ritual and on the security of the city before God. The words are reminiscent of the warning of the prophet Jeremiah,

> Do not trust in these deceptive words: This is the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord.
>
> (Jeremiah 7:4)

49:14-23 - The desolated city thinks that she is forsaken by Yahweh. But the Lord cannot utterly cast her off and she is to be rebuilt and re-populated. The nations will bring her children back and render obeisance to the restored city in her glory.

51:1-3 - The prophet reminds the people of the case of Abraham, and his promises to the patriarch, and of how they were fulfilled. Just as Yahweh fulfilled those promises in a seemingly impossible situation from the human point of view, so now He would bless Jerusalem and cause her barrenness to blossom. (cf 51:11)

51:17-23 - A call to Jerusalem to rouse herself. The city reels from the effect of utter desolation and there seems to be no one to help. But Yahweh has taken "the cup of staggering" out of her hand and has passed it into the hand of her tormentors. Here is an affirmation of the absolute sovereignty of Yahweh reminiscent of the declaration of Isaiah of Jerusalem in relation to the Assyrian powers.

52:1-2, 7-10 Reiterates the call to awake and recaptures the thought of 40:7. The section concludes in verse 10 with an affirmation which, to many scholars, has been a major ground for "universalism" in the message of Deutero-Isaiah.

> The The Lord has bared his holy arm
> before the eyes of all the nations;
> and all the ends of the earth shall see
> the salvation of our God.

54:1-17 - The whole chapter is taken up with the glorious restoration which Yahweh is going to effect for the city. All the themes that have already occurred in the texts noted above are caught up into this chapter.

In Ch 54 is jubilation from beginning to end. The sorrows of the past are remembered only as the dark background against which the joys of redemption are all the brighter. It is as though the prophet has had a vision of a New Jerusalem so real to him that its day seemed to have already come. The time of

> barrenness, desolation, and conflict is past. God's perfect rule has begun. The restored Jerusalem is more glorious than it has ever been before. (3)

When Deutero-Isaiah spoke of the promises of Yahweh in relation to Jerusalem he was not coining a new idea. There is a growing awareness today of the relationship of the prophet and all that came before him.

> It is now...apparent that when the prophets spoke of coming events, they did not do so directly, out of the blue, as it were; instead, they showed themselves bound to certain definite inherited traditions, and therefore even in their words about the future theyuuse a dialectic method which keeps remarkably close to the pattern used by earlier exponents of Jahwism. It is this use of tradition which gives the prophets their legitimation. At the same time they go beyond tradition - they fill it even to bursting-point with new content or at least broaden its basis for their own purpose. (4)

It is clear from the earliest to the latest prophets that this was the case with the Jerusalem tradition. They were aware of it and time and again use it with reference to their particular situation. Even when the tradition of Jerusalem's inviolability is being rejected the importance of the city in the lives and aspirations of the people forms the backcloth of the message of the prophet. (5)

Von Rad is clearly right when he says that connected with this tradition there were a number of closely related, and often, interwoven strands. (6) At the same time he notes how one or other of the prophets lays emphasis on one particular part of the tradition to serve his purpose and meet the needs of the moment.

How important then is this tradition for Deutero-Isaiah and what is its role within his writings?

I I

On every occasion except one (7) the motif occurs within a context of promise. (8) Zimmerli sums up the importance of this for Deutero-Isaiah,

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(3) J D Smart: History and Theology in Second Isaiah: Epworth 1967 p215
(4) G von Rad: op.cit p239
(5) cf Micah 3:12
(6) cf von Rad: op.cit p292, for discussion of the various concepts that can be traced in the prophetic employment of the Jerusalem motif and how in each case the prophets used only "parts of the total range of concepts".
(7) cf Isaiah 48:2
(8) cf part Isaiah 40:1ff, 45:13, 49:14-23, 51:3, 11, Ch 54

> The journey by God's guidance back through the transformed wilderness, whose edge is bordered...by the most glorious and spectacular trees...finds its goal in Zion where messengers of joy proclaim anew the word of the Kingdom of the God of Zion. The glory of this city's foundations, battlements, and gates, all made of precious stones, is described in full. Other words portray how the childless city, to its own astonishment, ~~will~~ will suddenly become again the mother of many children, to the point that there will be a space problem for the citizens and one will say to the other: "The place is too narrow for me, make room for me to dwell in" (49:20) For at a signal from Yahweh a movement will begin among the people of the world in which kings and princes will carefully bring the children of Zion back again from distant lands. (9)

Zimmerli goes on to emphasize the dependence of this prophet on known tradition.

> One can see how the prophetic word of God with powerful intensification actualizes anew elements of older traditions of Israel and proclaims the faithfulness of Yahweh in this new-style repetition of his originalaacts in the Exodus and guidance through the wilderness, and his care for ZIon.

One source of this tradition for Deutero-Isaiah is no doubt to be found in the writings of his predecessor, Isaiah of Jerusalem.

One of the highest expressions of this hope of a restored Zion is to be found in Isaiah 2:2-4 (cf Micah 4:1-3). It is most likely that the Micah oracle is dependent on Isaiah. (10)

It is significant to note that the three main emphases of this oracle all find clear expression in the message of Deutero-Isaiah in one way or another:

- Zion is to be established and become the most important centre in all the world (cf Isaiah 49:22f)

- there is to be a great influx of peoples to the city and the temple (cf Isaiah 45:13ff, 49:19ff, 54:1-3)

- Jerusalem has to become the centre for the dissemination of the knowledge of Yahweh. In Deutero-Isaiah this is supremely associated with the work of the Servant (cf 42:1-4) but the effect of the restoration of Jerusalem is that the nations will thereby be brought into the knowledge of God and his purpose. (11) In the word of promise in 51:12ff there are lines which remind us of the promise of Isaiah 2:3, "For out of Zion shall

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(9) W Zimmerli: Man and his Hope in the Old Testament: S B T 20 1968 p125ff
(10) G von Rad: The City on the Hill: Eng Ed 1966. This is a study of the relationship between Isaiah 2:2-4, Isaiah Ch 60, and Haggai 2:6-9. Von Rad takes the view that Is 2:2-4 is "the first and earliest expression of a belief in the eschatological glorification of the holy mountain and of its significance for the redemption of the entire world."
(11) cf Isaiah 49:26, 52:10, 45:23

go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." In the later text it is said of the restored people:

> I have put my words in your mouth
> .....
> saying to Zion, You are my people. (51:16)

But it is clear that, apart from this important oracle of Chapter 2, Jerusalem was important to First Isaiah in other connections. For example:

6:1ff - The place of his prophetic call is the Temple in Jerusalem in which he gained a vision of the glory and holiness of Yahweh. This was to prove foundational for his ministry and message. There were two things of supreme importance to Isaiah of Jerusalem, one was the spiritual condition of the people; the other was Jerusalem itself as the holy city of Yahweh. These two were indissolubly inter-related, the one depended on the other. (12)

14:32 - The only answer that can be given to the messengers of Philistia who come to induce the Israelites to join themaagainst the Assyrians is that the city belongs to Yahweh and thus it is the security of those who live in it. (cf 28:16) (13)

31:4-5 - The presence of Yahweh presupposes the city's protection and also Yahweh's aggression and judgment against the nations who threaten her.

36:1, 37:38 - The ultimate expression of the confidence of the prophet in the promise of Yahweh is found in the reply that is given to the Rabshakeh summed up in the words of 37:35:

> For I will defend this city to save it,
> For my own sake and for the sake of my servant David.

It is easy to see how important Jerusalem was for First Isaiah. His ministry was closely related to the situation and fate of the city. From the circumstances of his own prophetic call right through to the prophetic vision of the glorification of Zion, the city figured large in the prophet's view. It is in the divine promises with regard to the city that he finds the ground for his message of hope to the besieged king and people. In the short-term that message was vindicated by the events that followed the withdrawal of Sennacherib.

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(12) cf Isaiah 1:10-31, 33:5ff
(13) cf W Zimmerli: Man and his Hope in the Old Testament: op.cit p100

> the events did nothing to discredit the belief in Yahweh's protection of the city, but rather seemed to strengthen it. For the inhabitants of Jerusalem the eleventh hour reprieve from the assault by the besieging armies of Sennacherib served to entrench more firmly than ever the belief in the city's safety through its divine protection. (14)

However even this strong emphasis on Jerusalem by First Isaiah is probably not original. The appeals by him to the promises of Yahweh make sense if, in fact, they find a response within the memory of those to whom they were addressed. And it is not unlikely that this was the case. It has been pointed out more than once that there is evidence to suggest that such an idea was kept alive in the cult and that perhaps the first formal expression of a "Zion theology" was presented within the cultic hymns of the Temple. (15) It is clear that there are numerous references in the Psalms to the tradition of Yahweh's election of Zion. (16)

> The election of Mount Zion was indissolubly connected with the divine election of David and his dynasty to be rulers of Israel. This is well brought out in Psalm cxxxii:
>
> > The Lord swore to David a sure oath
> > from which he will not turn back:
> > .....
> > If your sons keep my covenant
> > and my testimonies which I shall teach them,
> > their sons also for ever
> > shall sit upon your throne.
> >
> > For the Lord has chosen Zion;
> > he has desired it for his habitation. (17)

This emphasis is widely evident throughout the Psalter. Zion is to be chosen as the place Yahweh dwells (Ps 9:11, 74:2); Zion is the holy mountain of Yahweh (Ps 2:6, 87:1, 99:9), the place where his holy temple is (Ps 5:7).

In Clements' view this tradition pre-dates Deuteronomy with its special emphasis on election and is to be dated, although there can be no ultimate certainty about this, probably sometime in the Davidic/Solomonic age.

The study which emphasizes most strongly the possibility of an early date

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(14) R E Clements: God and Temple: Oxford 1965 p48ff

(15) cf R E Clements: op.cit p48ff, P R Ackroyd: Exile and Restoration: S C M 1968 p46ff, J Bright: A History of Israel: S C M 2nd ed. 1972 p287ff

(16) cf J Bright: Covenant and Promise: S C M 1977 pp58-67 for an extended discussion of the witness of the Royal Psalms to the strength of this tradition. Bright also supports the view of Hayes in relation to the so-called "Hymns of Zion" which follows in this thesis.

(17) R E Clements: op.cit p48

for this Jerusalem tradition is that by J H Hayes. (18) In his view the tradition comes, not only from the period of the early monarchy under the influence of the Solomonic enterprises in the building of the temple, but it can be traced right back through the pre-monarchic period to pre-Israelite influence. (19) He focusses interest particularly on three psalms: 46, 46 and 76, and claims that the tradition of Yahweh's election of Zion finds its roots, as far as Israel is concerned, in the bringing of the Ark into the city by David. The important feature about each of these psalms is that they speak of the favour of Zion without mention of a specific "election" of Zion on the part of Yahweh.

A Weiser notes the similarities between these three psalms and concludes that there is some close affinity between them. On Psalm 76 he comments,

> The psalm itself makes quite clear that its first two strophes look back to things of the past, to events which took place at a time when Yahweh had become highly honoured in Judah and his name had become great in Israel, and when his dwelling-place had been "established" in Jerusalem. Probably this proves true only of the time of David, who, having conquered Jerusalem, made it the national and religious centre of his dual kingdom Judah and Israel. (20)

The point that Hayes makes is that these three psalms betray evidence of pre-Israelite influence which suggests that the tradition of the importance of the city pre-dates the Israelite view of it.

In Psalm 46 there is reference to two features which are early. First, the idea of a river linked with the city. Hayes does not interpret this eschatologically but mythologically, and finds a parallel in the Ugaritic myth that El lived "at the source of the (two) rivers in the midst of the fountains of the two deeps". Second is the occurrence of the name El Elyon, "who was pre-Israelite deity worshipped in Jerusalem" (Gen 14:18). Weiser comments,

> Since Jerusalem has no river, it must here be a matter of a word-picture borrowed from some other source. It seems to originate in the mythological idea of paradise which was applied to Jerusalem and incorporated in the tradition of the cult of Yahweh... Old Testament prophecy is likewise familiar with the thought that Jerusalem, as once the Garden of Eden,

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(18) J H Hayes: The Tradition of Zion's Inviolability: J B L: 82: 1963 p419ff
(19) but cf J J M Roberts: J B L 92: 1973: who puts forward strong arguments in favour of the tradition having arisen within the period of the David/Solomonic monarchy.
(20) A Weiser: The Psalms: S C M 1962 p525

> will be established on the highest mountain, (Is 2:2, Ezek 40:2) and that a miraculous river flows out from the city of God for the benefit of the whole world. (Ezek 47:1, Joel 3:18, Zech 14:8) (21).

In Psalm 48 Hayes sees numerous pre-Israelite references. Particularly the mention of Zion as being "in the far north" (lit: the recesses of Zaphon").

> The location of Mt Zaphon near the coast perhaps explains the reference to the ships of Tarshish being seen in their destruction. The material in Ps 48 must have originally been applied to another city and only secondarily to Zion or else have been purely mythological from the beginning with no real relationship to a geographical place. (22) (23)

In Psalm 76 the outstanding feature is the employment of the name Salem for the city.

> Salem occurs only here and in Gen 14 and is used in both places as the pre-Israelite name of Jerusalem.

His conclusion is that these three psalms provide us with clear evidence that the tradition of Yahweh's favour on Jerusalem must arise from a source priortto the employment of the motif by Isaiah of Jerusalem. He argues, further, that here indeed we have the source of many of the ideas which Isaiah made us of in his own message.

> These special Zion elements, as seen in Psalms 46, 48 & 76, were utilized by the prophet Isaiah, who centred his prophetic message in the Davidic and Zion traditions. Similar structures as noticed in the above psalms are integral to Isaiah's preaching (cf Is 10:5-11, 27b-34, 14:24-27, 28-32, 17:12-13, 28:14-22, 29:1-8, 30:27-33, 31:1-8, 33:20-24)

In his consideration of the problem of the relationship between particularism and universalism within the writings of Deutero-Isaiah, R Davidson suggests that here we are confronted with a paradox which is central to the Old Testament view of mission.

> It is our contention that, in dealing with the relationship between Yahweh, Israel, and the other nations, Second Isaiah

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(21) A Weiser: op.cit p370
(22) J H Hayes: op.cit
(23) J Bright: Covenant and Promise: S C M 1977 p68
Allusion is to the mythical mountain of the gods in the far north, the Mt Zaphon which is known from the Ugaritic texts and mentioned at various places in the Bible (e.g. Is 14:13f, Ez 28:14-16) The temple mountain, as God's chosen abode, is the holy mountain "in the far north".

> inherits and intensifies a paradox which lies near to the heart of the missionary outlook of the Old Testament. The two conflicting trends in exegesis are here mutually correcting, since both concentrate on but one element in a paradox which is central to Second Isaiah's thinking. For Second Isaiah it is the consolidation of Israel...which is the covenanted means of grace for others...it is the far seen triumph of Yahweh in the life of Israel which is the light drawing others to true faith. (24)

Davidson sees this as a necessary feature of Israel's faith which is time and again threatened, now by the religious liberalism in the form of the appeal of the Baal cults, now by the religious exclusivism evidenced in the Ezra-Nehemiah reform movement. (25) The forerunner of this dual emphasis in Deutero-Isaiah is to be seen, according to Davidson, in the text of Isaiah 2:2-4.

> Note the twofold emphasis, on the one hand, there is the eschatological exaltation of Zion and Jerusalem. But this is not an end in itself; it is the means whereby Yahweh's law and word are universalised. (26)

However when we look again at some of the earlier psalmsaalready quoted, there is evidence of the same tendency there. For example, in Psalm 76 there is much more than the inviolability of Zion involved. The psalm emphasizes the centrality of Zion and the absolute sovereignty of Yahweh and brings the peoples of the world into focus in a way not far removed from that of Isaiah 2:2-4.

It is noticeable how the main themes of Psalm 76 are the same as those of Isaiah 2:2-4, and are re-iterated strongly and frequently within the writings of Deutero-Isaiah. In fact there is an unbroken line in this theme extending through to such passages as Isaiah 60 which captures the emphasis of Deutero-Isaiah and those before him. Words that are familiar to Deutero-Isaiah

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(24) R Davidson: Sc J Th Vol 16: 2 Jun 1963 p166-85

(25) Cf A Gelston: Sc J Th Vol 18: 1965 pp308-18: Second Isaiah's Missionary Message, in which he broadly agrees with Davidson but takes issue with his view of paradox. "To my mind the refutation of the idols is sufficiently closely related to the corollary that Yahweh is God of all the earth as to justify the claim that the central motif is not so much 'the renewal, the exaltation of Israel the Servant' (Davidson p179) as the vindication of Yahweh as the sole God through the restoration of his people and through their mission to the rest of the world."

(26) Davidson: op.cit p177

are used to describe the outcome of God's rule, for example, those of verse 10,

בקום למשפט אלהים
להושיע כל־ענוי־ארץ

Three main emphases present themselves in Psalm 76, namely,

a) The establishment of Zion.

b) The establishment of peace; in this case by the disablement of those who make war.

c) The establishment of God's rule and justice. (משפט)

The parallels between these and Isaiah 2:2-4 are very clear:

a) v2 - The establishment of Zion

b) v4 - The establishment of peace

c) v3 - The establishment of the law of Yahweh

A F Kirkpatrick, writing in 1903, connected Psalm 75 & 76 with the escape of the city from the siege by the Assyrians.

> They speak of a great act of judgment, by which God had condemned the proud pretensions of some boastful enemy; of a spectacular annihalation of the hostile forces which had threatened Zion, the city of his choice, whereby He had manifested His presence and power among the people. The destruction of Sennacherib's army was just such an event of judgment, such a direct intervention on behalf of Zion. (27)

The difficulty in dating these psalms is well known. (28) It may be that, although they relate well to a known historical situation, they have been adapted from an earlier form to suit that moment. Weiser points out how the psalm, although making historical allusions in the first few verses, points forward in the second part beyond history.

> The retrospect is followed by a glance forward to the divine last judgment - a cultic and eschatological trend.

He echoes Kirkpatrick in seeing a deeper significance in the use of the ancient name, Salem, to describe the holy city,

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(27) A F Kirkpatrick: The Psalms; Cambridge 1903 p449

(28) P R Ackroyd: Exile and Restoration p45. "These, and other psalms are likely to have been understood in reference to many historical occasions, and the exilic situation is likely to have contributed something to their present form. This allusiveness of language of psalmody, however, makes it hazardous to pinpoint definite modifications."

> The application to Jerusalem of the poetical name 'Salem', which is reminiscent of the Hebrew term šalom (peace, salvation) is at the same time meant to indicate subtly that the dwelling-place of God is destined to be a city of peace, and that the Temple is appointed to be a place of salvation. In this conception the cultic and eschatological train of thought already shines through to which the psalm turns in its second part. (29)

It is clear, therefore, that when Deutero-Isaiah used the concept of the restoration of Zion to bring hope to the people in exile he was not coining new ideas but was speaking in terms that would long have been familiar to the people through the cult and the earlier prophets. It is also clear, that whatever we may ultimately make of it, ~~that~~ here (Psalm 76) and in Isaiah 2:2-4, we are already introduced to that paradoxical idea that in His establishment of Zion Yahweh has a purpose to extend his word to the ends of the earth through that act.

In almost every reference in Deutero-Isaiah to the Jerusalem motif the presence of this duality of thought can be discerned. We are presented time and again with the idea that the restoration of Jerusalem will have wide ranging effect in the life of the nations.

This does not attain the explicit statements of the Servant Songs (cf 42:4,6; 49:6) but it does lead us beyond the thought of mere nationalism for its own sake.

40:5; 52:10 - The salvation which Yahweh will effect on behalf of His people will be seen by the farthest ends of the earth. In words that are not far removed from those of 49:6, "that my salvation may reach to the end of the world".

49:23 - Foreigners, indeed the leaders of the peoples, will not only see but will respond by carrying Yahweh's children home. In so doing they will acknowledge Yahweh's universal dominion.

51:23 - The comfort of Yahweh's people will mean the consternation of those who oppress them. His glorification of Jerusalem leads to His judgment of the nations.

54:3 - The establishment of the city involves its enlargement. An enlargement which will encompass the nations. Here a movement from the nations by Yahweh's people is envisaged. (30)

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(29) A Weiser: op.cit p526

(30) Many commentators have seen a flash-back to the conquest of Canaan in these words so that the promise relates to the Promised Land. The words, however, are as reminiscent of Genesis 28:14 where in the Jacob blessing the promise is more universal.

45:14 - But in a section that cannot be dislocated from the verses of invitation that follow it (cf vv 22ff) a movement from the nations is envisaged.

> Thus says the Lord,
> The wealth of Egypt and the merchandise of Ethiopia,
> and the Sabeans, men of stature,
> shall come over to you and be yours,
> they shall follow you...
> They will make supplication to you, saying,
> God is with you only, and there is not other,
> no god besides him.

I I I

In Isaiah 48:2 there are words which demonstrate the fact that Deutero-Isaiah was aware of the fact that there were some who had mistreated these promises of Yahweh to Jerusalem. The strong affirmations of Psalms like 46, 48 and 76 had become in some quarters unconditional promises of the security of Jerusalem. (31)

> they call themselves after the holy city,
> and stay themselves on the God of Israel.

This has been discussed many times. R E Clements sums up much of the discussion,

> With the doctrine of Yahweh's presence in Jerusalem as the basis of belief in his judgment of the world from there, must be coupled the belief that his presence was also the defence of the city and the guarantee of its inviolability. This doctrine came to great prominence in Isaiah's time, but it must ante-date this prophet and probably goes back to the pre-Israelite inhabitants of the land. (32)

Of course, while as we have seen Isaiah of Jerusalem made wide appeal to this tradition as the basis of his message and to bolster the hopes of those whom he addressed at various times, this is not to suggest that he used it in the totally unconditional sense described above. For time and again the prophet reminds the people that Jerusalem's security is indissolubly linked with their own righteousness and that while, in the end there may be hope,

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(31) See the commentaries ad.loc for discussion on the difficulties of this text. Duhm et al would deny it to Dt-Is on the grounds that its theme is not in keeping with the message of consolation elsewhere. It makes no difference to our study whether the sins alluded to in the text are those of the present or previous sins. The point is that the prophet castigates those who have a wrong reliance on what they treated as unconditional promises.

(32) R E Clements: God and Temple: op.cit p71

the way to that hope would lie through refining and trial. (33)

> Therefore the Lord says,
> .....
> I will turn my hand against you
> and will smelt away your dross
> as with lye
> and remove all your alloy.
> And I will restore your judges
> as at the first,
> and your counsellors as at the beginning.
> (Isaiah Chapter 1:24-26)

Although explicit mention is not made of the Sinai covenant in First Isaiah nevertheless it is clear that the prophet spoke against a backcloth of awareness of the moral obligations which were laid upon the people before Yahweh (cf Isaiah 5:1-7). In this he is in keeping with those who went before him and those who come after him.

Micah 3:11 provides evidence of the same false confidence. The assumption of those who relied heavily on a doctrine of the inviolability of Zion was that because they were connected with the city then no harm could befall them.

> Is not the Lord in the midst of us?
> No evil shall come upon us. (34)

Jeremiah 7:4 bears further witness to the development of this sense of security. The prophet speaks against those who proclaim safety under cover of the holy city.

> Do not trust these deceptive words,
> This is the temple of the Lord,
> the temple of the Lord, the temple
> of the Lord.

Both texts occur within contexts of prophetic denial of such a doctrine. Micah had to point out that far from their safety depending on the security of Jerusalem, the security and sanctity of Jerusalem depended on their righteousness. But the leaders were perverting justice and founding the life of the city on violence and corruption.

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(34) J Bright: Covenant and Promise: S C M 1977, cf p73 for discussion of this tendency. "One must assume that they regarded their relationship with God, and the nation's future under God, as something based on the nature of things and to be taken for granted."

> Its heads give judgment for a bribe,
> its priests teach for hire,
> its prophets divine for money.
> .....
> Therefore because of you
> Zion shall become plowed as a field;
> Jerusalem shall become a heap of ruins.
>
> (Micah Chapter 3:11-12)

To those who sheltered under the false dogma of the city's inviolability this was a heretical affirmation to make, and in the case of Jeremiah his life was put at risk when he re-iterated the warning of the earlier prophet (Jer 26). It was only the memory on the part of some who heard him that Micah of Moresheth had once uttered the very same pronouncement that saved him from death at the hands of the priests and the prophets. (Uriah of Kiriathjearim was not so fortunate).

In Jeremiah 7:1-15 the prophetic principle in relation to Jerusalem is spelled out. The point at issue was not whether Yahweh did dwell in Zion or not. The prophets are never in any doubt as to the special significance of the place as far as that is concerned. It is the place where he has caused his name to dwell. But that fact leads to responsibility before privilege. There were two main thrusts within this principle that guided the prophet's message:

a) The place is only important because Yahweh chose it to be so. In His sovereign will He could withdraw from Zion. Yahweh was not confined to Jerusalem and, if the place was misused, He could and would withdraw from it:

> Go now to my place that was in Shiloh, where I made my name dwell at first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people Israel...therefore I will do to the house which is called by my name, and in which you trust, and to the place which I gave to you and to your father, as I did to Shiloh.
>
> (Jeremiah Chapter 7:13,14)

It is this de-localizing tendency that we see in the book of Ezekiel. In the opening visions of the book the people are made aware that Yahweh is not limited to Jerusalem, either to the temple or to the city. Neither has His power crumbled with the stones of the city in its destruction. He is powerfully active and universally sovereign and He can reach and speak to His people by the river Chebar just as much as He could in the Holy Place. Such an insight had important ramifications for the preaching of Deutero-Isaiah. Even if restoration meant the renewal of the city and the recovery of the covenant relationship, never again could Yahweh be conceived as being the god of Jerusalem only or only of the people there.

P R Ackroyd emphasizes the distinction between the prophetic view of the presence of Yahweh and the wrong view of those who clung to a doctrine of the inviolability of Zion.

> When Ezekiel stresses the withdrawal of Yahweh from the shrine (Ez 10:18-19; 11:22-23) and sees the prospect of his return (43:2ff) he is not indicating a physical presence or absence, but rather a denial of that protective presence which maintained the people's life and well-being through the Temple, and indicating...that the "real" presence of Yahweh is not to be confused with that of a "fixed" presence which had been frequently condemned by the earlier prophets. (35)

In the eschatological vision of renewal and re-establishment for Jerusalem, the renewed and lasting presence of Yahweh is connected with the expectation that in that day the people will also be freed from the iniquity that brought about their desolation.

> Son of man, this is the place of my throne and the place of the soles of my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the people of Israel for ever. And the house of Israel shall no more defile my holy name.
>
> (Ezekiel Chapter 43:7)

Deutero-Isaiah takes up the same theme. The renewal which is to take place is an act of grace on the part of Yahweh (Isaiah 51:22) and the hallmark of the new society which will be brought into being will be righteousness brought about by Yahweh Himself.

> All your sons shall be taught by the Lord,
> and great shall be the prosperity of your sons.
> In righteousness you shall be established;
> you shall be far from oppression, for you shall not fear.
>
> (Isaiah 54:13, 14)

It is this fact which gave rise to the second emphasis of the prophets.

b) Yahweh's choice of Jerusalem makes demands upon the lives of the people.

This was the tremendous realization that came to Isaiah of Jerusalem within the experience of his own call to the prophetic office. Yahweh was the God of Holiness and in His presence Isaiah was a man of uncleanness, belonging to an unclean people. This vision had repercussions right throughout his

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(35) P R Ackroyd: op.cit p28

ministry. He was called and sent by the Holy One of Israel who demanded a correlative holiness in the lives of His people (cf Leviticus 11:44). In the allegory of the vineyard Isaiah declares Yahweh's indignation at finding His desires frustrated:

> When I looked for it to yield grapes,
> who did it yield wild grapes?
> And now I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard.
> I will remove its hedges
> and it shall be devoured.
>
> (Isaiah Chapter 5:2bff)

In his great diatribe against Jerusalem in Chapter 29 the promise of destruction because of the sins of the people is given. (36) The same theme is spelled out by Jeremiah (7:1-15), Yahweh's presence means judgment before security. In making such affirmations Jeremiah and the other prophets are echoing what had always been a main thrust of prophetic announcement. The earliest of the writing prophets, Amos, made the very same declaration; that election brings responsibility.

> You only have I know of all the families
> of the earth;
> therefore I will punish you
> for all your iniquities.
>
> (Amos Chapter 3:2)

This prophetic insight into the nature of Yahweh and His covenant with His people carried important repercussions for the experience of the people. They carried the people beyond the narrow confines of national self-aggrandizement and ushered them into an understanding of the nature and power of Yahweh as a God who was free to act according to His will even to the extent of bringing judgment down on His chosen people. Indeed, it was the declaration of these prophets that it was through the experience of judgment that the purposes of Yahweh would be brought to fruition.

> Severe though the testing was, Israel's faith successfully
> met it, exhibiting an astounding tenacity and vitality.
> A solution to the problem before it...had in fact already

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(36) cf J Bright op.cit p293: "Isaiah's preaching was at once a powerful re-affirmation of the Davidic theology and its promises, a rejection of that theology as popularly held, and the infusion into it of a conditional element drawn from the traditions of primitive Yahwism."

> been provided in advance by the very prophets who had presided over the tragedy, particularly Jeremiah and Ezekiel (37)...by incessantly announcing it as Yahweh's righteous judgment on the nation's sin, these prophets gave the tragedy coherent explanation and permitted it to be viewed, not as the contradiction, but as the vindication of Israel's historic faith. (38)

It was this realization of the freedom of Yahweh to act that laid such a strong foundation for the message of Deutero-Isaiah. Just as He had been free to cut the city and people off so now He is free to take them up and restore them. Just as He had been able to use whomsoever He would as the instrument of His will (cf Isaiah 10:5) so now He is at liberty to raise up a foreign monarch to do His bidding.

> Thus says the Lord to his anointed, Cyrus,
> whose right hand I have grasped,
> to subdue nations before him
> and ungird the loins of kings.
>
> (Isaiah Chapter 45:1)

It was this same sovereign freedom which enables Yahweh to pass judgment on these same instruments when they overstep the mark in their lust for blood and when they have fulfilled the divine purpose. (39)

> Behold, I have taken from your hand
> the cup of staggering;
> the bowl of my wrath
> you shall drink no more;
> and I will put it into the hand of your tormentors,
> who have said to you,
> Bow down that we may pass over.
>
> (Isaiah 51:22-23)

Such a comprehensive view of Yahweh's sovereignty was bound to have a radical effect on a theological tradition which had become restrictive and limiting, as had the Jerusalem tradition within the experience of those who made it the ground of false hope. This note of universal sovereignty that is sounded within even the earliest cultic hymns concerning Jerusalem (40), and is clearly expounded in prophetic passages such as Isaiah 2:2-4, is something that would be diminished within an ersatz Zion theology whose main emphasis was the security and defence of the city, and which paid little attention to the conditional aspects of the covenant. In the kind of confrontation that was brought about by the conditions of the exile something had to suffer.

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(37) cf J Bright: Covenant and Promise op.cit p82ff for a succinct summary discussion of the way in which the pre-exilic prophets were able to enlarge Israel's concept of hope through the Davidic covenant by pronouncing God's imminent judgment on the existing order to make room for a decisive divine act of salvation in the farther future.

(38) J Bright: A History of Israel p349

(39) cf also Isaiah 10:5-19 and Isaiah Chapter 47

(40) Psalms 46:10, 48:4ff, 76:7ff

John Bright puts it well,

> Nebuchadnezzar's battering rams of course breached that theology beyond repair. It was a false theology and the prophets who proclaimed it had lied. (Lamentations 2:14) It could never be held in precisely the old form again. (41)

I V

How was it then that the doctrine that had taken such a hammering under the onslaught of the Babylonians, and had suffered so severely at the hands of prophets like Jeremiah, could so quickly be re-valued within the preaching of Deutero-Isaiah? Apart from the fact that his use of this tradition demonstrates the strength of it in the ongoing mind of the people, there are other cogent reasons why it should be that Deutero-Isaiah was able to make a renewed appeal to the hope that this doctrine engendered.

a) In the first place it is clear that Deutero-Isaiah accepted totally the fact of judgment which had been so much part of the message of his predecessors. Jeremiah had recalled the people to the challenge of the Mosaic covenant, not because he devalued the unconditional promises of Yahweh, but because the doctrine that wss the foundation of those promises had become violated and cheapened within a theology of easy grace.
The opening words of Deutero-Isaiah's oracle make it clear that he viewed what had happened within the experience of God's people as the result of God's hand of judgment coming upon them.

> Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.
> Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
>
> and cry to her,
> that her warfare is ended,
> that her iniquity is pardoned,
> that she has received from the Lord's hand
> double for all her sins.
>
> (Isaiah Chapter 40:1,2)

Indeed it is noticeable that it is Jerusalem who is addressed; who has borne the brunt of God's punishment, and who, in Deutero-Isaiah's message is to be re-furbished with splendour under the hand of God's grace. The recognition of the reality of this judgment runs right throughout the prophecy. (cf 42:24ff,

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(41) J Bright: A History of Israel: op.cit p348

43:25; 43:26-7; 44:22; 45:7; 48:3; 48:10,11; 50:1; 51:17-20; 54:7,8 et al). He does not shirk the fact that the responsibility for the present exile lies absolutely within the people's own hand. It was their sin which had brought about the judgment.

> Behold, for your iniquities you were sold,
> and for your transgressions your mother was put away.
> (Isaiah Chapter 50:1)

Neither is there any doubt left as to the sovereign judgment of God which has been laid upon his people. It was not Babylon in whose hand lay the power of judgment but in the hand of Him who wielded ultimate authority.

> You who have drunk at the hand of the Lord,
> the cup of his wrath
> who have drunk to the dregs
> the bowl of staggering.
> (Isaiah Chapter 51:7)

It was only as this fact was faced squarely that there was any recall of hope. And throughout his writings it is on the ground of the fact that judgment has fallen and had been fulfilled that Deutero-Isaiah bases his message of hope and recalls the tradition of promise to Jerusalem. This time the tradition is appealed to, not as the ground of false security in the hope of averting, or escaping from, judgment, but as a word of promise in the full recognition that judgment has fallen.

The full import of the Jerusalem tradition with Deutero-Isaiah can only be seen, however, when it is coupled with his other major themes. By itself it is doubtful if it would have been very effective. For example his polemic against idols and "no-gods" in the first eight chapters of his writings tends to the suggestion that there were those amongst the exiles who had suffered severe disillusionment with the official theologies of hope, particularly any promise of the inviolability of Jerusalem. Perhaps they had become cynical, but in any case it appears that they had forsaken Yahweh and had begun to worship the gods of the Babylonian pantheon. (42) It took all the force of the prophet's arguments in relation to the creative power of Yahweh to demonstrate the reality of the God of the Israelites as opposed to the nonentity of the gods of Babylon. This is one major reason

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(42) cf J Bright: Covenant and Promise: op.cit p188, who expands this theme and concurs with this idea.

why no one theme or motif can be extracted from the writings of Deutero-Isaiah and made to stand completely on its own. In this case, it was an appreciation of the cosmic significance of Yahweh, recalled by way of the great creation traditions of Israel's heritage, that provided the background against which any particular hope in relation to the re-founding of Jerusalem could be recalled. The inter-relation of these two important motifs for Deutero-Isaiah helps us to understand more clearly how it is that the universal can relate to the particular within his message. The universal reference of Yahweh as Creator carried with it the possibility for realization of the promise within the particular. Because of that the particular could never again be utterly introvert and ever after carried with it the discomfiture of the challenge of the universal.

b) It is also clear that prophets like Jeremiah, while lambasting those who had developed a false hope through a one-sided interpretation of the covenant, nevertheless did not leave the people without a word of ultimate hope. True, it was not going to be fulfilled in a moment, nor was it going to divert the coming judgment, but beyond the tragedy Yahweh was still announcing a word of hope to His people.
This is characterised chiefly in the promise of the new covenant which comes through both Jeremiah and Ezekiel. (cf Jer 31:31ff; 32:40 and Ezek 16:60ff; 37:26). The language of this last reference finds an echo in Deutero-Isaiah's description of the covenant which Yahweh wants to make with His people.

> but my steadfast love shall not depart from you,
> and my covenant of peace shall not be removed,
> says the Lord, who has compassion on you.
> (Isaiah Chapter 54:10)

For Isaiah of Jerusalem the hope of the future is embodied in the person of the messianic deliverer of the House of David. But Deutero-Isaiah here departs from the precedent of his great forebear. The figure of the Davidic Messiah is not present in his writings. (43) Instead he

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(43) The divine promises to David are alluded to in Isaiah 55:3ff, but here they are democratized and made to apply to the whole restored community. cf O Eissfeldt: The Promises of Grace to Davidain Isaiah 55:1-5 in Israel's Prophetic Heritage: ed B W Anderson and W Harrelson: London 1962

catches up the promise of the New Covenant and expresses it in terms of the renewal of Zion.

The promise of hope, however, is present more widely in Jeremiah than in his reference to the new covenant of promise. Time and again the prophet's own actions are intimations of promise. (44) Two outstanding examples of this are:

In Chapter 29. Where Jeremiah writes a letter to the exiles in Babylon. In it he dashes the false hopes founded on the words of false prophets. He encourages the people to settle down in their new environment and to recognize it as the will of Yahweh that they should be there. But in doing this he points them beyond the present away into the future, for beyond the circumstances of the moment lies the promise of ultimate restoration and return. In the meantime the people are given the promise that they will find God where they are, apart from the Temple or the Jerusalem cult.

> I will be found by you, says the Lord, and I will restore your fortunes and gather you from all the nations and all the places where I have driven you, and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile.
>
> (Jeremiah Chapter 29:14)

In Chapter 32. Right at the height of the crisis, in what appears to be the most unpropitious moment, Jeremiah is given instructions to purchase a field in Anathoth. This purchase is intended as a piece of prophetic symbolism pointing to the promise of return:

> For thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Houses and fields and vineyards shall again be bought in this land.
>
> (Jeremiah 32:15)

So right at the heart of the most condemnatory message in the Old Testament stands this strong theme of promise, and it is associated with the land and the city. It is not difficult to see how this would provide a real foundation on which Deutero-Isaiah could build his word of promise. These two strands meant that this word of promise could once again be expressed in terms of the Jerusalem tradition. But a tradition now totally dislocated from the clamminess of false theology and purified to make it the channel of God's word of promise. Through it, and its

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(44) cf J Bright: Covenant and Promise: op.cit p191ff, for a discussion of the significance of hope within the message of Jeremiah.

associated themes within Deutero-Isaiah, the eyes of the exiles were once again focussed on their homeland, and, in particular, upon the holy hill of Zion, and they were reminded of Yahweh's ability to carry out what he had promised.

V

There is little doubt that within the message of Deutero-Isaiah this great act of restoration is looked upon as having universal significance. When Yahweh restores His people the result will be manifested before all the nations of the earth.

> And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,
> and all flesh shall see it together (40:5).
>
> The Lord has bared his holy arm
> before the eyes of all the nations;
> and all the ends of the earth shall see
> the salvation of our God.(52:10)

In these texts two notes dominate; the fact that the people themselves will be restored, and more importantly, that with the restoration the glory of Yahweh will be revealed before all people. And so it seems proper to speak of some sort of "universalism" as far as Deutero-Isaiah is concerned. But what is the nature of that universalism?

A Gelston, in his discussion of Deutero-Isaiah's message, finds a tension within the writings between a "traditionally supercilious attitude towards those who are outside the covenant people" and the high point of the prophetic enunciation of a world mission of conversion to the gentiles. (45) This is not heightened enough to be described as paradox (46) but is the result of the fact that the prophet, as a child of his age and tradition, could hardly be expected "immediately to absorb all the implications of the revolutionary idea that the Gentiles are to find salvation in Yahweh". The language of texts such as Isaiah 54:3 has caused some commentators to see a recollection of the conquest of the Promised Land.

> Notwithstanding DI's universalism (xlv 20-25) there is a note of nationalism, even of revanchism, in this passage. Heb. "possess" (yiraś) can also, by implication, mean "dispossess";

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(45) A Gelston: Sc J Th: 18: 1965 p316ff
(46) cf R Davidson: op.cit, who takes more cognizance than Gelston of the universalist strands prior to Deutero-Isaiah as well as the particularist strands, and therefore posits the development of a paradox.

> so especially in Deut. (e.g.ix.1R S V). This irredentism - it never was a dream of world empire - is a legacy from the (much-idealized!) accounts of the conquest of the promised land. (47)

The language of the text is, however, more reminiscent of Yahweh's promise to Jacob, which itself reflects the earlier promise to Abraham:

> and your descendants shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north and to the south; and by you and your descendants shall all the families of the earth bless themselves. (Genesis Chapter 28:14)

Only two passages within Deutero-Isaiah may take us beyond those already quoted in our understanding of the problem, namely 45:14-25 and 49:22-26.

45:14-25. It seems clear enough that verse 14 must be connected with what precedes it, and that בָּךְ must relate to either people or Jerusalem itself. It is immaterial which is upheld since for Deutero-Isaiah there is no clear distinction between the two. When he speaks of the restoration of Jerusalem he is speaking of the restoration of the people, and when he speaks of the restoration of the people he always sees this as involving the renewal of the city.

There has been much discussion about the composition of the text (48) but as it is presented the whole seems to hang together, and there appears to be a progression in the development of thought within it.

> According to xlv 3ff the immediate purpose of the mission of Cyrus is the deliverance of Israel (xlv.4); the ultimate purpose the conversion of all nations (xlv.6) These two points form the subject of the present poem. Israel will one day receive the homage of all nations (14-17) for Yahweh will fulfil his purpose (18-19). Then the nations will be convinced that He alone is God (20-21), let them therefore turn from their idols and adore the true God. (22-25) (49)

The second part of verse 14 is reminiscent of Zechariah 8:20-23,

> Many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem, and to entreat the favour of the Lord... In those days ten men from the nations of every tongue shall take hold of the robe of a Jew saying, "Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you".

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(47) cf C R North: The Second Isaiah: Oxford 1964 p76. "Clearly what is anticipated is the coming of Yahweh himself, a theophany compelling in its majesty, which is to mark the beginning of a new era for all mankind".
(48) cf C Westermann: op.cit p168ff, who even sub-divides the three verses 14-17 into three further sub-divisions. He views 14 as having been originally connected with Isaiah 60:13-14.
(49) E J Kissane: The Book of Isaiah: Vol 2 p83

C R North explains the apparent contradiction between the wearing of chains by those who come over to Israel, and the seeming free will with which they do so.

> As to the incongruity, the chains are manacles not fetters, which would make the journey impossible. They could be fastened on by the Africans themselves, probably as an assurance that they were coming with no hostile intent. (50)

R N Whybray takes a very negative view of the passage when he states,

> Almost all commentators...see in this passage an offer of "salvation" to all mankind. This would be a most significant doctrinal innovation, but this view cannot be sustained... (51) Only verse 22 is susceptible of a universalistic interpretation. Yet even here there is no clear reference to the nations of the world. It is more probable that the whole created world is addressed here, not only its human inhabitants. Yahweh's "salvation" is cosmic in the sense that it will be recognized by the whole creation (42:4,6; 52:10), but 'be saved' in Hebrew does not have the soteriological connotations of Christian theology. It means that the whole world will acknowledge Yahweh's triumphant vindication of his people Israel. (52)

To say that, however, seems to stretch the evidence. Granted that the whole cosmic order is to enter into the witness and joy of what Yahweh is about to do in the experience of His people, nevertheless in Deutero-Isaiah the appeal is addressed, not to the created order, but to the inhabitants of the world. The inanimate and animal will only be secondary participants in what will occur within the experience of peoples. It is true that the material creation does take part in the act of salvation, but only in this secondary sense. For example, in Ch 40:4 the wilderness will be prepared as a highway and the obstacles of creation will be removed to enable the journey of the exiles to take place with ease. In 41:17-20, creation will blossom and flourish for the twofold purpose of providing nourishment and shelter for the returning pilgrims, and of providing a display of witness to the glory of Yahweh in creation. In 43:19-20, the wild beasts will glorify Yahweh because they have become beneficiaries

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(50) C R North: op.cit p158
(51) Whybray appeals to the studies noted in Ch 1 of this thesis as evidence for his view.
(52) R N Whybray: Isaiah 40-66: New Century Bible: 1975 p111

through his provision of water in the dry places for His people to drink. In 55:12-13, at what is perhaps the highest point, nature will join in the joy of salvation that belongs to those who are delivered as it bears witness to what God is doing in the renewal of His people.

There are certain principles which can be preceived in Deutero-Isaiah's frequent use of the phrase "the ends of the earth" that enable us to make some judgment concerning its usage in this passage.

a) It is always used to express entirety. For example, in 40:28 the totality of Yahweh's supremacy in creation, " the Creator of the ends of the earth". Or with the idea of extensiveness, the completeness of the coverage of his message of salvation, e.g. in 48:20, "send it forth to the end of the earth". Or sometimes it is used to express the completeness of the work of salvation, as in 41:9, "you whom I took from the end of the earth and called from its farthest bound".

b) The context or parallelism employed is usually determinative of the meaning of the phrase. So in 49:1 (cf 41:1) it is clear by the parallelism employed that the appeal is addressed to people everywhere.

> Listen to me, O coastlands,
> and hearken to me, you peoples from afar.

Or in 49:6, that the mission of the Servant is to the inhabitants of the ends of the world,

> I will give you as a light to the nations,
> that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth

In 41:9, where it is the scattered Israelites who are to be found at the ends of the earth, and it is from there that Yahweh recovers them.

> you whom I took from the ends of the earth,
> and called from its farthest corners.

Without attempting to give the Hebrew הָאָרֶץ of verse 22 a Christian connotation it nevertheless seems reasonable to suggest that it is the people who live as far as the ends of the earth who are addressed by Yahweh.

Westermann shares the view that the salvation is one in which God's people are the chief participants but this invitation of Yahweh is extended through them to peoples of every nation.

The Hebrew word for survivors (commenting on the phrase in verse 20) always presupposes a battle, and a lost battle at that, from which those concerned have made their escape. In the light of 45:1-7,

there can be no doubt that the prophet was thinking primarily of the Babylonians, and in particular of those who had escaped when the city itself fell. They stood, however, for the 'survivors of the nations' in general. (53)

This text seems to take us farther towards a thoroughly universalistic concept than any other outside the Servant Songs. By itself it would carry that import.

49:22-26. It is clear at a glance that this section comes nowhere near the last section in its emphasis on universal salvation. Neither the content of these verses nor the context in which they are set express any extrovert longing for the salvation of anyone outside Israel. The emphasis is on the restoration of forsaken Zion, the refurbishment of her broken walls and desolate places, and the recoupment from the nations of what they have taken from her.

Some commentators see indications of universalism in the statements with which the two strophes end:

> v23 : Then you will know that I am the Lord;
> those who wait for me shall not be put to shame
>
> v26 : Then all flesh shall know that I am the Lord your Saviour,
> and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob

Whybray denies any universalist interest at all to the passage, (54) whereas North, while admitting that the passage does not betray the open universal attitude of 45:20-25, nevertheless comments,

> although these verses have a strongly nationalistic colouring, nationalism is not the last word. The section ends, as is usual with DI, on a theocentric note: "All nations shall know that I am the Lord". (55)

Westermann sees some wider significance in the closing phrase of verse 23,

> The people on whose behalf this action is taken are to be moved to make a response, to know something. God's saving act here proclaimed is designed to tell the despondent and the despairing who God really is. He may be relied on unconditionally. Those who hope in him will not be put to shame. Thus the act of deliverance is the prelude to a new history in which the redeemed will always be aware of this. (56)

(53) C. WESTERMANN: op.cit p174

(54) R N Whybray: op.cit p146
(55) C R North: op.cit p196
(56) C Westermann: op.cit p221

It is doubtful, on the evidence, if this section from Deutero-Isaiah takes us in any way beyond the insight of the earlier cultic hymns. Some of the expressions are reminiscent of words from Psalm 46:

> Be still, and know that I am God,
> I am exalted among the nations,
> I am exalted in the earth.

or the more aggressive words of Psalm 76 that say almost the same thing as the end of Isaiah Ch 49:

> But thou, terrible art thou!
> Who can stand before thee when once thy anger is roused?
> From the heavens thou didst utter judgment;
> the earth feared and was still,
> when God arose to establish judgment
> to save all the oppressed of the earth.
> Surely the wrath of men shall praise thee,
> the residue of wrath thou wilt gird upon thee.

This consideration of the Jerusalem tradition enables us to make certain observations:

1) Whilst it is doubtful if it brings us to the point of hearing a call to extrovert missionary activity on the part of the people of God, nevertheless the tradition which Deutero-Isaiah inherited in relation to Jerusalem contained from its earliest formulation some notion of the extension of Yahweh's word and will beyond the bounds of the city. Indeed Jerusalem is to be the vehicle for the extension of that word to the nations. (cf Isaiah 2:2-4).

2) The evidence tends to support the view of such scholars as R Davidson in such comments as:

> For Second Isaiah it is the consolidation of Israel...which is the covenanted means of grace for others...it is the far seen triumph of Yahweh in the life of Israel which is the light drawing others to true faith. (57)

It is perhaps true that this could be described as 'intense nationalism' as it has been by N H Snaith and others, but surely this is to ignore the potential dynamic effect in witness of a community restored and living under the rule of God. It would seem consistent with the Biblical witness of both Old and New Testaments to suggest that the prime mode of witness as far as the divine intention is concerned has been through the establishment of communities which share and manifest the principles of God's rule in their common life. (cf Acts 2:42ff).

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(57) R Davidson: Sc J Th: Vol 16: 2: June 1963 p166-85

3) In any event the 'de-localizing' preaching of Jeremiah and Ezekiel meant that Deutero-Isaiah could re-employ the Jerusalem tradition but not in a way that could be construed as strict nationalism. The emphasis on the sovereign freedom of Yahweh stood as a reminder to the people of the universal reference of their God.

4) The inter-dependence of themes in Deutero-Isaiah means that the effect of one note of theological realization is felt strongly within all the others. This is so with the motif of creation and the Jerusalem tradition. The former robs the latter of the possibility of being open only to a local interpretation and particularist intention.

Chapter 5

Closely connected with this theme of the promise of Yahweh to Jerusalem in the traditions of Israel is the recollection of the ancient patriarchal covenant effected between Yahweh and Abraham of which mention has already been made in the previous chapter. The relationship between these two traditions in the forms of the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants has been widely discussed. (1) The present state of affairs in this sphere of Old Testament studies is probably best summed up by John Bright,

> The nature of the historical relationship between the Abrahamic covenant and the Davidic remains a matter of dispute. In view of the limitations of the evidence available to us, this will probably continue to be the case. (2)

The significance of the fact that the figure of Abraham reappears in Deutero-Isaiah, when he is of no significance for the pre-exilic prophets, has been discussed and debated by most commentators on the text. (3) The fact of the presence of Abraham in the prophecy highlights what is self-evident from a superficial reading of the writings. That Deutero-Isaiah goes to great pains to appeal broadly to all the great traditions of his people in an attempt to engender hope in their hearts and raise their expectations for the coming great denouement by Yahweh. B W Anderson perceives at least three great strands in this appeal from tradition:

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(1) e.g. cf R E Clements: Prophecy and Covenant: S B T 43:1965
Abraham and David: S C M 1967
D J McCarthy: Old Testament Covenant: Blackwell 1972
Treaty and Covenant: Analecta Biblica 21:1963
G E Mendenhall: Law and Covenant in Israel and the Ancient Near East: The Biblical Colloqium: 1955
Covenant: The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible: vol 1 pp66-87
D N Freedman: Divine Commitment and Human Obligation: Interpretation: 18: 1964 pp419-31
W Eichrodt: Covenant and Law: Interpretation: 20:1966 pp302-21
C F Whitley: Covenant and Commandment in Israel: J N E S 1963 pp 37-48
J Bright: Covenant and Promise: S C M 1977

(2) cf J Bright: op.cit

(3) cf e.g. C Westermann: Isaiah 40-66: S C M 1969 ad.loc
J D Smart: History and Theology in Second Isaiah: Westminster Press 1965
C R North: The Second Isaiah: OUP 1963
et al

a) The promise to the fathers
b) The deliverance from Egypt
c) The journey through the wilderness (4)

To these three emphases we can add with certainty what Anderson regards as a supplementary theme, the promises of Yahweh with regard to Jerusalem. By the time the exilic prophet appealed to this theme it had become as much a fixed tradition within Israel as had those of the Exodus and the promise to Abraham. It was a tradition that had found realistic fulfilment in the foundation and growth of the Davidic dynasty, and, like the other great traditions of Israel's heritage, had been equally subjected to the requirements for re-interpretation which the exigencies of history had brought. For Deutero-Isaiah the promise, the exodus, and the journey all lead to the renewed city, the re-established habitation of the people of God.

Abraham figures twice explicitly within the writing of Deutero-Isaiah, namely in Ch 41:8 and Ch 51:2. In commenting on the description given to Abraham in the first of these texts C Westermann reflects that,

> The words are proof positive that the historical traditions of his nation were the source of Deutero-Isaiah's inspiration, and that, in particular, he knew the Yahwist, in whose work election goes right back to Abraham. (5)

J D Smart places the highest possible significance on the words in terms of their universalistic implications. (6)

> A title that recalls not only the intimate relation between God and Abraham, but also the glorious destiny promised to Abraham in the traditions of Israel (Genesis 12:1ff), that through him and his descendants great blessings would flow out to all mankind.

Smart sees the same movement from particular election to universal blessing in the second text of Isaiah 51:2ff.

We have noted elsewhere the difficulties of attempting to define too precisely the relationship between the Priestly writings and those of Deutero-Isaiah. The studies of R E Clements are pertinent to our understanding of the place and role of Abraham in Deutero-Isaiah. (7)

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(4) B W Anderson: Israel's Prophetic Heritage: op.cit p182
(5) C Westermann: op.cit p70
(6) J D Smart: op.cit p71
(7) cf especially R E Clements: Abraham and David: op.cit
Prophecy and Covenant: op.cit

Clements sees the Yahwist theologian/s making use of what was originally a local cult tradition, with regard to the figure of Abraham, connected at first with the city of Hebron. They employ this within their own context to give foundation to the fact of the Davidic dynsaty, and in so doing they universalize the tradition. The promises to Abraham of becoming a great nation and a blessing to other peoples are, for the Yahwist, fulfilled in terms of the rule of David and the expansion of empire under that rule. (8)

With the demise of the house of David changes were called for in Israel's understanding of its covenant-relationship with Yahweh. These are reflected in the work of the Deuteronomists who give precedence to the Horeb covenant tradition under and within which they subsume the Davidic promises and the monarchy.

After the catastrophe of the exile a whole new understanding of the covenant was called for which would found the promises of Yahweh to His people on secure, unconditional promises in which there was no prospect of failure. So, in the Priestly tradition the emphasis is shifted right back beyond David and Sinai to the ancient Abrahamic covenant which is founded on the initiative of Yahweh in grace in his promises to the patriarchs.

The questions as to whether Deutero-Isaiah received his inspiration from the Priestly tradition or vice versa can only be guessed at. However it is clear that there is a close affinity between the two in the way that they handle the tradition.

It is Clements' view that it was the Yahwist's theologia/political use of the tradition which gave it a more universal reference, (9) particularly by emphasizing the third part of the promise that through Abraham the nations of the earth would be blessed. For the Yahwist this part of the triad of blessing was fulfilled in the Davidic hegemony over neighbouring states in the heyday of the dynasty. However Clements draws our attention to the fact that, under the influence of the Priestly writers, the original promises outlined in Genesis Ch 12 and related to the Davidic empire in Ch 15, are now presented within the Priestly tradition in Ch 17 with some

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(8) R E Clements: Abraham and David: p82
(9) Abraham and David: p58

significant alterations. The triadic pattern of promise is maintained but, particularly in the final part, the promises are not quite the same as those of the Yahwist. In the final part of the Priestly account the promise is changed to read that the God of Abraham (El-Shaddai) would be the god of his descendants for ever. And further,

> In the terminology of the covenant the most significant new feature in the Priestly account is that God makes with Abraham an "everlasting covenant", asserting its permanent validity and its unconditional character. (10)

It is significant that this phrase (b^{e}rit 'olam) occurs, not only in Deutero-Isaiah (55:3), but in Jeremiah (32:40, 50:5), and Ezekiel (16:60, 37:26). This is not only witness to a connection between these writings but demonstrates a common need shared by all the writers to lay the ground for an appeal to promises of Yahweh to His people that would be unconditional and unalterable, and therefore capable of overcoming the trauma of exilic despair.

If we examine the two texts in Deutero-Isaiah within which explicit reference is made to Abraham (41:8 and 52:2) then certain common principles begin to emerge:

1) Both are used as an appeal to engender hope through recollection of God's work in the experience of Abraham. In Ch 51:2 the seeming hopelessness of the exiles is addressed by recourse to the example of Sarah, out of whose barren womb God brought Isaac against all the natural odds. Just as He did the unexpected and the seemingly impossible then so He was able to do it again in the present experience of the people.

2) Both texts carry with them the promise of victory over those who oppose Yahweh and his purpose. (cf 41:11-13 and 51:6-8).

3) Both carry with them the idea of Yahweh's law being promulgated amongst the nations. (11) Just as Abraham stands at the head of the race in the older traditions as its progenitor and the mediator of blessing, so in Deutero-Isaiah this thought is implicit in Yahweh's call to the people, and especially in His work through the Servant.

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(10) op.cit p71ff

(11) Here I follow the thesis of Kissane (The Book of Isaiah, Vol II 1943) who views Chs 41 and 42:1-9 as a unity. If this is correct then there seems to be a real correlation between the two Abrahamic passages, and a logical progression in the first text which brings all the themes together.

4) But, just as the Yahwists had seen this blessing to the nations being fulfilled in terms of the Davidic hegemony, so Deutero-Isaiah sees this being fulfilled in the revelation of God's blessing through the re-establishment of His people in Jerusalem (cf 41:27 and 51:3). But for Deutero-Isaiah this promise is dislocated from any idea of a Davidic Messiah.
5) So the tradition is set free from any of its previous historical frameworks and is employed as a powerful motif of unconditional promise which leads to, and ensures, everlasting peace.

It is significant that the threefold emphasis employed time and again by Deutero-Isaiah of creation, exodus, and return, are brought into close proximity in the verses which follow the oracle of Ch 52.

> Awake, awake, put on strength,
> O arm of the Lord,
> awake, as in the days of old,
> the generations of long ago,
> Was it not thou that didst cut
> Rahab in pieces,
> that didst pierce the dragon?
> Was it not thou that didst dry up
> the waters of the great deep?
> that didst make the depths of the sea a way
> for the redeemed to pass over?
> And the ransomed of the Lord
> shall return
> and come to Zion with singing;
> everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
> they shall obtain joy and gladness,
> nnd sorrow and sighing shall flee away.
>
> (Isaiah Chapter 51:9-11)

Here the motifs of creation, exodus, and the re-establishment of Jerusalem are re-emphasized. This is where the promises of Yahweh to the patriarch lead, and these promises form the ground of hope that this establishment will be for ever and will have universal repercussions. Having said that, however, we are still a long way from any explicit call to the people to engage in a missionary movement, and the general thrust of the Abrahamic tradition is towards a centripetal rather than a centrifugal movement of witness.
The final part of the Priestly tradition concerning the patriarchal promise (Genesis 17) finds its counterpart in the eternal promise of Yahweh to his people through the prophet of the exile. It is epitomized in words of that other, and earlier, exilic prophet, who shares so much of the insight of Deutero-Isaiah, Ezekiel,

"The name of the city henceforth shall be, The Lord is there"
(Ezekiel Chapter 48:35)

Conclusions

Examination of these major themes within the writings of Deutero-Isaiah leads to the following observations:

1) The inter-relation of the creation and Jerusalem themes, the employment of the Jerusalem tradition, and the references to the Abrahamic tradition, provide a universalizing framework for the promises of hope. So the note of universalism which finds explicit expression within the Servant Songs also finds some support in the broader theological teaches of the Book of Consolation.

2) The weight of the evidence seems to lie with those who would recognize universalism of a limited nature within the prophecy. That is to say, there is undoubtedly universalism of a kind present within the message of the prophet but it hardly amounts to a call to universal mission on the part of God's people. Rather it is that the effect of Yahweh's saving and renewing work in the lives of his people is going to have universal ramifications. Only one text outside the Servant Songs seems really capable of bearing a thoroughly universalist interpretation, namely Isaiah 45:22, but even this can be viewed as a divine invitation to the nations to make a response for themselves to what Yahweh has achieved in the life of his people.

3) Either side of the argument faces the problem of historical fulfilment. For all the claims of H G May to the contrary, we can hardly conclude from subsequent history that the Jews embarked on a worldwide mission to the Gentiles. On the other hand it is difficult to see how the return of a comparatively insignificant band of people to an equally insignificant piece of country was to achieve the international significance of which the prophet seems to speak. It is the enigma of such questions that has led a number of scholars to look for the answer to the puzzle beyond the realm of the prophet's historical context if not beyond history itself.

ABBREVIATIONS

BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
ChQR	Church Quarterly Review
JBL	Journal of Biblical Literature
JBR	Journal of Bible and Religion
JPOS	Journal of the Palestine Oriental Society
JNES	Journal of Near Eastern Studies
OTS	Oudtestamentische Studien
ScJTh	Scottish Journal of Theology
SVT	Supplements to Vetus Testamentum
TGUOS	Transactions of the Glasgow University Oriental Society
VT	Vetus Testamentum

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