

# “THE ROBE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS”: EXILIC AND POST-EXILIC ISAIAH IN *THE BOOK OF MORMON*

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The book of Isaiah has enjoyed an enduring presence within Christian thought since the earliest period of Christian history. Isaiah has famously been called “the fifth gospel”<sup>1</sup> because of its ubiquitous presence within Christian writing, thought, and history and its immense influence on the New Testament.<sup>2</sup> The importance of Isaiah within broader Christianity carries over into early Mormon texts as well, and readers of *The Book of Mormon*<sup>3</sup> get a sense early on in their reading that they will have to deal with a significant amount of quoted material from Isaiah if they are going to engage the book and take it seriously. The book’s earliest character and émigré prophet, Nephi, explicitly states that he does not just want his readers to know his interpretation of Isaiah’s message. Instead, he wants them to read and know Isaiah’s

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1. John F. A. Sawyer, *The Fifth Gospel: Isaiah in the History of Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

2. Steve Moyise and Maarten J. J. Menken, eds., *Isaiah in the New Testament* (London: T&T Clark, 2005).

3. I refer to the 1830 printing of *The Book of Mormon*, just as other early Americanists do, when describing the text throughout this essay. My focus is on *The Book of Mormon* as a part of the print culture of the early national period of US history, and I recognize it as a major site where scholars of Mormon studies can more fully interact with other fields in the academy. See Joseph Smith Jr., *The Book of Mormon* (Palmyra: E. B. Grandin, 1830); Elizabeth Fenton and Jared Hickman, eds., *Americanist Approaches to The Book of Mormon* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019).

words, mediated at least through a slightly revised and updated version of the King James text of Isaiah.

Scholars of *The Book of Mormon* have noted at least since H. Grant Vest that it is a historical problem for the book to quote from Isaiah chapters 40–66 because it is widely accepted in biblical scholarship that this section of the book dates to after 600 BCE, the period when Lehi and Nephi left Jerusalem.<sup>4</sup> Numerous previous studies have examined the “problem of Isaiah in the Book of Mormon,”<sup>5</sup> however, few have set

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4. H. Grant Vest, “The Problem of Isaiah in the Book of Mormon” (master’s thesis, Brigham Young University, 1938). There were earlier treatments and acknowledgements of the “problem,” including by B. H. Roberts and Sidney B. Sperry. However, Vest’s stands, in my opinion, as the first formal, sophisticated discussion of the issue in an academic setting.

5. See Sidney Brenton Sperry, “The Text of Isaiah in the Book of Mormon” (master’s thesis, University of Chicago, 1926); H. Grant Vest, “The Problem of Isaiah in the Book of Mormon”; Sidney B. Sperry, *Answers to Book of Mormon Questions* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1967), 73–97; Wayne Ham, “A Textual Comparison of the Isaiah Passages in The Book of Mormon With the Same Passages in the St. Mark’s Isaiah Scroll of the Dead Sea Community” (master’s thesis, Brigham Young University, 1961); Gary L. Bishop, “The Tradition of Isaiah in the Book of Mormon” (master’s thesis, Brigham Young University, 1974); John A. Tvedtnes, *The Isaiah Variants in the Book of Mormon* (Provo: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1981); Carol F. Ellertson, “The Isaiah Passages in the Book of Mormon: A Non-Aligned Text” (master’s thesis, Brigham Young University, 2001); David P. Wright, “Isaiah in the Book of Mormon: Or Joseph Smith in Isaiah,” in *American Apocrypha: Essays on the Book of Mormon*, edited by Dan Vogel and Brent Lee Metcalfe (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2002), 157–234; Ronald V. Huggins, “Joseph Smith’s ‘Inspired Translation’ of Romans 7,” in *The Prophet Puzzle: Interpretive Essays on Joseph Smith*, edited by Bryan Waterman (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1999), 259–87; Dana M. Pike and David Rolph Seely, “‘Upon All the Ships of the Sea, and Upon All the Ships of Tarshish’: Revisiting 2 Nephi 12:16 and Isaiah 2:16,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 14, no. 2 (2005): 12–25, 67–71; Joseph M. Spencer, “Isaiah 52 in the Book of Mormon: Notes on Isaiah’s Reception History,” *Relegere: Studies in Religion and Reception* 6, no. 2 (2016): 189–217; and Joseph M. Spencer, “Nephi, Isaiah, and Europe,” in *Reading Nephi Reading Isaiah: 2 Nephi 26–27*, edited by Joseph M. Spencer and Jenny Webb, 2nd ed. (Provo: Neal A. Maxwell Institute Press, 2016), 19–35.

this issue in the more comprehensive, poignant problem of the influence of the entire King James Bible on the composition of *The Book of Mormon* as a whole.<sup>6</sup> As a contribution to the larger project of examining the King James Bible's influence on *The Book of Mormon*, this essay focuses on several aspects of the problem of Isaiah in *The Book of Mormon* as they relate to the more significant issue. I will focus on two problems with the use of Isaiah in *The Book of Mormon*. First, previous scholarship has assumed that none of Third Isaiah has had any effect on the text of *The Book of Mormon* and the Isaiah chapters it quotes. This assumption has relied on a mistaken way of identifying influence by looking only for long quotations. Second, I examine how biblical scholarship on Isaiah complicates having a block quotation including portions of not only Isaiah chapters 40–55 but also those from chapters 2–14 as well. It was just as unlikely for a sixth-century Israelite immigrating from the Middle East to the Americas to have Isaiah 2–14 as they appear in the KJV as it was to have 40–55, and it is the fact that most of the scholarship on *The Book of Mormon* up to now has obscured this that I wish to address.<sup>7</sup>

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6. There is at least one exception to this rule. See Wesley P. Walters, *The Use of the Old Testament in the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Utah Lighthouse Ministry, 1990). Some reviewers criticized Walters for including analysis on *The Book of Mormon's* use of the New Testament, but this is a strength of his master's thesis. *The Book of Mormon* blends phrases from both the Old Testament and the New Testament. The way the Bible influences *The Book of Mormon* cannot be analyzed unless scholars consider both. See John A. Tvedtnes, review of *The Use of the Old Testament in the Book of Mormon*, by Wesley P. Walters," *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 4, no. 1 (1992): 228ff.

7. There are two exceptions to this. See Grant Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader's Guide* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 69; and Joseph M. Spencer, *The Vision of All: Twenty-five Lectures on Isaiah in Nephi's Record* (Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2016), 21. Both Hardy and Spencer point out how scholarship on Isaiah problematizes the availability of Isaiah 2–14 to characters of *The Book of Mormon*.

## 1. The Problem of Dating Isaiah

Since the pioneering eighteenth-century work of both Johann Christoph Döderlein and Johann Gottfried Eichhorn, scholars have understood the compositional history of the book of Isaiah to be far more complicated than the notion that Isaiah of Jerusalem wrote all sixty-six chapters of the book.<sup>8</sup> In fact, since the last quarter of that century, scholars have argued that historians need to separate the historical person, Isaiah of Jerusalem, from the literary book itself. This observation is partially due to how scholars argue that Isaiah wrote portions of chapters 1–39 but not 40–66.<sup>9</sup> Scholars continued to examine and refine this approach to the compositional history of the book of Isaiah, and it became the leading theory of the book's authorship soon after the publication of Döderlein's and Eichhorn's work in the 1770s and 1780s.

The best expression of this position is found a century later in Samuel R. Driver's 1891 study *An Introduction to the Study of the Old Testament*.<sup>10</sup> Driver argued that chapters 40–66 are clearly of a later date and authorship than 1–39 because, primarily, the prophecies in 40–66 presuppose a sixth-century audience without ever claiming to be about the future and, secondarily, the literary style and theological perspective

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8. Johann Christoph Döderlein, *Esaias ex Recensione Textus Hebraei* (Altorf: Officina Schupfeliana, 1775); and Johann Gottfried Eichhorn, *Einleitung ins Alte Testament*, 5 vols. (Leipzig: Weidmanns Erben and Reich, 1780–1783).

9. Although the theory proposed by these eighteenth-century scholars broadly argued that a later author wrote all of chapters 40–66 during the sixth century, Eichhorn believed that he could extract more “inauthentic” material from chapters 1–39 as well. Christopher R. Seitz, “Isaiah, Book of (First Isaiah),” in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary, Volume 3: H–J*, edited by David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 473.

10. S. R. Driver, *An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament* (New York: Charles Scriber's Sons, 1910).

of the later chapters differ significantly from the earlier chapters.<sup>11</sup> A year after the publication of Driver's book, Bernhard Duhm identified a third author in the book, Trito-Isaiah, and argued that this anonymous author wrote later than both Isaiah of Jerusalem and Deutero-Isaiah.<sup>12</sup>

Duhm's theory would later become the standard account of the book's formation. In the wake of Duhm's work, most scholarship on Isaiah has engaged the book by dividing it into these three sections, roughly chapters 1–39, 40–55, and 56–66. This designation has remained a valuable tool in biblical studies to quickly explain three of the major blocks in the formation of the book,<sup>13</sup> although for the purposes of this study, it is beneficial to break down the sections of Isaiah

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11. Driver, *Literature of the Old Testament*, 230–246. See John Goldingay and David Payne, *Isaiah 40–55, Volume 1: A Critical and Exegetical Commentary*, International Critical Commentary (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2006), In2.

12. Bernhard Duhm, *Das Buch Jesaja* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1892). Duhm would change his position to separate the three sections to 1–39, 40–57, and 58–66 in the third edition (1914) of the commentary. See Øystein Lund, *Way Metaphors and Way Topics in Isaiah 40–55*, *Forschungen zum Alten Testament 2. Reihe*, 28 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 25n86.

13. While some scholars deny the idea that there is a Third Isaiah, the vast majority of scholarship on this question accepts the notion that there is a broad, tripartite division in the composition history of Isaiah: a Proto-, Deutero-, and Trito-Isaiah. However, all major scholars on Isaiah view chapters 40–66 as written well after 600 BCE. See Claus Westermann, *Isaiah 40–66: A Commentary*, Old Testament Library (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1969); Goldingay and Payne, *Isaiah 40–55*, 1; J. J. M. Roberts, *First Isaiah: A Commentary*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2015), 2–3; and Hans Wildberger, *Isaiah 28–39: A Continental Commentary*, translated by Thomas H. Trapp (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002), 496ff. Two of the most relevant scholars who see chapters 40–66 as still later than 1–39 but written by a single author include Benjamin D. Sommer, *A Prophet Reads Scripture: Allusion in Isaiah 40–66*, *Contraversions: Jews and Other Differences* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1998), 187–95; and Shalom M. Paul, *Isaiah 40–66: Translation and Commentary*, The Eerdmans Critical Commentary (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2012), 12.

further in order to go beyond this simplified and truncated portrait of the critical understanding of the book. The oversimplification of the division of source material in the book of Isaiah has unfortunately led scholars within Mormon studies to assume that only the quotation of Isaiah 48–54 in *The Book of Mormon* is historically problematic.<sup>14</sup> It is time for a broader and deeper engagement with all the relevant data.

## 2. Identifying Third Isaiah in *The Book of Mormon*

The influence of specific phrases from portions of verses in Isaiah 56–66 on *The Book of Mormon* has almost wholly eluded scholars of the book since they became aware of the problem of Isaiah's authorship over a century ago. H. Grant Vest, a master's student at Brigham Young University in the 1930s working under Sidney B. Sperry, believed that he found one example of Third Isaiah in *The Book of Mormon*, but it comes from Isaiah 55. When he was working on his thesis, scholars identified Isaiah 55 as part of Third Isaiah.<sup>15</sup> To my knowledge, only one other scholar has previously connected language in *The Book of Mormon* with Third Isaiah.<sup>16</sup> In the following sections, I will describe *The Book of Mormon* verses influenced by Third Isaiah individually.

### 2.1 *Isaiah 61:10*

In 2 Nephi 4, the Lehiite company has just arrived at the New World, and Lehi has provided patriarchal blessings and counsel to his and Ishmael's sons and grandchildren. In verse 12, he dies, and soon after Nephi states that his brothers Laman and Lemuel were again angry with Nephi for chastising them (vv. 13–14). Scholars have labeled the text from verse 15

14. Cf. Kent P. Jackson, "Isaiah in the Book of Mormon," in *A Reason for Faith: Navigating LDS Doctrine and Church History*, edited by Laura Harris Hales (Provo: Religious Studies Center at Brigham Young University and Deseret Book Company, 2016), 69–78.

15. Vest, "Problem of Isaiah in the Book of Mormon," 230.

16. See footnote 32.

to the end of the chapter "the Psalm of Nephi," the "only . . . psalm in the entire volume,"<sup>17</sup> and in verse 33, we find the first instance of language from Third Isaiah in *The Book of Mormon*. "O Lord, wilt thou encircle me around in the robe of thy righteousness!"<sup>18</sup>

The phrase "the robe of righteousness" is found in the KJV only in Isaiah 61:10. The separate words "robe" and "righteousness" are not found together in any other verse in the KJV. In Isaiah 61, the author states that they "will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness."<sup>19</sup> As Claus Westermann has argued, this is related to the songs of praise in Deutero-Isaiah, but the two different authors show "characteristic" differences in how they present their songs of praise. As Westermann states, Deutero-Isaiah's songs of praise are "sung by the community (call to praise in the imperative)," whereas the song in Isaiah 61:10 is "sung by an individual."<sup>20</sup>

At stake is Nephi's use of a part of Isaiah that dates far after his leaving Jerusalem sometime around 600 BCE. It is similar to his quotations of Romans 7:24 in 2 Nephi 4:17 ("O wretched man that I am!"), Hebrews 12:1 in 2 Nephi 4:18 ("I am encompassed about, because of the temptations and the sins which doth so easily beset me"), and both James 1:5 ("I know that God will give liberally to him that asketh") and James 4:3 ("if I ask not amiss") in 2 Nephi 4:35.<sup>21</sup> These texts date to well after

17. Sidney B. Sperry, *Our Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Stevens & Wallis, Inc., 1948), 110.

18. Smith, *The Book of Mormon*, 70–71.

19. All quotations from the Bible are from the KJV unless otherwise noted.

20. Westermann notes Isaiah 44:23 as an example of this kind of song in Deutero-Isaiah. See Westermann, *Isaiah 40–66*, 371. Joseph Blenkinsopp provides this longer list: 42:10–13; 44:23; 45:8; 49:13, and to cf. 12:1–6. Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 56–66: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Bible Commentary, 19b (New York: Doubleday, 2003), 230.

21. Smith, *The Book of Mormon*, 80.

the period that an ostensible historical Nephi could have used them.<sup>22</sup> The key here is that the author of 2 Nephi 4 is dependent on a phrase in Third Isaiah and blends the language taken from that source with language taken from multiple books in the New Testament.

Dependence on this phrase from Isaiah 61:10 is also found in 2 Nephi 9:14.<sup>23</sup> Beginning in 2 Nephi 6:6–7, Jacob quotes Isaiah 49:22–23, then Isaiah 49:24–52:2 in 2 Nephi 6:16–8:25. Jacob expounds on these chapters in 2 Nephi 9, like Nephi did for Isaiah 48–49 in 1 Nephi 22. In verse 14, Jacob explains how “the righteous shall have a perfect knowledge of their enjoyment and their righteousness, being clothed with purity, yea, even with the robe of righteousness.”<sup>24</sup> Nephi and Jacob both approach the text of Isaiah in the same way by quoting entire chapters and then explaining those chapters to their audiences. Although the two sermons are decades separated, Jacob continues Nephi’s quotation and is dependent in his exposition on the exact phrase from Isaiah 61:10 that we find Nephi using in 2 Nephi 4:33. This brings attention to the singular use of Isaiah by two characters in the narrative.

Likewise, we also find many biblical quotations and echoes in this chapter from several New Testament sources. As Philip Barlow has previously shown, 2 Nephi 9:16–17 borrows language from a range of texts, including (in the order they appear in the verses) Matthew 24:35; Revelation 22:11; Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10; Hebrews 12:2; Matthew

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22. It is noteworthy that Smith also used the terminology from these sources in Doctrine and Covenants 29:12 and 109:76. See Michael Hubbard MacKay, et al., eds., *The Joseph Smith Papers, Documents, Volume 1: July 1828–June 1831* (Salt Lake City: Church Historian’s Press, 2013), 179; and Brent M. Rogers, et al., eds., *The Joseph Smith Papers, Documents, Volume 5: October 1835–January 1838* (Salt Lake City: Church Historian’s Press, 2017), 206n139.

23. I made the connection to 2 Nephi 9:14 independent of the Joseph Smith Papers editors in the previous note.

24. Smith, *The Book of Mormon*, 80.



25:34; and John 15:11.<sup>25</sup> We can also add an informal quotation of 2 Corinthians 5:10 in 2 Nephi 9:15 to this long list ("must appear before the judgment seat of the Holy One of Israel").<sup>26</sup> Jacob's extensive use of the New Testament around the phrase "robe of righteousness" in 2 Nephi 9 is similar to what we found in Nephi's dependence on Third Isaiah in 2 Nephi 4. Both sections of *The Book of Mormon* are dependent on Third Isaiah and several texts from the New Testament. These verses also cannot be stripped from Nephi's or Jacob's texts without doing irreparable harm to their message. The author of these chapters knew Third Isaiah and the New Testament.

## 2.2 *Isaiah 65:2/Romans 10:21*

The second example of a phrase in Third Isaiah that influenced *The Book of Mormon* is found in Isaiah 65:2. However, the use of this verse was mediated through the New Testament's quotation of this same passage, specifically in Romans 10:21.<sup>27</sup> The formal quotation of Isaiah 65:2 in Romans 10:21 takes only from the first half of the source text. This part of Isaiah 65:2 reads in the KJV, "I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people." Romans 10:21 says, "But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people." Although slightly varying among themselves in terminology, each of the three verses in *The Book of Mormon* dependent on Isaiah 65:2 is far closer in its wording to the KJV of Romans 10:21

25. Philip L. Barlow, *Mormons and the Bible: The Place of the Latter-day Saints in American Religion*, rev. ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 30.

26. The KJV of the beginning of 2 Corinthians 5:10 reads, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ. . . ."

27. See J. Ross Wagner, "Isaiah in Romans and Galatians," in *Isaiah in the New Testament*, edited by Steve Moyise and Maarten J. J. Menken (London: T&T Clark International, 2005), 124–25; and Steve Moyise, *Evoking Scripture: Seeing the Old Testament in the New* (London: T&T Clark, 2008), 33–34n5.

than Third Isaiah.<sup>28</sup> We find the one exemplar that deviates most from the other two in 2 Nephi 28:32. There the divine states, “for notwithstanding I shall lengthen out mine arm unto them from day to day, they will deny me.”<sup>29</sup> Both Jacob 5:47 and 6:4 agree with Romans 10:21 and have “stretched” and “stretches,” respectively, instead of “lengthen,” like in 2 Nephi 28:32, whereas Isaiah 65:2 has “spread out.” The two verses in Jacob also have “all the day long,” which is closer to Romans 10:21, “all day long,” contrary to 2 Nephi 28:32, “from day to day.” These are all different than what we find in Isaiah 65:2, “all the day.” The similarity in thought and imagery suggests that the author was familiar with the basic idea stated in Isaiah 65:2 as quoted in Romans 10:21 but, due to the disparity in wording, likely could not recall the exact wording so instead relied on their memory.<sup>30</sup>

Each of the three verses in *The Book of Mormon* ends with a negative sentiment about those God reaches out to help. They will deny him (2 Nephi 28:32), they are corrupted (Jacob 5:47), and “they are a stiffnecked, and a gainsaying people” (Jacob 6:4).<sup>31</sup> In each verse, there is some improvisation in how the author uses the language from the

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28. Isaiah 65:2a reads, “I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people,” whereas Romans 10:21 reads, “But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.”

29. Smith, *The Book of Mormon*, 115.

30. It is common for Smith, and other early Americans, to not remember the exact wording of a biblical source text but retain the main idea and vocabulary within their allusions. One example found in a handful of Smith’s texts is at the end of Doctrine and Covenants section 4. I have argued elsewhere that in the earliest version, Smith likely realized that he could not remember exactly the list of virtues in 2 Peter 1:5. After a failed attempt, he left a placeholder, “&c,” which was then published in *The Book of Commandments* (1833) and subsequently updated to reflect the wording in 2 Peter 1:5 in the 1835 *Doctrine and Covenants*. See Michael Hubbard MacKay, et al, eds., *The Joseph Smith Papers, Documents, Volume 1: July 1828–June 1831* (Salt Lake City: Church Historian’s Press, 2013), 13.

31. Smith, *The Book of Mormon*, 139.

source texts. 2 Nephi 28:32 is, just like Jacob 5:47 and 6:4, ultimately dependent on Isaiah 65:2 through Romans 10:21 but more freely engages with the imagery in the text rather than the specific language.<sup>32</sup>

### 2.3 *Isaiah 63:1*

Nephi continues to echo Third Isaiah when he is about to "make an end of [his] prophesying" in 2 Nephi 31:19.<sup>33</sup> Earlier in the chapter, Nephi wants the implied audience to remember that he prophesied about how John the Baptist would baptize Jesus, so, it follows, it is vital for everyone to follow Jesus' actions. In verse 19, Nephi asks if the reader has started on the path of discipleship and whether they are now done; he answers in the negative. "For ye have not come thus far save it were by the word of Christ with unshaken faith in him, relying wholly upon the merits of him who is mighty to save."<sup>34</sup> The one "mighty to save" is explicitly Jesus in his capacity as savior and redeemer of humanity,

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32. I am not the first to note the connection between at least one of the three links to Isaiah 65:2 in *The Book of Mormon*. Brent Metcalfe independently identified this same influence back in the 1980s, decades before my work. At the Sunstone Symposium in 1988, Metcalfe described his forthcoming edited collection *New Approaches to the Book of Mormon* in a presentation entitled "Chiasmus as Necessary Proof of Ancient Semitic Origins of the Book of Mormon." In the course of giving the presentation, Metcalfe mentioned the intertextual connection between Jacob 6:4 and Isaiah 65:2 and how it is through Paul's epistle to the Romans that Third Isaiah influenced Jacob 6:4. See Brent Lee Metcalfe, ed., *New Approaches to the Book of Mormon: Explorations in Critical Methodology* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1993), though Metcalfe's published paper was ultimately on a different topic. For the presentation, see "New Approaches to the Book of Mormon," Sunstone, Jan. 1, 1988, available in audio form at <https://www.sunstonemagazine.com/new-approaches-to-the-book-of-mormon/>. Metcalfe describes the connection just after the 48-minute mark.

33. The quotation is found in 2 Nephi 31:1.

34. 2 Nephi 31:19. Smith, *The Book of Mormon*, 120.

an explicitly Christian soteriology that is significantly different from anything found in the book of Isaiah.

There are two other instances of this “mighty to save” language. In Alma 7:14, Alma states that in order to “inherit the kingdom of heaven” a person has to “be baptized unto repentance” and “washed from your sins, that ye may have faith on the Lamb of God . . . which is mighty to save and to cleanse from all unrighteousness.”<sup>35</sup> Alma 34:18 is more ambiguous, however. After describing the importance of Jesus’ atonement, in verse 18, Amulek echoes Isaiah 63:1 when he states, “Yea, cry unto him for mercy, for he is mighty to save.”<sup>36</sup>

*The Book of Mormon* brings a Christological interpretation to Third Isaiah’s phrase. In contrast to how Third Isaiah employs the terminology of YHWH being the one “mighty to save,” the way the chapters of *The Book of Mormon* specifically engage with Isaiah 63:1 place Jesus front and center as the one “mighty to save.” This Christianizing of the text clarifies how historians should date the texts Smith dictated in a period after the development of Christian soteriology and the rereading of Isaiah 63 as Jesus’ second coming. This development in the history of ideas is crucial for the composition of the passages in *The Book of Mormon* that are dependent on Isaiah 63:1.

#### 2.4 Isaiah 66:1 and Matthew 5:34–35

The final verse from Third Isaiah that has influenced *The Book of Mormon* is also found in the New Testament, like the examples above. In Jesus’ injunction against oath swearing (Matthew 5:34–35), Matthew cites Isaiah 66:1: “The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool.” The passage is also referenced in the New Testament in Acts 7:49. Both 1 Nephi 17:39 and 3 Nephi 12:34–35 are dependent on Matthew 5:34–35, the latter more explicitly than the former because 3 Nephi 12–14 is a block quotation of Matthew 5–7. 1 Nephi 17:39 reads,

35. Smith, *The Book of Mormon*, 240–41.

36. Smith, *The Book of Mormon*, 320.

"He ruleth high in the heavens, for it is his throne, and this earth is his footstool." The particle "for," found in both 1 Nephi 17:39 and Matthew 5:34—but not in Acts 7:49 or Isaiah 66:1—just before describing the heavens as the throne and the earth as the footstool, indicates the dependence of 1 Nephi 17:39 on Matthew 5:34 rather than either Acts 7:49 or the ultimate source, Isaiah 66:1. Still, that the idea and language originate with Third Isaiah supports the influence of Third Isaiah on *The Book of Mormon* as mediated through the New Testament.

### 3. Deutero-Isaianic, Exilic, and Post-Exilic Revision of Isaiah 2–14

As noted above, the dominant approach to the "Isaiah problem" of *The Book of Mormon* has been to see the uses of First Isaiah, including chapters 2–14, as posing no historical problem for the Nephite record. However, this view adopts a theory that all or nearly all of First Isaiah is authentic and available in its current form by 600 BCE. Many scholars have noted that other parts of Isaiah 2–14 were not written by Isaiah of Jerusalem but rather in the exilic or post-exilic periods. Bernhard Duhm, the scholar who initially proposed the tripartite division of the book of Isaiah in 1892,<sup>37</sup> also recognized that not all of chapters 1–39 could be ascribed to Isaiah of Jerusalem. Instead, scholars had to recognize that much of this material was composed and added to the book of Isaiah centuries after Isaiah's prophetic career.<sup>38</sup> It is essential to recognize this fact and not forget that the tripartite division is more

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37. Bernhard Duhm, *Das Buch Jesaja übersetzt und erklärt*, 4th ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1922).

38. While discussing "literary continuity" between the different parts of Isaiah, Kent Jackson recently stated that, "In fact, the literary variations within chapters 1–35 are such that if one wanted to, one could argue for multiple authors within that section alone." Jackson, "Isaiah in the Book of Mormon," 74. The problem is that this is not hypothetical; scholars have been making this exact argument since the eighteenth century.

a heuristic model than an exact representation of scholarship over the last three centuries.

In his 1994 study, H. G. M. Williamson convincingly argued that Deutero-Isaiah redacted, and therefore reorganized and rewrote, much of the material in Isaiah 2–14.<sup>39</sup> Although not everyone accepts his theory exactly as he argued it, Williamson brilliantly grounded his entire argument on specific verses in Isaiah 1–39 that most Isaiah scholars already accepted as later than Isaiah of Jerusalem. The rhetorical power of this approach allowed Williamson to focus on the similarities between the later additions in First Isaiah and the lexicon, historical setting, and theological perspective in Isaiah 40–55 over against those of the sections of 1–39 that scholars view as original to Isaiah himself.

Some scholars have rightly cautioned against approaches they see as too confident in identifying “the editorial growth of a biblical book over the centuries with the barest minimum of actual evidence.”<sup>40</sup> But, as is also the case in J. J. M. Roberts’s commentary, sometimes the later additions and editorial structures are so clear that even a more cautious commentator like Roberts must note how First Isaiah developed well after Isaiah of Jerusalem’s lifetime. It is essential to note the specific passages in Isaiah 2–14 that Roberts, Williamson, and most other Isaiah scholars have agreed are later additions or editorial changes to these passages. The fact that parts of Isaiah 2–14 were either revised, restructured, or composed during or after the Babylonian exile complicates the assumption that Nephi or any of his descendants could have quoted these chapters in full the way Nephi did in 2 Nephi 12–24. As we will see, the shape of Isaiah 2–14 would have been drastically different in a pre-exilic setting than what we find in the KJV, and therefore *The Book of Mormon*. Due to space constraints, I will only analyze a few examples.

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39. H. G. M. Williamson, *The Book Called Isaiah: Deutero-Isaiah’s Role in Composition and Redaction* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994).

40. Roberts, *First Isaiah*, 3.

### 3.1 *Isaiah 2:1–5*

The block quotation of Isaiah 2–14 begins in 2 Nephi 12:1. The first verse of this quotation is widely recognized as a later addition to Isaiah 2. Roberts views Isaiah 2:1 as a late addition—even later than Williamson dates the verse—connecting Isaiah 1:29–31 to 2:2–4.<sup>41</sup> Isaiah 2:2–4 has a complicated history because of its close parallel in Micah 4:1–4, but the entire pericope, too, is almost universally recognized as a late addition to First Isaiah. Roberts argues that 2:1 was added to bridge Isaiah 2 to Isaiah 1:29–31 and contextualize 2:2–4 and claims that the oracle is original to Isaiah and not Micah.<sup>42</sup> Most scholars also argue that the text in Micah 4:1–4 is a late addition to that book,<sup>43</sup> although scholars

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41. Roberts argues that Isaiah 2:1 was added as a bridge to connect Isaiah 1:29–31, even though most scholars think that chapter 1 was added as part of the latest redaction of the book as a whole, well into the post-exilic period. See Roberts, *First Isaiah*, 35. Williamson argues that the author of Deutero-Isaiah added Isaiah 2:1 as the heading of the book as it was in the late exilic period, before the return of the Israelites from Babylon. See Williamson, *The Book Called Isaiah*, 153.

42. Roberts, *First Isaiah*, 35.

43. Cf. Hans Walter Wolff, *Micah: A Commentary*, Continental Commentary (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1990), 116–18. Gary Stansell leaves it as a given that critical scholarship has isolated Micah 4:1–4 as a later addition to the book. Gary Stansell, *Micah and Isaiah: A Form and Tradition Historical Comparison*, SBL Dissertation Series 85 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988), 7. Berges has noted, “the post-exilic origin of Isa. 2.2–4/Mic. 4.1–3 is nearly universally accepted,” in Ulrich F. Berges, *The Book of Isaiah: Its Composition and Final Form*, Hebrew Bible Monographs 46 (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2012), 61. These scholars note that Wildberger is an outlier, believing that Isaiah 2:2–4 is original. See Hans Wildberger, *Isaiah 1–12: A Commentary*, Continental Commentary (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 85–87. Williamson notes that “a very early post-exilic date is favoured by a number of the most recent studies of the passage.” Williamson, *The Book Called Isaiah*, 148.

often view the version in Micah as more complete than what is found in Isaiah 2:2–4.<sup>44</sup>

There is also the problem of Isaiah 2:5. Williamson argues that Deutero-Isaiah added this verse to connect 2:2–4 to 2:6–21.<sup>45</sup> Otto Kaiser, Hans Wildberger, Ulrich Berges, and others support the argument that 2:5 is a late addition to the text, even though some scholars believe 2:2–4 is original to Isaiah.<sup>46</sup> Recent scholarship has identified at least parts, if not the whole, of Isaiah 2:1–5 as being too late of an addition to the book of Isaiah to have been available on the brass plates as described in *The Book of Mormon*.

### 3.2 Isaiah 3:18–23

According to Wildberger and most Isaiah scholars, Isaiah 3:18–23 is a redactional interpolation that interrupts the continuity between verses 17 and 24.<sup>47</sup> There have been several attempts to argue that this is not

44. Cf. Williamson, *The Book Called Isaiah*, 149. As Williamson has noted in his commentary, though, fragment 10f 4QIsa<sup>c</sup> of the Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS) complicates this notion by agreeing with both the Masoretic Text (MT; the traditional Hebrew Bible) of Micah instead of Isaiah, as well as varying from the standard text and Micah in its own way. H. G. M. Williamson, *Isaiah 1–5: A Critical and Exegetical Commentary*, International Critical Commentary (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2006), 166.

45. Williamson, *The Book Called Isaiah*, 146. Roberts accepts 2:5, as he does 2:2–4, as being original Isaiah but fails to engage critically with all of the major points brought up by Williamson, Blenkinsopp, Berges, and others. Cf. Roberts, *First Isaiah*, 44.

46. Otto Kaiser, *Isaiah 1–12: A Commentary*, The Old Testament Library (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1983), 56; Wildberger, *Isaiah 1–12*, 84; Berger, *The Book of Isaiah*, 60–61.

47. Wildberger, *Isaiah 1–12*, 147, contra Roberts, *First Isaiah*, 60. Roberts offers an argument similar to one made by H. Barth in 1977. Williamson responds exhaustively to Barth's argument (Williams, *The Book Called Isaiah*, 139), but Roberts does not engage with Williamson—or any of the other numerous scholars on this point besides Wildberger—in his argument that these verses are original. Berges, *The Book of Isaiah*, 69, notes the obvious textual problems



the case, most recently by Roberts, but the responses have failed to adequately counter all the reasons for seeing Isaiah 3:18–23 as a later, post-exilic (according to Williamson and others) interpolation.<sup>48</sup> Although Williamson notes that for these verses, "Authorship and date is impossible to determine with certainty,"<sup>49</sup> the latter part of his statement is determinative. Williamson, along with numerous other scholars, identifies the final editor of this section, chapters 2–4, as working in the post-exilic period.<sup>50</sup> Wildberger and Kaiser both restructure this section in their commentaries to account for the interpolation of verses 18–23, moving verse 24 after verses 16 and 17.<sup>51</sup> Williamson notes that "Verse 24 follows smoothly on v. 17 both in subject matter and in form."<sup>52</sup> Many scholars view the use of the phrase "in that day" at the beginning of verse 18 as introducing a redactional gloss,<sup>53</sup> and Williamson sees the statement in verse 18 that "the Lord will take away" as a reference to verse 1, "suggesting a reader who had the wider passage in view rather than being just a late annotator who worked atomistically."<sup>54</sup>

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in the traditional Hebrew Bible (MT) and the different versions, showing how 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> of the Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS) resolves the issue by adding the word "shame." Roberts takes this reading as a given rather than dealing with the textual problems. According to Roberts, "MT seems clearly defective," but this is right at the point of the literary seam. Roberts, *First Isaiah*, 60.

48. Williamson, *Isaiah 1–5*, 288; Kaiser, *Isaiah 1–12*, 79; Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1–39*, 201; Wildberger, *Isaiah 1–12*, 147f. Sweeney says that "3:16–24 could have been composed at any time" (Sweeney, *Isaiah 1–39*, 110), demonstrating at least a slight shift from his earlier thinking that all of Isaiah 3:16–4:1 was Isaianic (Sweeney, *Isaiah 1–4* and the *Post-Exilic Understanding of the Isaianic Traditions*, 178, 181).

49. Williamson, *Isaiah 1–5*, 288.

50. Williamson, *Isaiah 1–5*, 238.

51. Wildberger, *Isaiah 1–12*, 148–51; Kaiser, *Isaiah 1–12*, 79–80.

52. Williamson, *Isaiah 1–5*, 286.

53. Williamson, *Isaiah 1–5*, 286; Wildberger, *Isaiah 1–12*, 147.

54. Williamson, *Isaiah 1–5*, 290.

The list of women's fine clothing and jewelry in verses 18–23 would have a significant influence on the editing of the whole of Isaiah 2–4, according to Williamson, especially as it was developed further in Isaiah 4:2–6, another later addition to this section.

### 3.3 *Isaiah 4:2–6*

Wildberger notes that chapters 2–4 have a great deal of material that originally comes from Isaiah of Jerusalem, but that “it is common to find secondary messages” added “at the conclusion of each” of these three chapters.<sup>55</sup> He sees 4:2–6 as a likely addition to the text and non-Isaianic for the following reasons: (1) the introduction includes the formula “on that day,” which he notes several times in his commentary as usually indicating a secondary expansion;<sup>56</sup> (2) the passage uses “the prosaic form in vv. 3ff.”;<sup>57</sup> and (3) there is much secondary material in chapters 2–4 that includes messages of salvation, especially at the ends, that verses 2–6 share. For Wildberger, these verses have to be described generally as post-exilic, since they are a part of the later “shaping of the book of Isaiah, including such additions which announce salvation, and thereby set all of the harshnesses of the preceding words of judgment into the framework of Yahweh’s eventual goal for history and for his people.”<sup>58</sup> Accordingly, this later rethinking of the earlier judgments

55. The following all view Isaiah 4:2–6 as a later addition: George Buchanan Gray, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Isaiah* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1912), 77; Kaiser, *Isaiah 1–12*, 85; Wildberger, *Isaiah 1–12*, 165; Williamson, *The Book Called Isaiah*, 143; Sweeney, *Isaiah 1–39*, 110–11; Berges, *The Book of Isaiah*, 69; Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1–39*, 204; Williamson, *Isaiah 1–5*, 305–06; Stromberg, *Isaiah After Exile*, 174–83; Roberts, *First Isaiah*, 67.

56. Wildberger, *Isaiah 1–12*, 147, 164.

57. Wildberger, *Isaiah 1–12*, 164.

58. Wildberger, *Isaiah 1–12*, 165. Cf. Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1–39*, 204, develops some of Wildberger’s points even further and shows how “We are . . . justified in suspecting that this kind of language is presenting an idealization of the specific form of temple community existing in the province of Judah under Iranian rule (sixth to fourth century B.C.E.)”

"was not the learned work of someone sitting at a writing desk, but developed instead in the liturgical use of the prophetic writings in the assemblies of the community during the era of the second temple."<sup>59</sup> Williamson further notes that 4:2–6 works with 2:2–4, which we saw earlier is a secondary edition, as a "bookend" to this section of Isaiah, chapters 2–4.<sup>60</sup> These two additions were integral to the final redactor's purposes in their attempt to unify the disparate content that became Isaiah 2–4. I will show further below that more recent scholarship has argued that at least 4:2–6 was authored either by Third Isaiah<sup>61</sup> or one of their contemporaries.

### 3.4 *Isaiah 5:25–30*

In his commentary on First Isaiah, which we have seen is more critical of the idea that parts of 2–14 were edited, rewritten, and shifted to their current position within the text at later periods, Roberts places Isaiah 10:1–4a between 5:8–24 and 5:25–30. He does this because "there are a number of indications that the connection between v. 24 and v. 25 is secondary" and that "In terms of form, it would appear that 10:1–4a goes with 5:8–24 and 5:25–30 goes with 9:7–20, probably at its conclusion."<sup>62</sup> The text as it now stands in 2–14 is not even close to the original order Roberts argues it would have been in during the earlier stages of the book. Although there is some uncertainty about what order exactly these four sections of Isaiah 5, 9, and 10 would have been in, many scholars agree that its current form is due to later redactional activity and that 5:25–30 was heavily edited and added last to its current

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59. Wildberger, *Isaiah 1–12*, 165.

60. Williamson, *Isaiah 1–5*, 305n13.

61. In biblical scholarship, it is common to call both the text and the potential author Third Isaiah.

62. Roberts, *First Isaiah*, 85.

position.<sup>63</sup> Most of Isaiah 6–9 gets in the way of this earlier organization of the text of First Isaiah.

### 3.5 *Isaiah 8:21–23a*

Scholars have long argued that Isaiah 8:21–23a is an intricate collection of small text fragments that likely go back to Isaiah.<sup>64</sup> Williamson noted in his study on the role of Isaiah 40–55 on the editing of 1–39 that 8:21–23a “has been compiled along exactly the same lines as those we suggested for 5:25–30,”<sup>65</sup> namely, that “the redactor was responsible for giving [5:25–30] its new and present setting in the book”<sup>66</sup> and comes closest to the thought and revisionary perspective, against what is in First Isaiah, to Deutero-Isaiah.<sup>67</sup> Although scholars disagree on the dating of this passage, whether it is originally Isaianic or later,<sup>68</sup> they agree that the way it has been edited and brought into its current position occurred later in the book’s history.<sup>69</sup> Wherever these verses might have been initially in a collection of writings by First Isaiah, it is clear that they would not have been in their present position because they do not flow with the surrounding text and that the editor changed some of the wording to fit its new location in the text.

63. Gray, *Critical and Exegetical Commentary*, 95; Kaiser, *Isaiah 1–12*, 96, 110–11; Wildberger, *Isaiah 1–12*, 194f.; Williamson, *The Book Called Isaiah*, 132; Sweetney, *Isaiah 1–39*, 195; Berges, *The Book of Isaiah*, 75; Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1–39*, 211, 217, 221–22.

64. Gray believed that it was three separate fragments. Gray, *Critical and Exegetical Commentary*, 157. Cf. Wildberger, *Isaiah 1–12*, 378–79.

65. Williamson, *The Book Called Isaiah*, 140.

66. Williamson, *The Book Called Isaiah*, 134.

67. Williamson, *The Book Called Isaiah*, 140–43.

68. Wildberger made a convincing case for its origins with Isaiah. Wildberger, *Isaiah 1–12*, 378–79.

69. See Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1–39*, 244–45.

### 3.6 *Isaiah 11:10–12:6*

In his commentary on Isaiah 1–12, Wildberger notes that there has been an almost universal agreement in Isaiah scholarship that Isaiah 11:10–16 and all of chapter 12 do not come from First Isaiah.<sup>70</sup> This depiction of the field was accurate up to the time Wildberger was working<sup>71</sup> and it is still the current position within biblical studies.<sup>72</sup> After considering all the reasons why scholars view 11:10–16 and chapter 12 as later additions to 2–11, Williamson shows that none of the objections raised by scholars allow a date of this material beyond the time of Deutero-Isaiah. Because 11:10–12:6 build upon 2–11 in ways similar in theme and content to the way that Isaiah 40–55 build on these earlier chapters as well as the other later additions to 2–11, and because they act as a literary bridge to 13–27 (highlighting their editorial nature), Williamson argues that they likely come from the same hand as the editor he identified for the other sections: Deutero-Isaiah himself.<sup>73</sup> Even if Williamson is incorrect to state that these chapters were either edited or authored by Deutero-Isaiah, the point still stands that Isaiah 11:10–12:6 would not have been a part of the book of Isaiah before 600 BCE because they were written either by Deutero-Isaiah or a contemporary.

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70. Wildberger, *Isaiah 1–12*, 489, 502.

71. Cf. Driver, *Literature of the Old Testament*, 210–11; Gray, *Critical and Exegetical Commentary*, 223; Kaiser, *Isaiah 1–12*, 262, 269–70.

72. Sweeney, *Isaiah 1–39*, 204 (but see H. G. M. Williamson, "The Theory of a Josianic Edition of the First Part of the Book of Isaiah: A Critical Examination," in *Studies in Isaiah: History, Theology, and Reception*, edited by Tommy Wasserman, Greger Andersson, and David Willgren [London: Bloomsbury, 2017], 3–21); Berger, *The Book of Isaiah*, 113–14; Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1–39*, 266–68; Stromberg, *Isaiah After Exile*, 5, 84–86; Williamson, *Isaiah 6–12*, 669–70, 687–89.

73. Williamson, *The Book Called Isaiah*, 118–23, 141–43.

### 3.7 Isaiah 13–14

According to Williamson, most scholars generally date Isaiah 13, which they view as mostly a unified, discrete text, to right before the rise of Cyrus, king of Persia.<sup>74</sup> He notes that some of the major attempts to connect this chapter with Isaiah of Jerusalem have failed because of the text's references to the nations at play. The Medes, in particular, are depicted in a way in Isaiah 13 that does not comport with the time when Assyria was the dominant power in the Near East, but the prophecy also does not reflect what most likely took place during Cyrus's reign ca. 539 BCE either.<sup>75</sup> Isaiah 14 does not incorporate enough historical information for scholars to date it exactly, but the fact that the editor has joined it with chapter 13 means that the text refers to the king of Babylon. Williamson notes how the editorial material in Isaiah 14:1–4a and 22–23 make this connection explicit, therefore setting chapters 13–14 in this later context well after the life of Isaiah and into the sixth century, decades after the Lehi group are depicted as leaving Jerusalem.

Even at the minimum, based on the knowledge that we have about the growth of the book of Isaiah, a pre-exilic Israelite scribe or author would not have had access to the full text of Isaiah 2–14, or in the order it is found in the KJV. Although *The Book of Mormon* quotation of these chapters does vary from the source text, sometimes more than others—this also indicates a redactional and expansionistic approach in Smith's quotation—it very rarely deletes text from Isaiah, for the most part preserving the text that is found in the KJV. Nephi would not have had available to him most or significant parts of Isaiah 2:1–5, 3:18–23, 4:2–6, 5:25–30, 8:21–23a, 11:10–12:6, or 13:1–14:32. Other verses could also be isolated and analyzed throughout Isaiah 2–14 that would not have been available to Nephi, but for the sake of both space and argument, these examples suffice to highlight the problem that this block

74. Williamson, *The Book Called Isaiah*, 158.

75. Williamson, *The Book Called Isaiah*, 158n5.

quotation poses to simple explanations of the problem of Isaiah in *The Book of Mormon*. I will now turn to six examples of late additions to Isaiah 2–14 and 48–55 that scholars identify as either related to the circle that produced Isaiah 56–66 or, possibly, written by Third Isaiah himself as he redacted, and therefore rewrote, the book of Isaiah.

#### 4. Third Isaiah in Isaiah 2–14 and 48–55

Recent scholarship has highlighted the probability that several of the late additions to Isaiah 2–14 and 48–55 were composed by the same author as the final redaction of Third Isaiah. The principal scholar proposing this argument has been Jacob Stromberg, whose 2011 publication *Isaiah After Exile: The Author of Third Isaiah as Reader and Redactor of the Book* has had a positive reception in the field since it was initially published.<sup>76</sup> Likewise, Williamson incorporated Stromberg's findings in the most recent volume of his commentary on Isaiah 1–27.<sup>77</sup> Further problematizing the issue, this opens the possibility that more of Third Isaiah is in *The Book of Mormon* than just the verses already discussed in section 2, specifically in the block quotations of Isaiah 2–14 and 48–55 themselves. This also means that *The Book of Mormon* formally quotes material from Third Isaiah. I will now examine the sections of Isaiah 2–14 and 48–55 that Stromberg and Williamson have identified as Third Isaiah and their reasons for doing so.

##### 4.1 *Isaiah 4:2–6*

As noted above, Isaiah 4:2–6, quoted in 2 Nephi 14, is not likely traceable to the historical Isaiah. According to Stromberg, Isaiah 4:2–6 is "a text almost universally regarded as much later than the prophet himself,

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76. Stromberg, *Isaiah After Exile*.

77. H. G. M. Williamson, *Isaiah 6–12: A Critical and Exegetical Commentary*, International Critical Commentary (London: T&T Clark, 2018).

and usually dated to at least as late as the post-exilic period.”<sup>78</sup> Many of the studies published in the years leading up to Stromberg’s work pointed toward his argument that Isaiah 4:2–6 was composed by the final author of Third Isaiah.<sup>79</sup> Most of these scholars asserted that Isaiah 60–62 influenced the author of Isaiah 4:2–6, but Stromberg emphasizes how the author of 60–62 developed these ideas and language to frame the beginning and end of Isaiah 56–66.<sup>80</sup>

Those who reject a post-exilic dating for Isaiah 4:2–6, like J. J. M. Roberts,<sup>81</sup> often fail to engage exhaustively with the reasons why most scholars do so. Roberts notes how the connection between Isaiah 3:16–4:1 and 4:2–6 “and the difficulty of analyzing the oracle as poetry have led many scholars to treat the oracle as a post-exilic insertion.”<sup>82</sup> In fact, the arguments put forward for this view are far more robust than this. Marvin Sweeney, for example, provides at least four reasons outside of the two noted by Roberts to view 4:2–6 as post-exilic in origin.<sup>83</sup> Sweeney notes that (1) the reference to “YHWH’s book of life” is now understood by scholars “as a late concept in Biblical literature,” (2) “the use of Exodus motifs is not characteristic of Isaiah of Jerusalem” but

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78. Stromberg, *Isaiah After Exile*, 174.

79. For instance, as noted above, Sweeney’s fourth argument for dating Isaiah 4:2–6 as post-exilic. Others include Blenkinsopp, who, after noting that some of the language in 4:2–6 best connects to Isaiah 66:15–16, states that “all of this highly charged language projecting a future very different from the unsatisfactory present is in keeping with the perspective of the last few chapters of the book,” i.e., Third Isaiah. Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1–39*, 204. Stromberg notes others in Stromberg, *Isaiah After Exile*, 175n114.

80. Stromberg, *Isaiah After Exile*, 176.

81. Roberts, *First Isaiah*, 67–68.

82. Roberts, *First Isaiah*, 67.

83. Marvin A. Sweeney, *Isaiah 1–4 and the Post-Exilic Understanding of the Isaianic Tradition*, Beiheft zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 171 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1988), 179–81. Cf. Stromberg, *Isaiah After Exile*, 174.



is an integral part of Deutero-Isaiah, (3) "the use of creation language, such as *bara* in v. 5, is characteristic of Deutero-Isaiah," not Isaiah of Jerusalem, and (4) these verses are influenced by "an unmistakable priestly stamp which is not characteristic of Deutero-Isaiah but does appear in the Trito-Isaiah materials."<sup>84</sup> Due to these specific considerations in the development of biblical traditions and the uncharacteristic nature of the vocabulary and ideas to Isaiah of Jerusalem, Sweeney and most other scholars view Isaiah 4:2–6 as originating in the post-exilic period.<sup>85</sup>

Important to our present purposes, those scholars who argue that Isaiah of Jerusalem wrote Isaiah 4:2–6 do so by reordering the verses. As Wildberger has noted, both Bernhard Stade and Karl Budde argued that the verses in Isaiah 4:2–4 are original but have them in the following order: after verse 1, it then goes verse 4, verse 3, and then verse 2. Verse 5 is, according to them, later than Isaiah of Jerusalem.<sup>86</sup> This rearrangement suggests that even if we went with the minority view that some of the verses in 4:2–6 are original to Isaiah, they should be in a completely different order than found in 2 Nephi 14:2–6. The ordering throughout *The Book of Mormon* simply follows the KJV.

#### 4.2 *Isaiah 6:13b*

Nephi's quotation of Isaiah chapter 6 in 2 Nephi 16 includes the second half of verse 13. Stromberg was not the first to connect Third Isaiah with Isaiah 6:13, although he is the first to argue the relationship in detail and explore the possibility that Third Isaiah wrote 6:13.<sup>87</sup> Sweeney also

84. Sweeney, *Isaiah 1–4*, 179–180.

85. See also Williamson, *The Book Called Isaiah*, 143–44; and Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1–39*, 203–04; and Williamson, *Isaiah 1–5*, 205–15; and Hans Wildberger, *Isaiah 1–12*, 164–65; and Kaiser, *Isaiah 1–12*, 85; and Berges, *The Book of Isaiah*, 69–70.

86. Stade wrote in 1884 and Budde in 1932. Wildberger, *Isaiah 1–12*, 164.

87. Stromberg, *Isaiah After Exile*, 160–74.

suggested this in an essay originally published in 1997, as did Willem Beuken in an essay in 1989.<sup>88</sup> Berges notes how most scholars view Isaiah 6:12–13 as a late addition to the chapter, some arguing for up to four additions in these two verses.<sup>89</sup> Berges argues convincingly that verses 12–13a are from only one hand and that a later redactor added 13b (“so the holy seed shall be the substance thereof,” KJV) with Isaiah 4:3 in mind.<sup>90</sup> As we saw in section 4.1, Isaiah 4:2–6 is a late addition and, if we follow Stromberg’s argument, either written by Third Isaiah or one of his contemporaries.

According to Stromberg, after analyzing the connections between Isaiah 6:13b and the rest of Isaiah and finding that Isaiah 65:9 is the only text that clearly shares a relationship with this gloss, “it seems best to ascribe 6:13b either to the same author who composed 65:9 or to a later imitator familiar with this passage.”<sup>91</sup> Stromberg supports the former option by comparing how the author of Isaiah 57, Third Isaiah, alluded to and developed Isaiah chapter 6 in chapter 57 the same way

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88. Cited in Stromberg, *Isaiah After Exile*, 161n53. The essay was republished in Marvin A. Sweeney, *Form and Intertextuality in Prophetic and Apocalyptic Literature*, *Forschungen zum Alten Testament* 45 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 46–62. Sweeney briefly notes the connection on p. 56. W. A. M. Beuken, “Does Trito-Isaiah Reject the Temple? An Intertextual Inquiry into Isa. 66:1–6,” in *Intertextuality in Biblical Writings: Essays in Honour of Bas van Iersel*, edited by Sipke Draisma (Kampen: Uitgeversmaatschappij J. H. Kok), 53–66.

89. Berges, *The Book of Isaiah*, 87. Stromberg also notes that the following scholars view 13b as a later gloss: Beuken, Blenkinsopp, Childs, Clements, Duhm, Gray, Kaiser, Marti, Skinner, Barthel, Emerton, and Williamson. Stromberg, *Isaiah After Exile*, 161. As J. A. Emerton notes, “There thus seems to be a contrast, or even a contradiction, between the total disaster of which the beginning of the verse speaks and the hope that is implied at the end.” Emerton, “The Translation and Interpretation of Isaiah vi.13,” in *Interpreting the Hebrew Bible: Essays in honour of E.I.J. Rosenthal*, edited by J. A. Emerton and Stefan C. Reif (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 86.

90. Berges, *The Book of Isaiah*, 88.

91. Stromberg, *Isaiah After Exile*, 164.

the gloss does in Isaiah 6:13b. It would make sense, then, since Third Isaiah redacted the book that he would harmonize his addition and Isaiah 6:13b.

### 4.3 *Isaiah 7:15*

Again, as part of Nephi's large block quotation of the early chapters of Isaiah, 2 Nephi 17 quotes Isaiah 7:15. In general, for decades, scholars have understood Isaiah 7:15 as a later addition to this chapter, meant to further elaborate on the sign in 7:14. Citing Paul Humbert, Wildberger noted that Isaiah 7 verses 14 and 16 followed what Humbert called "the biblical annunciation style," or, as Wildberger preferred, "an annunciation oracle."<sup>92</sup> In this style or oracle formula, there are generally four elements: (1) a clause that begins with "behold" that announces pregnancy or birth; (2) a clause that "instructs the mother how to name the child"; (3) a clause introduced by "for" or "because" (כי, *ki*) that explains the name; and (4) supplementary information describing what the son will do.<sup>93</sup> This is significant because Isaiah 7:14 and 7:16 follow this annunciation formula perfectly, but the structure is interrupted by 7:15. In every one of the other cases of the formula in the Hebrew Bible, "the naming element is immediately followed . . . by כי."<sup>94</sup>

The addition builds off both 7:16 and 7:22, initially appearing as a doublet of 7:16 because both texts state that the boy will learn "how to reject the bad and choose the good."<sup>95</sup> According to Stromberg, this combination of verses 16 and 22 in the interpolated material in verse 15 works "to project the sign into the future beyond the time of Ahaz."<sup>96</sup> Stromberg notes the close connections between 7:15 and Isaiah 4:3 and

92. Wildberger, *Isaiah 1–12*, 307.

93. Wildberger, *Isaiah 1–12*, 307.

94. Williamson, *Isaiah 6–12*, 163–164, nt. 70.

95. Stromberg, *Isaiah After Exile*, 223.

96. Stromberg, *Isaiah After Exile*, 224.

chapters 36–39, both of which Stromberg argues to have likely been the work of Third Isaiah.<sup>97</sup> Although Stromberg notes, “That both 7 and 36–9 are so closely related, and that the sign in each has been edited to point beyond the circumstances of its respective narrative, seems beyond coincidence,”<sup>98</sup> he concludes by stating that 7:15 is tentatively the work of Third Isaiah. In the end, whether one follows Stromberg’s arguments to their conclusion or not, 7:15 is a later addition to the chapter and would not have been included in a pre-exilic version of Isaiah 2–14.

#### 4.4 *Isaiah 11:10*

The large block quotation of Isaiah in 2 Nephi includes Isaiah 11:10 as well. Stromberg argues that the author of Third Isaiah read Isaiah 11 and integrated the idea of a peaceful reign in verses 6–9, which is a later addition to 11:1–5,<sup>99</sup> into his writing of Isaiah 65:25.<sup>100</sup> Because of the evidence that Third Isaiah was reading Isaiah 11 and incorporating aspects of it into his composition well after the return from exile, Stromberg asks if it is also possible that the same author redacted chapter 11 and added verse 10. As Williamson recently noted, “The verse has to be a join between the two parts [i.e., 11:1–9 and 11–16], and so later than them both” because the depiction of a root as a signal or banner in verse 10 “can only be understood as the result of the welding together of figures from vv. 1 and 12.”<sup>101</sup> Verse 10 therefore cannot be part of either 11:1–9 or 11:11–16 but instead works to bridge the two together as a later addition to the chapter.<sup>102</sup>

97. See Stromberg, *Isaiah After Exile*, 174–183, 205–222.

98. Stromberg, *Isaiah After Exile*, 227.

99. Gray views all of Isaiah 11:1–16 as at least late or post-exilic. Gray, *Critical and Exegetical Commentary*, 214–15, 223.

100. Stromberg, *Isaiah After Exile*, 101–09.

101. Williamson, *Isaiah 6–12*, 669.

102. Kaiser, *Isaiah 1–12*, 262; Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1–39*, 266–67; Wildberger, *Isaiah 1–12*, 463; Jongkyung Lee, *A Redactional Study of the Book of Isaiah 13–23* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 164n2.

In this light, then, Stromberg notes the following clear and unique links between Isaiah 11:10 and 65:25. In no other place in the Hebrew Bible do you find the concept of "rest place" and "my holy mountain" together, and these two sections of Isaiah are both explicitly connected to the idea of the Davidic covenant. Scholars have also understood the verse as an editorial addition commenting on the chapter because the verse begins with the formula "on that day," which is generally understood to mean that it is a later addition, and verse 10 blends material from the first and second halves of the chapter.<sup>103</sup> In all of the examples that Stromberg finds where Third Isaiah most likely wrote the later additions to parts of Isaiah 1–39 or 40–55, he notes that Third Isaiah's actions as an editor are related to the ways that he reads these earlier chapters of Isaiah and incorporates them into his writing. In this example, Isaiah 11:10 builds on 11:12 the same way that sections of Third Isaiah (Isaiah 56:8 and 66:18–20) built on 11:12 by being more inclusive concerning the nations than the earlier authors in Isaiah had been.<sup>104</sup> Williamson accepts Stromberg's thesis and notes that "Within the major redactional phases in the growth of the book of Isaiah which I identify, this verse may be set among the last."<sup>105</sup>

#### 4.5 *Isaiah 48:1, 19b, 22*

A smaller block quotation of Isaiah 48 appears in 1 Nephi 21. Stromberg and several other scholars have noted that Isaiah 48:22 is an additional verse added to the end of Isaiah 40–48 to connect this part of the book to what comes later. Specifically, they view Isaiah 48:22 as an editorial insertion that builds on Isaiah 57:21, part of Third Isaiah.<sup>106</sup> Stromberg

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103. Stromberg, *Isaiah After Exile*, 184–85.

104. Stromberg, *Isaiah After Exile*, 191.

105. Williamson, *Isaiah 6–12*, 670.

106. Westermann, *Isaiah 40–66*, 205; Williamson, *The Book Called Isaiah*, 210–11; Klaus Baltzer, *Deutero-Isaiah: A Commentary on Isaiah 40–55* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 304; Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 40–55*, 286f.; Stromberg, *Isaiah After Exile*, 230; Berges, *The Book of Isaiah*, 310.

shows how the dichotomy between salvation for the righteous and the wicked, found only in Isaiah 48:22 and nowhere else in Deutero-Isaiah, develops Isaiah 40–48 in the same way that Isaiah 57 does. That “there is nothing in Isaiah 48:20–21 that prepares for the same statement in 48:22” is telling<sup>107</sup> and supports the notion that the verse is a later addition that tries to temper the universalizing views on salvation in Isaiah 40–48. Accordingly, Stromberg views this verse as having been added by the author of Isaiah 57 since they both build on and revise Isaiah 40–48 in the same way.

#### 4.6 *Isaiah 54:17b*

*The Book of Mormon* also includes a citation of Isaiah 54 in 3 Nephi 22.<sup>108</sup> Several scholars in recent decades have viewed Isaiah 54:11–17 as a later addition to the chapter that stems from historical groups contemporary to Third Isaiah.<sup>109</sup> Stromberg focuses only on verse 17b and agrees with Odil Hannes Steck that verses 1–16 share a great deal with Isaiah 40–55 in general, but that 17b has some significant variations that go against the norms in Deutero-Isaiah.<sup>110</sup> Primarily, in every place the term “servant” is found in Isaiah 40–55, it is in the singular except for in Isaiah 54:17b. On the other hand, every time the phrase is found in Isaiah 56–66, it is always in the plural, “servants of the Lord,” as found in 54:17b. After examining the arguments about the composition of chapter 54, Stromberg notes that verses 1–16 could still be a later hand than Deutero-Isaiah, but that 17b itself is connected to Third Isaiah,

107. Stromberg, *Isaiah After Exile*, 230.

108. Nephi quotes Isaiah 48:1–52:2 and 55:1–2. If Nephi had these chapters, then he presumably would have had chapter 54 by implication.

109. Cf. Stromberg, *Isaiah After Exile*, 245n63.

110. Odil Hannes Steck, *Gottesknecht und Zion: Gesammelte Aufsätze zu Deuterjesaja* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1992), 111–12, 124, 170–71. Cited in Stromberg, *Isaiah After Exile*, 245.

and, since it is generally viewed as an editorial addition, it makes sense to view this as having been added by Third Isaiah.

### Conclusion

Although the problem of Isaiah in *The Book of Mormon* has been a part of Mormon studies since its beginning as an academic subfield, scholars have yet to fully incorporate biblical scholarship into their work on this crucial issue. Prior work has attempted to isolate the problem of Isaiah in *The Book of Mormon* as only regarding the dating of Deutero-Isaiah. Attempts to understand this issue have not involved more direct engagement with continuing contemporary scholarship on Isaiah. Relatedly, very few attempts to further identify the influence of all of Isaiah on *The Book of Mormon* have been carried out in the last several decades. This paper invites those engaged in the study of *The Book of Mormon* to not remain in isolation but to broaden their studies by incorporating different methods, fields, and approaches to locating and analyzing the influence of the Bible on *The Book of Mormon*. This influence is crucial to understanding the content, message, and composition of the book.

Further, attention to Isaianic scholarship and its relation to the dating of the block quotations of Isaiah 2–14 and 48–55 in *The Book of Mormon* complicates the normative approach to explaining the quotation of these chapters. *The Book of Mormon* not only dates them to the pre-exilic period, but it also assumes that before 600 BCE, the book of Isaiah was in its present form and had been well-known and accepted scripture as it is in the KJV, or close to it. Isaiah 2–14 would have been a far shorter text in the pre-exilic period than what is cited in 2 Nephi 12–24. Scholarship on Isaiah broadly speaking has identified numerous verses in both Isaiah 2–14 and 48–55 that date well after Deutero-Isaiah. If Stromberg's thesis is to be adopted, some of these were composed during the redactional process of the book by the final author of Third Isaiah or one of his contemporaries. This evidence, blended with what we know about how other parts of *The Book of Mormon* utilize biblical

texts,<sup>111</sup> suggests that the author of *The Book of Mormon* only knew the book of Isaiah as it is found in the KJV.

One of the most important implications of a fresh view of this scholarship is a reconsideration of the influence of Third Isaiah on *The Book of Mormon*. Until now, the consensus has been that Third Isaiah was missing entirely from *The Book of Mormon*. In this paper, I have identified several verses in *The Book of Mormon* that are dependent on Third Isaiah. 2 Nephi 4:33 and 9:14 allude to Isaiah 61:10 for the phrase “robe of righteousness.” 2 Nephi 28:32, Jacob 5:47, and Jacob 6:4 allude to Isaiah 65:2 but are mediated through Romans 10:21, further problematizing the dating and dependence of these *Book of Mormon* passages on Third Isaiah. 2 Nephi 31:19, Alma 7:14, and Alma 34:18 allude to the description that God is “mighty to save,” originally from Isaiah 63:1. The author of these verses knew both Third Isaiah and New Testament passages dependent on Isaiah 63:1. We can no longer say that Third Isaiah did not influence the composition of *The Book of Mormon* or that Third Isaiah cannot be found within the book.

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111. See Colby Townsend, “Behold, Other Scriptures I Would that Ye Should Write’: Malachi in the Book of Mormon,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 51, no. 2 (Summer 2018): 103–37; and David P. Wright, “In Plain Terms that We May Understand’: Joseph Smith’s Transformation of Hebrews in Alma 12–13,” in *New Approaches to the Book of Mormon: Explorations in Critical Methodology*, edited by Brent Lee Metcalfe (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1994), 165–229; and Wright, “Isaiah in the Book of Mormon,” 157–234. The way *The Book of Mormon* uses biblical texts is similar to what we find in the revelations Smith dictated during his lifetime, most of which are now in the various versions of the Doctrine and Covenants in the churches based on Smith’s restoration movement. For a complete analysis of these from 1828–1830, see Colby Townsend, “Rewriting Eden with the Book of Mormon: Joseph Smith and the Reception of Genesis 1–6 in Early America” (master’s thesis, Utah State University, 2019), 75–131.

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