

## **“He Filled Zion with Justice and Righteousness” The Composition of Isaiah 33**

Not surprisingly, in the Isaiah-research, chapter 33 is considered a key passage. If Isa 34-35 and 36-39 are disregarded — as they often are — as late insertions, Isa 33 becomes the closing section of the so-called First-Isaianic collection. In modern investigations on the formation of biblical books the outstanding literary significance of opening and closing chapters has never been debated. Isa 33 is commonly viewed as a redactional text, i.e. one composed for this specific location to function either as an editorial bridge between the first and the second part of the book <sup>(1)</sup>, or — more often — as a concluding summary to Isa 1-32 <sup>(2)</sup>.

At the same time, Isa 33 is a complicated text with intermittently shifting addressees, alternating time scale and different genres intersecting each other. In approaching this complexity, several exegetes assume that Isa 33 is composed of two (33,1-6; 33,7-24) <sup>(3)</sup> or three (33,1-6; 33,7-16; 33,17-24) <sup>(4)</sup> more or less independent compositions, brought together by a final editor. A few other scholars view the development of Isa 33 in terms of expansion of earlier

<sup>(1)</sup> W.A.M. BEUKEN, “Jesaja 33 als Spiegeltext im Jesajabuch”, *ETL* 67 (1991) 5-35. Cf. also U. BERGES, *Das Buch Jesaja*. Komposition und Endgestalt (Herders Biblische Studien 16; Freiburg 1998) 247-248.

<sup>(2)</sup> E.-J. WASCHKE, “Jesaja 33 und seine redaktionelle Funktion im Protojesajabuch”, *Gott und Mensch im Dialog*. Festschrift für Otto Kaiser zum 80. Geburtstag (ed. M. WITTE) (BZAW 365.1; Berlin 2003) 529-532. E. BOSSHARD-NEPUSTIL, *Rezeptionen von Jesaja 1–39 im Zwölfprophetenbuch*. Untersuchungen zur literarischen Verbindung von Prophetenbüchern in babylonischer und persischer Zeit (OBO 154; Freiburg – Göttingen 1997) 186, and Z. KUSTÁR, “*Durch seine Wunden sind wir geheilt*”. Eine Untersuchung zur Metaphorik von Israels Krankheit und Heilung im Jesajabuch (BWANT 154; Stuttgart 2002) 86-87, 90, 93-94, believe that Isa 33 also forms a bridge to Isa 36–39.

<sup>(3)</sup> G. FOHRER, *Das Buch Jesaja* (ZBK; Zürich – Stuttgart 1967) 135; R.E. CLEMENTS, *Isaiah 1–39* (Grand Rapids, MI 1980) 265.

<sup>(4)</sup> J. VERMEYLEN, *Du prophète Isaïe à l'apocalyptique*. Isaïe, I-XXXV, miroir d'un demi-millénaire d'expérience religieuse en Israël (ÉB; Paris 1977–78) I, 429-438, and H. WILDBERGER, *Jesaja*. Kapitel 28-39 (BKAT X.3; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1982) 1286, 1322, distinguish two lamentations, vv. 2-6 and 7-12(13-16) respectively, and a salvation prophecy, all from the same period.

material<sup>(5)</sup>. However, since these solutions were unable to explain all structural complexities most scholars renounced to reconstruct earlier forms of Isa 33 and chose to read it as one literary unit<sup>(6)</sup>, not excluding eventual minor additions or glosses<sup>(7)</sup>. In Gunkel's view, the shifting voices represent artificial creations of an author who makes use of liturgical patterns<sup>(8)</sup>. In more recent studies, the cause of the irregular construction is rarely dealt with explicitly, but it is apparently inferred that this can be explained within the limits of a complex literary coherence by the fact that Isa 33 is built as a text with frequent intertextual allusions to other parts of the book<sup>(9)</sup>.

The scope of this article is twofold. Firstly, it reopens the discussion concerning the literary integrity of Isa 33 suggesting a new diachronic model for the formation of this chapter. Secondly, it examines Isa 33 in comparison to other Isaianic texts, concluding with a brief note on its role in its current location.

### I. The Coherence of Isaiah 33

Isaiah 33 begins as a הו"א-prophecy. The הו"א-particle also functions as a literary marker, as a catchword around which the speeches in the collection of Isa 28–33 were formed<sup>(10)</sup>. The extent of this collection is

<sup>(5)</sup> According to VERMEYLEN, *Isaïe*, I, 430, Isa 33,1-6 is composed of a genuine Isaianic v. 1, expanded in the late pre-exilic period by vv. 3-4, in the post exilic period by vv. 2.5-6a (with vv. 7-12, 17-24a), and even later by v. 6b (with vv. 13-16 and 24b). Vv. 7-16 are regarded as expansions of vv. 1-6 by K. KOENEN, *Heil den Gerechten – Unheil den Sündern*. Ein Beitrag zur Theologie der Prophetenbücher (BZAW 229; Berlin – New York 1994) 118. In the view of BERGES, *Jesaja*, 242, vv. 3-4.7-12 form an apocalyptic addition to Isa 33.

<sup>(6)</sup> B. STADE, "Miszellen. Jes. 32. 33.", ZAW 4 (1884) 254-271; J.J.M. ROBERTS, "Isaiah 33: An Isaianic Elaboration of the Zion Tradition", *The Word of the Lord Shall Go Forth*. Essays in Honor of David Noel Freedman in Celebration of His Sixtieth Birthday (eds. C. MEYER – M. O'CONNOR) (Philadelphia, PA 1983) 15-25; KUSTÁR, *Krankheit*, 84-85.

<sup>(7)</sup> For v. 1, see B. DUHM, *Das Buch Jesaja* (Göttingen 1968) 240; v. 9: DUHM, *Jesaja*, 242 (also v. 8a); KUSTÁR, *Krankheit*, 83; BOSSHARD-NEPUSTIL, *Rezeptionen*, 184; vv. 21b.23: WILDBERGER, *Jesaja*, 1312-1313; KUSTÁR, *Krankheit*, 85; v. 23: DUHM, *Jesaja*, 247; vv. 23a.24: CLEMENTS, *Isaiah*, 272.

<sup>(8)</sup> H. GUNKEL, "Jesaja 33, eine prophetische Liturgie", ZAW 42 (1924) 177-208.

<sup>(9)</sup> See BEUKEN, "Jesaja 33", 5-35; BOSSHARD-NEPUSTIL, *Rezeptionen*, 185-188; WASCHKE, "Jesaja 33", 517-532.

<sup>(10)</sup> The six collections are: Isa 28,1-29; 29,1-14; 29,15-24; 30,1-33; 31,1-32,20; 33,1-24. Cf. G. STANSELL, "Isaiah 28-33: Blest Be the Tie that Binds

debated, and there is a tendency to exclude Isa 32–33 from this collection of *הוֹי*-words. But were it not for the strange form and place of Isa 32, chapter 33 would certainly not appear as suspicious alongside Isa 28–31. In various other smaller and larger collections in Isaiah the pronouncements of judgment against Judah are closed by prophecies against its enemy (cf. Isa 10,5–11,9; 29,1–8; 30; 31). This observation makes it at least possible that the series of *הוֹי*-prophecies against Israel and Judah (28–32) come to a close in Isa 33 with a text condemning the enemy through whom YHWH had punished his people. If this possible function of Isa 33 is taken into account, it leads to the first significant observation concerning the integrity of this chapter. From a literary critical point of view, the *הוֹי*-prophecies in Isa 28–31(32) are usually composite structures. Can this also be the case with the apparently similarly formed Isa 33?

A second preliminary observation regards the form of Isa 33 as a *הוֹי*-prophecy. If Isa 33 is compared to other *הוֹי*-words, it strikes us that in other cases these *הוֹי*-prophecies are much shorter in their alleged original form. Isa 33 would be not only the longest composition of its kind, but also the strangest one, with frequently interchanging topics and addressees (including YHWH in 33,2–3, which is unique)<sup>(1)</sup>.

Beside these two external factors raising doubts concerning the coherence of Isa 33, the internal structure of this chapter also presents problems, as we shall see below. Regardless of integrity issues, the pericopes inside this chapter are delimited variously, with transitions signalised mostly between vv. 1 and 2, vv. 6 and 7, vv. 12 and 13 or 13 and 14, and vv. 16 and 17. In what follows, I turn to discussing these internal problems, paying special attention to these transitional verses.

Isa 33,1 gives the first concern of the prophecy: the subjugation of the enemy called *שׂוֹדֵד*, ‘destroyer’ and *בּוֹגֵד*, ‘unfaithful’, ‘treacherous’. According to v. 1, the enemy is supposed to go down in a way it caused others to go down: the treacherous one will be deceived, the destroyer will be destroyed (*ius talionis*). Formally speaking, v. 1 is composed as a prediction, so that the fall of the enemy is still a matter of the future. It must bring destruction to completion first. V. 1 uses the 2nd and 3rd

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(Isaiah Together)”, *New Visions of Isaiah* (eds. R.F. MELUGIN – M.A. SWEENEY) (JSOTSS 214; Sheffield 1996) 68–103.

(<sup>1</sup>) Cf. VERMEYLEN, *Isaie*, I, 430. See also WILDBERGER, *Jesaja*, 1286: “ein Weheruf hat in einem Klage lied [as he interprets Isa 33,1–6] gewiß keinen Platz”. Nevertheless, he assumes that v. 1 represents the background against which the lament of 33,2–6 should be understood, and considers 33,1–6 one unit.

masc. forms in addressing the enemy and applies the paronomasia as a literary feature (שׁוֹרֵד / שְׁדוּד / שׁוֹרֵד / שׁוֹשֵׁד; בּוֹגֵד / בָּגָדוּ / בָּגָדוּ / בָּגָדוּ).

In v. 2 the form and content changes abruptly. The יְהוָה-cry of v. 1 is discontinued, both as a prophetic word and as a text addressing the enemy. Vv. 2-3 is a prayer of a community<sup>(12)</sup> addressing YHWH in the 2nd person. Kaiser tried to solve the problem by maintaining that v. 1 was a superscription or motto to the main text<sup>(13)</sup>. But such a combination of woe-cry and prayer would be unique to the Bible. Wildberger, who is also aware of the unsuitability of v. 1, takes this as the description of the situation lamented in vv. 2-6<sup>(14)</sup>. However, v. 1 hardly complies formally with this element of the lamentations. Therefore the problem with the incompatibility of vv. 1 and 2-3 remains.

Although the prayer addressing YHWH in 2nd pers. comprises only vv. 2-3, scholars often connect v. 4 to this prayer<sup>(15)</sup>. In the present form of v. 4 this is clearly impossible because the 2nd pl. suffix of שְׁלַלְכֶם points to a different speaker and audience<sup>(16)</sup>. Another problem is that while v. 3 probably alludes to historical experiences of deliverance, based upon which the community expects YHWH's future act of salvation<sup>(17)</sup>, the message of v. 4 is far too concrete to fulfil this function.

In my view, the problem is ultimately not with the text of v. 4, but with connecting it to vv. 2-3. As noted above, there is a break after v. 1, which may suggest that vv. 2-3, the unusual prayer in the context of a יְהוָה-prophecy, were inserted here secondarily. If v. 4 is read as a direct follow-up to v. 1, the text becomes perfectly clear. The enemy was addressed in the 2nd and 3rd pers. in v. 1, and so we find this also in

<sup>(12)</sup> Cf. זרענו, חנונו, קרינו, ישועתנו, זרעם is probably also to be corrected to זרענו (cf. Tg. Syr and some Vg manuscripts). On the ם > נו change as scribal error, cf. E. TOV, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (Minneapolis, MN – Assen 2001) 249.

<sup>(13)</sup> O. KAISER, *Der Prophet Jesaja*. Kapitel 13–39 (Göttingen 1973) 269; cf. also KUSTÁR, *Krankheit*, 82.

<sup>(14)</sup> WILDBERGER, *Jesaja*, 1285.

<sup>(15)</sup> BEUKEN, “Jesaja 33”, 15; M.A. SWEENEY, *Isaiah 1–39 with an Introduction to Prophetic Literature* (FOTL 14; Grand Rapids, MI 1996) 422; BERGES, *Jesaja*, 241; KUSTÁR, *Krankheit*, 82.

<sup>(16)</sup> In order to sustain the unity of vv. 3-4, שְׁלַלְכֶם is usually emended to שְׁלַל כְּמוֹ אֶכָּף (DUHM, *Jesaja*, 240; WILDBERGER, *Jesaja*, 1283) or שְׁלַל כְּמוֹ אֶכָּף (apparatus of the BHS<sup>3</sup>). However, there is strong support for the MT. Cf. 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>, LXX (τὰ σκῦλα ὑμῶν), Vg (*spolia vestra*); note also the suff. in Syr (*bzhwn*). For the absence of the prep. כּ in comparison, see GKC §§118r, 141d.

<sup>(17)</sup> Cf. KUSTÁR, *Krankheit*, 82.

v. 4. Paronomasia is a significant literary device in v. 1, but also in v. 4 (רָסַף / רָסַף; כְּמִשֶּׁק / שִׁוְקָה). V. 4 predicts the reversal of fortunes for the destroyer<sup>(18)</sup>, as v. 1 did. The booty which the enemy had gathered will be given to its destroyers. As the enemy of Judah is pictured as a locust, so its destroyers also take on this appearance<sup>(19)</sup>.

To conclude, arguments derived from the content and literary form of vv. 1 and 4 suggest that these verses formed an earlier layer in the prophecy. The two verses were detached from each other, and a short prayer was inserted between them (vv. 2-3). The prayer, which also looks forward to the destruction of the enemy, apparently reflects on the text of the earlier דָּוִד-prophecy, and implores YHWH to fulfil the promise of deliverance that 33,1+4 predicted on a former occasion.

There is another shift in Isa 33,5. This verse speaks about God in the 3rd pers.: “YHWH is exalted for he dwells on high. He filled Zion with justice and righteousness”. Scholars usually connect this verse with the previous pericope, arguing that vv. 5-6 must represent the motif of confidence (*Vertrauensmotif*) of communal laments which Isa 33,1-6 supposedly imitates<sup>(20)</sup>. The problem with this view is that v. 3 has already expressed the confidence of the praying community. The logical discontinuity between vv. 3, 4 and 5, questions that vv. 3-5 would have the same literary function.

As for the meaning of v. 5, the participles נִשְׁבַּח and שָׁכַן describe actions already evident to the author. The exaltation of YHWH is manifested in the circumstances<sup>(21)</sup>. That circumstance is the fulfilment of Zion with justice and righteousness. The word pair מִשְׁפָּט וְצִדִּיקָה has clear juridical connotations and is often mentioned in connection with the activity of the king as the representative of jurisdiction<sup>(22)</sup>. This also corresponds well with the exaltation of

<sup>(18)</sup> Cf. KAISER, *Jesaja*, 272.

<sup>(19)</sup> See Jer 51,14; Nah 3,15-17. Cf. also Nah 2 with Joe 1-2. VERMEYLEN, *Isaïe*, I, 430, also argued that vv. 3-4 are secondary comments on v. 1, but his connection of vv. 3-4 and his independent derivation of v. 1 are problematic.

<sup>(20)</sup> Cf. WILDBERGER, *Jesaja*, 1286; KUSTÁR, *Krankheit*, 82. VERMEYLEN, *Isaïe*, I, 430, considers vv. 5-6a the oracular answer to v. 2.

<sup>(21)</sup> Cf. J.A. ALEXANDER, *Commentary on Isaiah* (repr. Grand Rapids, MI 1992) II, 8; E.J. YOUNG, *The Book of Isaiah* (Grand Rapids, MI 1969) II, 408.

<sup>(22)</sup> 2 Sam 8,15; 1 Kgs 10,9; Ps 72,1; Isa 1,26 [cf. v. 25]; 9,6; Jer 22,15; 23,5; 33,15. In case it is used in a religious sense, this also means obedience to the law of God, often related to social justice (Gen 18,19; Deut 33,21; Ps 106,3; Isa 5,7; 28,17; 56,1; 58,2; Jer 22,3; Ezek 18,5.19).

YHWH in v. 5a (cf. Isa 6,1)<sup>(23)</sup>. It is therefore correct to render the qatal of מלא (with most scholars) as past tense<sup>(24)</sup>.

But what does it mean in v. 5b that YHWH filled Zion with justice and righteousness? This is generally interpreted as God's salvation of Jerusalem<sup>(25)</sup>. However, in that case contradiction arises with vv. 1-4, which speak about salvation yet to come. If Zion is saved already, why is there a prayer looking out for deliverance?

משפט and צדקה represent the divine order restored by YHWH (he is the subject of מלא): that is to say, punishing the godless and rehabilitating those oppressed. This means that the negative or positive connotation of משפט and צדקה is dependent on the attitude of the people towards YHWH. In Isaiah's descriptions of Judah in the 8th century, this word pair has negative connotations. There is no justice and righteousness in Jerusalem (Isa 1,21; 5,7; 28,17), that is, the people do not "fill" Jerusalem with justice and righteousness<sup>(26)</sup>. Justice and righteousness performed by YHWH means that Judah is punished for unlawful deeds (5,16; cf. 3,14; 4,4; 34,5). Somewhat similarly, משפט and צדקה in Isa 56-59 is used mostly in prophetic criticism or stipulations (56,1; 58,2; 59,8.14). The terms משפט and צדקה appear with positive connotations for Judah almost always in proclamations of the future<sup>(27)</sup>. The former city of lawlessness will become one of justice and righteousness (1,26.27; 32,16). This often means justice performed and supervised by the leaders (1,26-27; 9,6; cf. 11,4-5; 16,5; 28,6; 32,1). Second, in Isa 40-55, משפט and צדקה may refer to acts of salvation or rehabilitation (45,8; 46,13; 50,8; 51,5.6.8). But it is noteworthy that here the two terms are never used together (side by side or in parallelism)<sup>(28)</sup>. Third, in Isa 56-59, the attitude of the people is mirrored by YHWH's own משפט and צדקה, which may have the sense of bringing salvation (59,9.11). Yet this part of the book only speaks of the lack of manifestation of YHWH's משפט and צדקה.

<sup>(23)</sup> See also Ps 99,1 and 4; 103,6 and 19.

<sup>(24)</sup> E.g., ASV, NASB, JPS Tanakh, NRSV, Wildberger, Kustár. Taking it to refer to the present situation (NAB, Revidierte Elberfelder) is grammatically the least likely for the qatal form of מלא, cf. P. JOÜON – T. MURAOKA, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew* (SubBi 14; Roma 1993) §112c-i. Rendering מלא as future (NIV, Einheitsübersetzung, Kaiser) is possible grammatically, and at a later stage in the composition of Isa 33 this may have also been implied (see below).

<sup>(25)</sup> YOUNG, *Isaiah*, II, 408; WILDBERGER, *Jesaja*, 1290; KUSTÁR, *Krankheit*, 83.

<sup>(26)</sup> See also Isa 1,17.21; 5,23; 10,2; 29,21.

<sup>(27)</sup> Exception is 1,21, referring to the remote past in contrast with the present.

<sup>(28)</sup> Cf. R. RENDTORFF, "Zur Komposition des Buches Jesaja", VT 34 (1984) 312.

In the case of Isa 33,5b one should look for parallels in which משפט and צדקה are used together, with YHWH as performer. This leads to — for our case most illuminative — Isa 5,16: “YHWH of hosts will be exalted (גבה) in judgment (משפט) and the holy God will show himself holy in righteousness (צדקה).” It is strange that this verse is barely mentioned in connection with 33,5. Not only do both משפט and צדקה appear here, but they are used in connection with the exaltation of YHWH, as in 33,5. The exaltation of YHWH is connected to his judgment (and not salvation!) on Judah<sup>(29)</sup>. When 33,5 maintains that YHWH filled Zion with justice and righteousness, it looks back to Isa 5,16 and considers 33,5 to be the fulfilment of this prediction: YHWH performed justice in Zion, who was punished for her sins. משפט וצדקה were re-established (cf. Isa 4,4).

This throws an interesting light on the relation of v. 5 with vv. 1+4. According to v. 1, as soon as the destroyer is ready with its work (כ[כ/ג] לתך / כהתמך)<sup>(30)</sup>, it will be destroyed. V. 5 suggests that this time has now come. When Zion was filled with משפט וצדקה, divine punishment was brought to accomplishment. In his judgment, through this human tool (cf. Isa 10,5), YHWH manifested himself as an exalted powerful king (Isa 5,19). If this interpretation is correct, Isa 33,5 is part of a later elaboration on vv. 1+4.

Those who translate the qatal form of מלא in v. 5 as future rely on v. 6, with which this is seen as strongly related. Although 33,6 is extremely difficult to translate, it is most likely that ויהיה alludes here to the future. The poetic structure of v. 6 may be represented as follows:

ויהיה אמונת עתידך	and the steadfastness of your times will become (like)
חסן ישועת	a stronghold of salvation,
חכמת ודעת	wisdom and knowledge <sup>(31)</sup> , (i.e.)
יראת יהוה	the fear of YHWH,
היא אוצרו	that will be his treasure house.

<sup>(29)</sup> YHWH's exaltation is also connected to judgment in 2,6-22, although neither צדקה nor משפט appear here. Isa 2,11,17 uses the same שגב niphal as 33,5b (see below).

<sup>(30)</sup> כ is rendered as ‘according to’ by SWEENEY, *Isaiah*, 422. However, the temporal connotation of the verbs חסן and מלא makes this unlikely. Sweeney's translation would require כשדרךך and כבדרךך. For כ[כ/ג] לתך, see below.

<sup>(31)</sup> Cf. JOÜON – MURAOKA, *Grammar*, §129s. חכמה ודעת appears to be a hendiadys for wisdom (Qoh 1,16; 2,26; Isa 47,10). According to wisdom traditions (Prov 1,7), חכמה means יראה יהוה.



Obviously, the literary parallelism is structured on the synonyms חֶסֶן, 'treasure, wealth, stronghold', and אוֹצָר, 'supplies, treasure(house), storeroom' <sup>(32)</sup>. In both lines of the parallelism the two synonyms form the predicate of the sentence, חֶסֶן וְהוּדָה...חֶסֶן and הוּדָה אוֹצָר respectively <sup>(33)</sup>. But synonymous parallelism generally implies that other elements of the two verse lines also function similarly. On a syntactic level, אֱמוּנַת עֲתִיד is said to become חֶסֶן, just as יִרְאֵת יְהוָה [...] will be אוֹצָר for Zion / Judah <sup>(34)</sup>. This note is important, for this makes it probable that the 2nd masc. suffix in עֲתִיד, does not refer to Judah, as usually understood, but to YHWH, as the parallel יִרְאֵת יְהוָה suggests.

אֱמוּנַת עֲתִיד, "the steadfastness of your (God's) times", may mean that God's time (permanence) is not affected by the course of history, in contrast to destroyers and treacherous ones who come and go. The destroyer is a temporary figure (cf. 33,1). A similar idea (God's permanence and the passing-away Chaldean oppressor) appears in Hab 1,12 <sup>(35)</sup>. חֶסֶן יְשׁוּעָה is "treasure of salvation", or perhaps better, "stronghold of salvation", or a "saving stronghold" <sup>(36)</sup>. As YHWH's אֱמוּנָה is Judah's חֶסֶן, so is יִרְאֵת יְהוָה its treasure room (אוֹצָר).

The form of this verse as addressing YHWH in the first instance (עֲתִיד), and referring to Judah in the 3rd pers. (אוֹצָר) makes it difficult to consider it as directly continuing v. 5. Yet in order to clarify its provenance and intention one has to analyse the entire prophecy first.

V. 7 is considered the beginning of a new unit, strophe or prophecy because of the discontinuity with v. 6. However, v. 7 is an unusual beginning for a new text. The logical discrepancy is caused by v. 6, which if removed for the moment, vv. 7-9 fit perfectly as a follow-up

<sup>(32)</sup> For the parallelism, see also Jer 20,5 and Isa 23,18 (verbs אוֹצָר and חֶסֶן).

<sup>(33)</sup> E. KÖNIG, *Das Buch Jesaja* (Gütersloh 1927) 286-287 and NRSV consider YHWH to be the implicit subject of וְהוּדָה, but that distorts the parallelism.

<sup>(34)</sup> The masc. וְהוּדָה before אֱמוּנַת is strange, but grammatically not impossible. It may be due to the masc. gender of the addressee (cf. the suffix of עֲתִיד). See וְהוּדָה in Job 8,7 (cf. Gen 10,10); Mic 5,6,7; cf. also וְהוּדָה with fem. nouns in Gen 35,5; 39,5; Ex 17,12 (cf. 1 Sam 5,9; 7,13; 12,5; 1 Chr 4,10); Josh 17,9; 19,1.33; 21,20; 1 Chr 6,21.

<sup>(35)</sup> The steadfastness of YHWH means that אַתָּה מִקֶּדֶם, "you are from everlasting" and לֹא תָמוּת, "you will not die" (pre-massoretic text), unlike the enemy, which emerges at one point in history and quickly passes away (Hab 1,6-11).

<sup>(36)</sup> In Ps 89,9 חֶסֶן and אֱמוּנָה are also related to YHWH. Cf. also Aramaic חֲסִינָא 'fortification', 'stronghold' in KAI 202B:8. For YHWH as the stronghold of salvation, i.e. a powerful building, see 2 Sam 22,51, where he is the "tower of salvation", מְגוּר יְשׁוּעָה, for the king. Similarly, in Ps 28,8 God is מְגוּר יְשׁוּעָה, "stronghold of salvation", for his anointed one.



to v. 5. Isa 33,7-9 concretises YHWH's actions in Jerusalem. He filled the city with justice and righteousness, i.e. performed his judgment in Zion. As a consequence, the warriors (אַרְאֵלִים)<sup>(37)</sup> cry aloud in the streets, the messengers of peace (מְלָאכֵי שָׁלוֹם) weep bitterly; the roads are empty, without travellers (cf. Jdg 5,6-7); people and nature are mourning<sup>(38)</sup>.

The frequent opinion that Isa 33,8 refers to a foreign kings' disrespect of treaty obligations towards Judah is based first on v. 1, which proclaims judgment on the 'treacherous one' (בּוֹגֵד), a term which is used in connection with broken covenants<sup>(39)</sup>. Second, scholars also interpret 33,8 through 2 Kgs 18,14-17<sup>(40)</sup>. However, if v. 1 belongs to a different literary level, this clearly cannot influence the understanding of v. 8. As for the relationship with 2 Kgs 18, it is important that exactly the episode 18,14-16 is missing from the Isaianic parallel account of Sennacherib's campaign against Judah. Moreover, 2 Kgs knows nothing about a treaty broken by Assyria (cf. 2 Kgs 18,31 on the contrary), but 2 Kgs 18,7 does refer to Hezekiah's rebellion against Assyria.

It is therefore more likely that Isa 33,8 accounts the rejection of a treaty by the vassal Judah towards one of the foreign kings<sup>(41)</sup>. Ezek 17,12-18 speaks in the same manner about Judah breaking the treaty with Babylon (הַפֶּר בְּרִיתָהּ). The covenant with the foreign king should have been kept as a covenant with YHWH (cf. Ezek 17,19; see also 2 Chr 36,13). When Judah rejected the treaty, the loyalty oath and disregarded the payment of tributes<sup>(42)</sup>, he was punished by YHWH through a foreign nation.

<sup>(37)</sup> In spite of R. WEIS, "Angels, Altars and Angles of Vision: The Case of אַרְאֵלִים in Isaiah 33,7", *Tradition of the Text. Studies Offered to Dominique Barthélemy in Celebration of His 70th Birthday* (eds. G.J. NORTON – S. PISANO) (OBO 109; Freiburg – Göttingen 1991) 285-292, only this translation makes sense for אַרְאֵלִים (cf. אַרְאֵל in 2 Sam 23,20; 1 Chr 11,22). It is impossible to regard אַרְאֵלִים as a derivate from אַרְאֵה ל, for אַרְאֵה לֹהֵם cannot be abbreviated to לֹהֵם. Moreover, אַרְאֵה ל (qal) means "to look after", "to care for" (Gen 22,8; Ps 64,6; 1 Sam 16,7), which is not suited here. אַרְאֵה ל (niph'al), "I reveal myself", is also impossible. אַרְאֵה hiphil is never used with ל. For the idea of warriors crying loudly after an enemy incursion (שָׁדַד), see also Isa 15,4 הַלְצֵי מוֹאָב יִרְעוּ, "the armed men of Moab cry out").

<sup>(38)</sup> Isa 15,1-9; 19,1-15; 24,4-12; 32,12-13; Jer 12,4; 23,10; 50,35-38; Hos 4,2-3.

<sup>(39)</sup> Jdg 9,23; Hos 6,7; Mal 2,10-16. Cf. KUSTÁR, *Krankheit*, 82.

<sup>(40)</sup> KÖNIG, *Jesaja*, 291; FOHRER, *Jesaja*, 140; ROBERTS, "Isaiah 33", 21.

<sup>(41)</sup> So also DUHM, *Jesaja*, 242.

<sup>(42)</sup> עֲדִים is most likely to be emended to עֲדִים, 'contracts' (not עֲדִים, 'witnesses') (cf. 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>; HALOT; ROBERTS, "Isaiah 33", 19; cf. Aram. עֲד, 'treaty')

YHWH's judgment in Zion, the core of the lament<sup>(43)</sup>, is followed by an oracular utterance in vv. 10-12. Vv. 10-12 and 5.7-9 belong to the same literary level. First, the dwelling of YHWH in the high (v. 5) and his arising to take action (v. 10) are also connected in Isa 18,4-5. Furthermore, the fact that this action is to take place immediately (עֲתָה) suggests that we are again (as in v. 5) beyond the time scale of Isa 33,1, the completion of destruction. Finally, the 2nd pers. pl. in v. 11 is only understandable in the present context. Insofar as the prophecy is supposed to answer the events described in 33,5.7-9, it addresses the foreign nations proclaiming them destruction (cf. Isa 37,22-29). It is remarkable though that even this layer in the prophecy presupposes the existence of the enemy.

We may conclude thus far that Isa 33,5.7-12 is an elaboration on the earlier text 33,1.4. While in v. 1 YHWH's plan has not yet been accomplished, vv. 5.7-9 already presuppose that the enemy has fulfilled its task assigned to it by God. The prayer in vv. 2-3 is also secondary to 33,1.4. There are some clues that vv. 2-3 and 5.7-12 belong to the same literary level. These verses have the form of a communal lament evoked by the experienced calamities, as well as by the promise uttered in the earlier prophecy of 33,1.4 regarding the timely destruction of the enemy. The structure prayer of deliverance / description of the situation / oracular answer to the prayer is attested

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and Akk. *adû / adiu*, '[treaty-]oath'). This is not only suggested by the parallelism with ברית (cf. also Gen 31,44), but also by the syntagmatic relationship with מאס, which is often used in connection with synonyms of עד (cf. Lev 26,15.43; 2 Kgs 17,15; Isa 5,24; Jer 6,19; Ezek 5,6; 20,13.16.24; 2,4). מאס appears with Jerusalem in 2 Kgs 23,27 (with YHWH as subject; cf. also Jer 14,19), but the pl. of ערים would sound strange in Isa 33,7. אָנוֹשׁ is probably a cognate of Ugaritic *'unt* and Akkadian *unuššu*, which means 'tax' or 'tribute' (cf. also 1 Kgs 10,15). Cf. D.R. HILLERS, "A Hebrew Cognate of *unuššu* / *'unt* in Isa 33, 8", *HTR* 64 (1971) 257-259; A.F. RAINEY, "Observations on Ugaritic Grammar", *UF* 3 (1971) 169; G. DEL OLMO LETE – J. SANMARTÍN, *Diccionario de la lengua ugarítica* (Aula Orientalis Supplementa 7; Barcelona 1996) I, 41-42.

If Isa 24,5 indeed alludes to 33,8 (W.A.M. BEUKEN, *Isaiah 28-39* [HCOT; Kampen 2000] 261-262; see note 95 below), this may again confirm that ברית has two further synonyms in 33,8.

Isa 33,8	Isa 24,5
הַפֶּר בְּרִית	כִּי־עָבְרוּ תוֹרַת
מֵאֵס עֲדִים*	חֲלָפוּ חֶק
לֹא חָשַׁב אָנוֹשׁ	הִפְרוּ בְרִית עוֹלָם

(43) For vv. 7-9, cf. also H.G.M. WILLIAMSON, *The Book Called Isaiah. Deutero-Isaiah's Role in Composition and Redaction* (Oxford 1994) 223.

in Ps 12,1-6 and Isa 37<sup>(44)</sup>. The role of v. 6 will be understood only later.

Isa 33,13 is a YHWH-speech that some see as one unit with 33,10-12<sup>(45)</sup>. Other exegetes question that this formal similarity is sufficient to support literary unity<sup>(46)</sup>. Indeed, the imperative שמעו often signifies the beginning of a new prophecy (cf. Isa 1,2.10; 6,9; 7,13; 36,13; 48,1; 49,1; etc.). Furthermore, the 2nd pers. forms in v. 13 do not refer to the enemy as in vv. 1, 4, or 11, but they have a different audience in view.

Regarding the connection between vv. 13-24 and 1-12, one may note that vv. 13-24 make often use of motifs attested in vv. 1-12, suggesting that the two are supposed to be related. At the same time, however, there is a clear shift in the theme of the prophecy from the promise of destroying the enemy, to the description of those going to dwell in the city in the future. At the point of v. 13, the enemy seems to have already been destroyed (cf. עשיתי). Moreover, while motifs and themes from vv. 1-12 reappear later, these motifs are reused in a modified sense, as reinterpretations, underlining their different origin. (a) אש אוכלת in v. 14 points back to v. 12. But while fire is there an instrument of judgment, in v. 14 the fire is located in Zion and is identified with YHWH. (b) מרומים and משגב in v. 16 clearly allude to v. 5, but while there the exaltation of YHWH emphasises his withdrawal and estrangement from Zion (cf. Isa 6,1; 18,4), in v. 16 YHWH and his people dwell in the same place. In v. 5 מרום is clearly not Jerusalem (Ps 148,1), but it probably is in v. 16. (c) In v. 15 הלך צדקות may allude to צדקה in v. 5, but in v. 5 it is a divine act. (d) In v. 8 the sinful ancestors rejected the treaty (מאס עדים), in v. 15 the righteous one will reject (מאס) a form of life contrary to the covenant. (e) In v. 4 the identity of the plunderers of the enemy is unclear, in v. 23 these plunderers appear to be Jews.

Some take רחוקים and קרובים to refer to non-Jews and Jews alike, i.e. all people of the world<sup>(47)</sup>. Others consider קרובים Jerusalemites and

<sup>(44)</sup> The description of the situation and the prayer are interchanged in Isa 37. Cf. also Ps 60; 85; Jer 14,1-10. The relationship between the prayer in 33,2-3 and the oracle 33,10-12 may also be underlined by רום in v. 10 and רוממת in v. 3 (cf., however, 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>).

<sup>(45)</sup> KAISER, *Jesaja*, 274; WILDBERGER, *Jesaja*, 1302; KOENEN, *Heil*, 119; SWEENEY, *Isaiah*, 424.

<sup>(46)</sup> VERMEYLEN, *Isaïe*, I, 432; ROBERTS, “Isaiah 33”, 15; WASCHKE, “Jesaja 33”, 520.

<sup>(47)</sup> KAISER, *Jesaja*, 274; KUSTÁR, *Krankheit*, 84.

רחוק the dispersed Judeans (Isa 43,6; 49,12; 60,4.9)<sup>(48)</sup>. However, if v. 13 is related to vv. 14-16, it becomes clear that the author is concerned with Jews, not foreigners<sup>(49)</sup>. Moreover, as we shall see below, vv. 14-16 also presuppose that the people addressed do not live in Zion yet, so that קרובים would unlikely refer to Jerusalemites over against those in the diaspora<sup>(50)</sup>. Instead of a geographical connotation it is more probable that the merism of v. 13 signifies distance from God, the speaker: רחוקים refers to those who are far from him and קרובים those who are close to him, who trust him. A parallel example is Isa 57,19, which addresses both רחוק and קרוב, proclaiming them peace and salvation. The larger context of 57,19 suggests that רחוק and קרוב refer to the totality of the people of YHWH, with different degrees of knowledge and experience of him. רחוק symbolises the sinful and iniquitous people (57,17), for whom YHWH is the God, who dwells in a distant, high and holy place (57,15; cf. Isa 6,1; 33,5.15), those whom he must heal (57,18; cf. Isa 6,10; 33,24), and קרוב may allude to the contrite and those lowly in spirit (57,15), to whom YHWH says he is near (cf. also Jer 12,2; 23,23)<sup>(51)</sup>.

The scene in vv. 14-24 is imaginary and highly metaphorical. The question who may live in Zion (v. 14), the adverbs שם (v. 21) and אז (v. 23), the portrayal of the king and the “country far away” (v. 17), and the description of the city (vv. 20-21.23), all imply some distance in time and space from the real scene of events.

According to the context of vv. 14-15, חטאים and חנפים refer to exilic contemporaries of the author, so that these are in fact synonyms for רחוקים. These people have not yet succeeded to overcome and distance themselves from the negative spiritual heritage of their forefathers<sup>(52)</sup>. If they would like to stay alive in Zion, they have to live according to

<sup>(48)</sup> Cf. Dan 9,7; CLEMENTS, *Isaiah*, 268; KUSTÁR, *Krankheit*, 213.

<sup>(49)</sup> Contra BERGES, *Jesaja*, 245.

<sup>(50)</sup> V. 14 does not presuppose that the sinners already live in Zion, but it rather emphasises that they cannot stay alive in Zion.

<sup>(51)</sup> For Isa 57 as an allusion to Isa 33, cf. further the themes of dwelling on high (אשכנז...מרום; 57,15 | 33,5.16), the eternity of YHWH (שכן עדי; cf. אמונת עתיד in 33,6) and the healing of Zion punished for her sins (57,18-19 | 33,24). Seemingly the people distanced from God (רחוק) are distinguished from the רשעים in 57,20-21. In recent analysis, however, vv. 20-21 are regarded as additions (BERGES, *Jesaja*, 472-473; KUSTÁR, *Krankheit*, 205; cf. KOENEN, *Heil*, 82). For רחוק and קרוב see also Isa 46,12 and 55,6-7.

<sup>(52)</sup> For חטא, see Isa 1,4.18.28; 29,21; 31,7; 42,24; 43,27; 64,4. For חנף, see Isa 9,16; 10,6; 24,5; 32,6.

the Torah. Accordingly, קְרוֹבִים refers to the צְדִיק. The list of v. 15 presents Zion faithful to the covenant, in contrast to Zion of v. 8<sup>(53)</sup>.

V. 17 makes a transition from the impersonal formulations of vv. 15-16 to directly addressing Israel. As often noted, vv. 14-16 use the form of entrance-liturgies<sup>(54)</sup>. This form is composed of a question (who may dwell close to God), an answer and a promise of blessing. This older liturgical form focusing on the pilgrims entering the temple is ingeniously readapted here to the situation of the Judean returnees. The final formula of these entrance-liturgies is the promise to those faithful to the Torah. The salvation prophecy of 33,17-24 can be considered an expanded and personalised prophetic adaptation of this concluding liturgical element of blessing.

The king in Isa 33,17 is most often identified with YHWH<sup>(55)</sup>, though a few scholars argue that this verse refers to a human figure<sup>(56)</sup>. The strongest argument in favour of the first opinion is v. 22, which calls YHWH commander, ruler and king. However, YHWH's kingship does not exclude the coexistence of a subordinate human king. There are further problems in identifying מֶלֶךְ with YHWH. First, the lack of the definite article is most striking if מֶלֶךְ stands for YHWH. Second, “seeing God” is also problematic, especially in such a late period, as this text is usually dated<sup>(57)</sup>. Third, יָפִי, ‘beauty’ nowhere belongs to the characteristics of YHWH. God may appear as majestic, kind, but not as beautiful<sup>(58)</sup>. יָפִי is a physical quality, used for the outward appearance

<sup>(53)</sup> Cf. מִשָּׁם in vv. 8 and 15.

<sup>(54)</sup> Cf. Ps 15; 24; S. MOWINCKEL, *Psalmstudien* (Amsterdam 1961) II, 237; GUNKEL, “Jesaja 33”, 192-194.

<sup>(55)</sup> KAISER, *Jesaja*, 275; WILDBERGER, *Jesaja*, 1314; SWEENEY, *Isaiah*, 428; WASCHKE, “Jesaja 33”, 522.

<sup>(56)</sup> ALEXANDER, *Isaiah*, 13; CLEMENTS, *Isaiah*, 269; BEUKEN, *Isaiah*, 247, 270. DUHM, *Jesaja*, 245, and YOUNG, *Isaiah*, II, 421, argue that this refers to the Messiah.

<sup>(57)</sup> I doubt that the Isaianic vision (!) of YHWH in 6,5 (WILLIAMSON, *Book*, 226; BERGES, *Jesaja*, 245; WASCHKE, “Jesaja 33”, 528), or the cultic term of seeing God's face (Ps 11,7; KAISER, *Jesaja*, 274), could be equalled with the promise of Isa 33,17. Isa 52,8, which is also presumed to support the divine king interpretation in 33,17 (BERGES, *Jesaja*, 245), is a problematic text (cf. LXX; 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>). Moreover, Isa 52,8 does not speak about seeing YHWH as in 33,17, but probably seeing his return to Zion (so the MT). Cf. also 35,2; 40,5; 66,18.

<sup>(58)</sup> Debating this, MOWINCKEL, *Psalmstudien*, II, 237, refers to the phrase יָפִי לְחֻזֶּה in Ps 27,4. While יָפִי can be used in certain cases with a sense close to יָפִי (Sol 1,16; 7,7), yet יָפִי means ‘kindness, friendliness’ (2 Sam 1,26; Ps 90,17 [יָפִי אֱלֹהֵינוּ עָלֵינוּ]; cf. HALOT). It may be compared with מִיב (Ps 133,1; Prov 24,25; Job 36,11), which under certain conditions can also refer to handsome

of humans, plants or ornaments. Strikingly, Jer 10,4 uses יִפֶּה in connection with the idols<sup>(59)</sup>.

As for the positive evidence, יִפֶּה characterises a human king in Ps 45,3; 1 Sam 16,12; 17,42; Ezek 28,12<sup>(60)</sup>. Furthermore, the position of מֶלֶךְ at the beginning of the sentence suggests that this word is emphatic, alluding to a situation in which there is no human king in Jerusalem, but everyone is eager to find one there<sup>(61)</sup>. Last, in v. 17 מֶלֶךְ / אֶרֶץ are used in parallelism. If אֶרֶץ has a political significance in this place, it makes most sense to think similarly of מֶלֶךְ as well. The presence of a human king, the second to YHWH, is also presupposed by v. 21, as argued below.

V. 17b is also astonishing. אֶרֶץ מִרְחָקִים, that the returnees are promised to see, is often interpreted as a land that stretches far away, a broad and wide land<sup>(62)</sup>. This can hardly be correct, however, since in all other instances the construction [מִן]רְחָק[ים] means “a distant land”, “far land”<sup>(63)</sup>.

This verse has serious implications for the date and provenance of

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outward appearance, but hardly so with YHWH. The same Ps 27,13 has לִרְאוֹתָּהּ בְּמוֹבֵי־יְהוּדָה, suggesting that in case of YHWH נֶעַם and מוֹב are indeed similar (see also Ps 16,11; 135,3; 147,1).

<sup>(59)</sup> The Egyptian examples of the divinity’s beauty cited by WILDBERGER, *Jesaja*, 1315-1316, are most probably related to the physical appearance of these gods, either as exposed by cultic statues, or through the divine-human Egyptian king. Neither of these is relevant for the biblical text.

<sup>(60)</sup> Cf. 1 Sam 25,3; 1 Kgs 1,3; Est 1,11; 2,7; Ezek 16,13, using יִפֶּה for a queen.

<sup>(61)</sup> The last memory of the people leaving Jerusalem for exile was that their king was taken away and foreigners appeared in the city (cf. vv. 18-19).

<sup>(62)</sup> Cf. NRSV; NIV; DUHM, *Jesaja*, 245; YOUNG, *Isaiah*, II, 422.

<sup>(63)</sup> Prov 25,25; Isa 13,5; 46,11; Jer 6,20; 8,19. See also Deut 29,21; Josh 9,6,9; 1 Kgs 8,41; Isa 8,9; 39,3; Jer 4,16. “Large country” would be אֶרֶץ רַחֲבָה (cf. Ex 3,8; Neh 9,35; see also Gen 13,17; 26,22; 34,21; Ex 34,24; Jdg 18,10; 1 Chr 4,40; Job 38,18; Isa 8,8; 22,18; cf. Isa 30,23). אֶרֶץ מִרְחָקִים in Jer 8,19 is especially important. When exegetes explain its meaning as “from throughout the land”, they do this by referring to Isa 33,17. Cf. W. RUDOLPH, *Jeremia* (HAT 12; Tübingen 1968) 62; P.C. CRAIGIE et al., *Jeremiah 1-25* (WBC 26; Waco, TX 1991) 137. But it is more likely that Jer 8,19 (at least from מִרְחָקִים אֶרֶץ) quotes the exiled (distant) people, being a later addition. This was already presupposed by some for the מִדְּרוֹעַ+אֶם sentence, but Craigie argued convincingly that the Jeremianic syntax מִדְּרוֹעַ+אֶם forms a coherent unit. As an insertion, Jer 8,19a could be YHWH’s word rather than the prophet’s. It is possible that Jer 8,19 refers to Isa 33,17, but that need not mean that its understanding of YHWH as king coincides with the intention of the author of Isa 33,17 (contra BOSSHARD-NEPUSTIL, *Rezeptionen*, 185). Jer 8,19 may have relied on the larger context of Isa 33,17 (cf. vv. 5.22).

this prophecy. While in most other cases “distant land” refers to Mesopotamia or Persia, in Isa 33,17 it probably signifies Canaan as viewed from Mesopotamia, thus also presupposing an audience somewhere by the rivers of Babylon. This does not only corresponds to vv. 14-16 (who is going to dwell in Zion?), but also to vv. 18-19. The shocking questions of people wandering where foreign tribute gatherers could have disappeared can be well-understood if put in the mouths of those arriving home, but not from those already living in Zion.

The phrase *מְקוֹם יְהוָה לָנוּ אֲדִיר יְהוָה* in v. 21 is notoriously difficult. The problem is caused mainly by the words *אֲדִיר יְהוָה*. It is syntactically impossible to consider *אֲדִיר* an adjective here<sup>(64)</sup>. Some separate the two words rendering “the mighty one, YHWH”<sup>(65)</sup>. However, the lack of the definite article would be again troubling. Other scholars propose to change *יהוה* into *יהיה*, translating “there will be a mighty one for us”<sup>(66)</sup>. But the emendation has no textual support. Moreover, the lack of the article would be a problem again, for while *אֲדִיר* is used as an adjective connected to the name or person of YHWH (1 Sam 4,8; Ps 8,2.10; 75,6; 93,4), in a nominal form it never substitutes YHWH.

It is possible, however, to leave the MT unchanged and still arrive to an acceptable interpretation. I propose to translate *אֲדִיר יְהוָה* most simply as a genitival construction, “the mighty one of YHWH”. It is remarkable that when used as a noun, *אֲדִיר* refers almost exclusively to high rank officials<sup>(67)</sup>. There are two important cases where *אֲדִיר* refers to a king. The first case is Isa 10,34. According to the original intention of Isa 10,28-34 as a prophecy directed against Jerusalem (cf. 11,1), the phrase *יִפֹּל בְּאֲדִיר יִפֹּל* in 10,34 refers to the fall of Zion (“Lebanon”) by “a mighty one”, who will cut it off like trees<sup>(68)</sup>. This *אֲדִיר* who will

<sup>(64)</sup> Cf. KJV: “glorious Lord”.

<sup>(65)</sup> A. DILLMANN, *Der Prophet Jesaja* (Leipzig 1890<sup>s</sup>) 299.

<sup>(66)</sup> WILDBERGER, *Jesaja*, 1311.

<sup>(67)</sup> Jdg 5,13.25; 2 Chr 23,20; Neh 3,5; 10,30; Jer 14,3; 25,34.36; Nah 2,6; 3,18; Zech 11,2. *אֲדִיר* is never used in an abstract sense as “majesty” (Wildberger), or “might” (Young).

<sup>(68)</sup> Contra the unnecessary emendations of e.g. H. WILDBERGER, *Jesaja*. Kapitel 1-12 (BKAT X/1; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1972) 425; H. BARTH, *Die Jesaja-Worte in der Josiazeit*. Israel und Assur als Thema einer produktiven Neuinterpretation der Jesajaüberlieferung (WMANT 48; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1977) 69-72, see, e.g., S. MOWINCKEL, “Die Komposition des Jesajabuches Kap. 1-39”, *AcOr* 11 (1933) 283-284; G.C.I. WONG, “Deliverance or destruction? Isaiah x 33-34 in the final form of Isaiah x-xi”, *VT* 53 (2003) 544-552.



cause Jerusalem to fall is the Assyrian king (cf. 10,15; 28,2). The second text is Jer 30,21, where אֲדִיר is paralleled by מִשְׁל, both of which allude to the future king of Israel who God promises to bring forth from among his people. It is most likely therefore that אֲדִיר יְהוָה, “the mighty one of YHWH”, refers to a human king in Jerusalem, as in v. 17 above.

The first part of v. 21 should be delimited as follows:

כִּי אִשְׁשֵׁם אֲדִיר יְהוָה לָנוּ	For there a mighty one of YHWH will
מְקוֹם־נְהָרִים	be to us (like) a place of rivers <sup>(69)</sup> ,
יָאִרִים רַחְבֵּי יָדִים	(like) spacious channels <sup>(70)</sup> .

The mighty waters recall the idea of mighty ships (צִי אֲדִיר / אֲנִי־שֵׁט), both of which are obviously symbolic images. The metaphors of ship are followed by an assertion of YHWH as commander, leader and king (v. 22), but v. 23a returns again to the theme of ships. This unusual sequence determined some scholars either to abandon vv. 21b.23a<sup>(71)</sup>, or to relocate v. 23a after 21<sup>(72)</sup>. However, it is curious that vv. 21b.23 as late insertions were separated from each other. It would be more natural to presuppose that the original sequence was blurred by the secondary insertion of v. 22. But is the order of vv. 21-23 really so strange after all? Ships with a mast and sail represent loftiness, pride and arrogance. As in Isa 2,16, אֲנִי־שֵׁט and צִי אֲדִיר are not enemy ships, but Judaeans vessels symbolising human power<sup>(73)</sup>. But where there is an אֲדִיר יְהוָה, there is no place for צִי אֲדִיר. It is not the mighty ships, but YHWH, who saves his people<sup>(74)</sup>. Therefore the demolition of Judah’s lofty ships is an essential sign of faith relying solely on YHWH’s saving power. In this reading each of vv. 21-23 fits the reasoning of the author well and need not be considered secondary.

V. 23b is unclear, but the division of spoils among the lame may continue the previous idea that it is not human power which saves Zion (cf. Isa 31,8)<sup>(75)</sup>. V. 23b may point back to v. 4 and identify the

<sup>(69)</sup> מְקוֹם־נְהָרִים probably alludes to a place rich in waters.

<sup>(70)</sup> For רַחְבֵּי יָדִים, cf. also Gen 34,21; Jdg 18,10; 1 Chr 4,40; Isa 22,18.

<sup>(71)</sup> KAISER, *Jesaja*, 276-277; KUSTÁR, *Krankheit*, 86.

<sup>(72)</sup> FOHRER, *Jesaja*, 139; JPS Tanakh (1985).

<sup>(73)</sup> Contra, e.g., M.E.W. THOMPSON, “Vision, Reality and Worship: Isaiah 33”, *ExpT* 113 (2002) 329. The suffix of חֲבִלָּיָה also refers to Judaeans — contra H.R. HOLMYARD, “Does Isaiah 33:23 Address Israel or Israel’s Enemy?”, *BibSac* 152 (1995) 273-278.

<sup>(74)</sup> Note the part. כִּי and the emphatic יוֹשִׁיעֵנִי in v. 22, as well as the military (!) terminology (commander, leader) in v. 22.

<sup>(75)</sup> Whether עֵד should be עִוֵּר, ‘blind’ (BHS<sup>3</sup> with support from the Tg), is uncertain.

plunderers of the enemy with Zion. At the same time, the imagery of lame is connected to the sickness-theme of v. 24.

To conclude, vv. 13-24 form a coherent unit in which we find allusions to the earlier part of the prophecy, suggesting that this passage was composed in view of the former text. However, its focus on the returnees and the description of a new Jerusalem, the different addressees, as well as the reinterpretation of the earlier motifs suggest that vv. 13-24 derives from a later occasion than vv. 1-12.

As noted, v. 6 belongs neither to vv. 1+4, nor to vv. 2-3+5+7-12. Its focus and intention is akin to vv. 13-24, for both of which v. 5 is a central text, interpreted differently from its original meaning. V. 6 reads 33,5 as a prediction for the future<sup>(76)</sup> in which *מִשְׁפָּט* and *צְדָקָה* have positive connotations for Israel, the god-fearing people. Similarly v. 15, connects *מִשְׁפָּט* and *צְדָקָה* to the righteous life of the god-fearing inhabitants of Zion (cf. Isa 1,21). As the protection of the city is warranted by YHWH, the stronghold (*חֹסֶן*), in v. 6, so also v. 16 (cf. vv. 20-23) places the emphasis on the security of Jerusalem, the *מְרוֹמִים* and *מִשְׁנֵב*, alluding to *נִשְׁבַּח* and *מְרוֹם* in v. 5.

To sum up, Isa 33 is not one literary unit, but a complex composition of three distinctive passages. Vv. 1+4 is the basic text, expanded in a secondary stage by vv. 2-3+5+7-12, which forms a communal lament. As a third step vv. 6+13-24 were added, which formally represent an elaborated version of entrance-liturgies. The following section is supposed to clarify the theological background and the intertextual relationships of these passages.

## II. Isaiah 33 in its Context

### 1. Isa 33,1+4: The Primary Text

The earliest text on which all subsequent expansions are built is the *יְהוָה*-cry of 33,1+4. The combination *שׁוֹדֵד* and *בּוֹגֵד* used in connection with the enemy also appears (in reversed order) in Isa 21,2, hinting at literary relationship. In Isa 21,2 *שׁוֹדֵד* and *בּוֹגֵד* refer to Babylon<sup>(77)</sup>, who

<sup>(76)</sup> *מִלֵּא* qatal allows this; cf. note 24 above.

<sup>(77)</sup> According to BEUKEN (“Jesaja 33”, 15), *שׁוֹדֵד* and *בּוֹגֵד* refer to the Elamites and Medians (Persians) both in Isa 21,2 and 33,1 (cf. also BERGES, *Jesaja*, 243). This identification creates difficulties for 21,1-10, where only these two verbs explain why Babylon is destroyed. For Chaldea as *בּוֹגֵד* and *שׁוֹדֵד* in 21,2, see D.S. VANDERHOOF, *The Neo-Babylonian Empire and Babylon in the Latter Prophets* (HSM 59; Atlanta, GA 1999) 130, n. 37.

causes the groaning (אֶחָתָה) of the oppressed, inciting the intervention of YHWH by way of Elam and Media. Does Isa 33,1 also refer to Babylon? Intertextual allusions do not necessarily imply identical interpretations. Although 33,1 is in general considered secondary to 21,2, it seems rather that the opposite is the case. Isa 21 does not clarify to whose groaning<sup>(78)</sup> YHWH replies by punishing the שׂוֹדֵד and בּוֹגֵד. From the larger context of 33,1, however, it becomes clear that it has caused much suffering to Judah (33,7-9). “Her groaning” (אֶחָתָה) in 21,2 may actually allude to the prayer of the oppressed people in 33,2-3<sup>(79)</sup>. Isa 21,2 can therefore be explained from (i.e. it presupposes) 33,1.

Another probable case of intertextuality in 33,1 depends on a textual emendation. Rashi and many others suggested that כְּנִלְתֵּךְ (from the *hapax* נִלָּה) should be emended to כִּכְלִיתֵךְ<sup>(80)</sup>, a variant confirmed by 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> and supported by the syntax<sup>(81)</sup>. If the reading כִּכְלִיתֵךְ is accepted, then the word pair תָּמַם and כִּלָּה, as well as שׂוֹדֵד, bring v. 1 particularly close to Isa 16,4, which also speaks about the disappearance of the — most likely Assyrian<sup>(82)</sup> — oppressor.

The possible Assyrian addressee behind 33,1+4 is underlined by comparing its message to Isa 10,12<sup>(83)</sup>. In Isa 10, YHWH promises to punish the proud Assyria after he has finished all his work in Zion which points to a common theology behind these verses (temporised punishment). Besides, the above noted imagery of locusts in 33,4 may also remind us of Assyria (Nah 3,15-17) as the primary addressee<sup>(84)</sup>.

Insofar as other יְהוֹיָכִי-prophecies in the collection of Isa 28–32 can at

(78) Note the 3rd pers. sg. fem. suffix in אֶחָתָה.

(79) For Babylon as בּוֹגֵד, cf. Isa 24,16 (?); Hab 1,13; 2,5. For שׂוֹדֵד, see Isa 16,4; Jer 6,26; 12,12; 15,8; 48,8.18.32; Jer 51,48.53.56.

(80) From כִּלָּה, ‘to finish / complete’. Cf. BDB 649; DUHM, *Jesaia*, 240; ROBERTS, “Isaiah 33”, 18. For תָּמַם and כִּלָּה used together, see also Isa 16,4; Jer 44,27; Lam 3,22; Dan 9,24. The נ > כ change, cf. E. WÜRTHWEIN, *Der Text des Alten Testaments. Eine Einführung in die Biblia Hebraica* (Stuttgart<sup>5</sup>1988) 119.

(81) When כִּלָּה is related to a verb, it is generally followed by ל + inf. Cf. Gen 17,22; 18,33; 24,19; 43,2; Ex 31,18; Deut 26,12; Josh 19,49; Ruth 3,3; 1 Kgs 3,1; Jer 51,63; Amos 7,2. The only exception is Dan 12,7.

(82) This could be inferred from the friendly attitude towards Moab which changed considerably in the post-exilic period. It is not clear though whether Assyria has actually fallen or only left the country. It may be Isa 16,4, which alludes to 33,1+4.

(83) Cf. also ROBERTS, “Isaiah 33”, 19.

(84) The attack of the enemy against Assyria is also typified as a locust invasion in Nah 2 (cf. Joel 1–2; Jer 51,14). As BEUKEN (“Jesaja 33”, 16) noted, the imagery of booty also appears in Assyria-related contexts in Isa 8,1.4; 10,6.14.

least partially be dated to the Assyrian period, one may assume that Isa 33,1+4 once closed an earlier collection of דְּרִי-text by pronouncing judgment on Assyria, who for a little while had become the axe of YHWH cutting the mighty trees of Israel and Judah. The role of 33,1+4 was similar to the anti-Assyrian prophecy in Isa 10, which also appears as a culmination of Israel-related prophecies<sup>(85)</sup>.

## 2. Isa 33,2-3+5+7-12: *The First Expansion*

Vv. 1+4 look forward to the time when the enemy will have finished the work assigned to it by YHWH. The first expansion of this text takes up the idea of timing, reminding YHWH that following the fulfilment of the first part of the earlier prophecy, the time has come to fulfil the second part of the promise (cf. Ps 102,14; Zech 1,12). For this purpose, the author uses the form of communal laments with prayer, description and oracle. When discussing the intertextual connections of Isa 33, scholars mostly point out sporadic lexical relationships between Isa 33 and other texts, but they give little attention to the formal similarities between Isa 33 and other Isaianic passages<sup>(86)</sup>.

While 1st pl. formulas are not uncommon to Isaiah, they appear rarely in the context of a prayer. The first text to be mentioned is Isa 26, which also includes communal lament. The whispered prayer alluded to in 26,16, from the time when Judah was under oppression (צָר), could be 33,2-3 (cf. בַּעַת צָרָה), reminding in 26,18 that the related oracle (33,10-12) has remained unfulfilled. Isa 26 also presents the humiliation of “the city” (26,5), the exaltation of YHWH (26,11), the destruction scenes (26,5-6), and an oracle (26,19-21) which sets a new date for the realisation of the old prophecy (כְּמַעֲטֵרֵנָּה / עַד־יַעֲבִירֵנָּה). Beyond formal similarities, there is also a close lexical and thematic connection between the two passages<sup>(87)</sup>. However, Isa 26 presents a

<sup>(85)</sup> Contra WASCHKE (“Jesaja 33”, 530), who considers Isa 32 the closure of the דְּרִי-collection.

<sup>(86)</sup> For example, BEUKEN (“Jesaja 33”, 13-15) argues that 33,2 can be seen as mirroring Isa 8,17.22-23; 12; 25,9.10; 51,5; 59,1.11. BERGES (*Jesaja*, 246, 248) maintains that 33,24 alludes to 1,4; 6,7; 40,2 and Lam 4,22. It is difficult to imagine, however, that an author composes each verse in view of so many references and yet arrives to a coherent final text. For the problems with this way of dealing with intertextuality, see also WASCHKE, “Jesaja 33”, 524, who emphasises the importance of “inhaltliche und strukturelle Analogien”.

<sup>(87)</sup> 33,2 | 26,8 (cf. also 25,9); 33,2 (לְבָקְרִים) | 26,9 (בְּלִילָה); 33,5 | 26,8 (מָרוֹם / עַד־יַעֲבִירֵנָּה); 33,5 | 26,8 (אֶרֶץ מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ / מִשְׁפָּט); cf. 26,16; מִשְׁפָּט is used here as judgment on Judah;



by punishing Jerusalem God will restore the earlier order<sup>(93)</sup>. Isa 1,27 seems to be based on 5,16, but it also goes beyond it in that 5,16 is not about the redemption of the city. As it was argued above, 33,5 also has strong connections to 5,16 and maintains that this prediction regarding the elevation of YHWH (גְּבוּרָה) in justice and righteousness is now fulfilled. Thus both 1,27 and 33,5 go back to 5,16, but the idea of the redemption of Jerusalem is more emphatic in 1,27 than in 33,5, questioning that the latter would be actually based on 1,27.

In Isa 5,15-16, the exaltation of YHWH is connected with the humiliation of Judah, with special emphasis on its leaders. Isa 5,15-16 is also referred to by 2,5-22, another important text for 33,2-3+5+7-12. The central theme of 2,5-22 is the exaltation of YHWH alone and the punishment of the haughty nation<sup>(94)</sup>. The weeping military leaders in 33,7 may be an example of this humiliation. In this context, it is even arguable that the geographical metaphors of 33,9 refer to 2,13-14<sup>(95)</sup>. Isa 33,7-9 seems to restate that 2,5-22 was fulfilled.

It is often noted that the unusual אֲרָאֵל in 33,7 hints at אֲרִיאֵל in 29,1, the Isaianic prophecy against Jerusalem in which the theme of humiliation of the proud ancient city also plays a prominent role<sup>(96)</sup>. In this connection the phonetic similarity between צַעֲקוּ חֲצָה (33,7) and אֲרָאֵל צַעֲקוּ לְאֲרִיאֵל (29,2) is also noteworthy<sup>(97)</sup>.

The imagery of hay and straw in v. 11 has a significant parallel in Isa 5,24, the context from which 5,16 was also taken up in 33,5. In this earlier text Israel is compared to קֶשׁ and חֶשֶׁשׁ, who will be consumed (אָכַל) by the enemy<sup>(98)</sup>. The metaphor of קֶשׁ appears only in Isa 32,13, but its synonyms, שְׂמִיר and שִׁית belong to the most favourite motifs of the book, mostly as symbols for the judgment on Judah or Israel (5,6;

<sup>(93)</sup> Isa 1,25 implies punishment and וַאֲשִׁיבָה in 1,26 alludes to restoration.

<sup>(94)</sup> Cf. נִשְׁגָּב (as in 33,5); עֲנִי גְבוּרָה; גֵּאָה, רֹם / רֹם, נֶשֶׁא (2,11.12; cf. 5,15-16).

<sup>(95)</sup> For Lebanon and Carmel, cf. also 10,34; 29,17; 35,2. See also Isa 24,4-12, which appears to be a later allusion to 33,7-9 (cf. 33,1 | 24,16; 33,7 | 24,11; 33,8 | 24,12; 33,9 | 24,4.7; 33,17.22 | 24,23).

<sup>(96)</sup> See שָׁפַל in 29,4 with 2,9.11.12.17; 5,15; 10,33; 32,19.

<sup>(97)</sup> Note also אֲכִילָה in 29,6, although this probably refers here to the destruction of Jerusalem (1,7; 5,24; 9,18; 10,16.17; cf. also 28,2) and not the enemy (26,11; 30,27.30.33). תִּפְקֹד, whether a sg. 3 fem., or a sg. 2 masc., has no other antecedent in the previous verse. See also צִיר (29,3; cf. 33,2), הַמֶּן (29,5; 33,3), and קֵיל (29,6; 33,3). The diachronic aspect of the relationship between Isa 33 and the later expansion of 29,1-8 is not entirely clear. KUSTÁR (*Krankheit*, 103) assigns 29,5-7 and Isa 33 (with 30,27-33) to the same author.

<sup>(98)</sup> מֶאֶס עֲדִים appears only here. Cf. 5,24 (מֶאֶס אֶת תּוֹרַת יְהוָה) with 33,8 (מֶאֶס עֲדִים).

7,23-25; 9,17 [cf. אָסל / שָׁס]; 10,17; 27,4; 29,6). The message of 5,24 is inverted in 33,11-12<sup>(99)</sup>.

As for the date of vv. 2-3+5+7-12, this edition presupposes that the enemy has not yet fallen. The audience is a lamenting community, which looks forward to being delivered. The image of heroes and messengers wailing in the streets after being punished for a treaty broken with a foreign power, does not appear to be stereotypical, but it may reflect actual historical circumstances. Following the retaliatory campaign during Jehoiachin in 598, part of the elite and military personnel from Judah were deported to Babylon (2 Kgs 24,10-16). Whether it is this deportation which made the warriors of Jerusalem cry, or whether they were the warriors left by the Babylonians during the later siege of 587 (2 Kgs 25,19; 25,23; Jer 40,7; 41,3)<sup>(100)</sup>, or the lament was composed during the siege, before the actual fall of the city to counsel those inside the walls (cf. 33,10-12), it is difficult to tell. It is probable, nevertheless, that the text originates from these difficult years of Judah.

### 3. *Isa 33,6+13-24: The Second Expansion*

While the lamentation and oracle in Isa 33,1-5.7-12 is concerned with the oppression of Jerusalem and the punishment of its enemy, the second expansion, 33,6+13-24, changes the perspective to the glorious Zion and those planning to dwell there. Isa 33,6+13-24 is written as an expansion of the previous text, especially focused on the central v. 5<sup>(101)</sup>.

Isa 33,6, comparing YHWH to a fortification, reflects the theology of cultic poetry<sup>(102)</sup>. The emphasis on the cultic role of Zion is also evident in 33,14-16, as mentioned. Furthermore, the description of Jerusalem in vv. 16.20-21 uses mythological language and is acquainted with the theology of the Zion psalms Ps 46; 48 and

<sup>(99)</sup> For a similar reversion, see Isa 30,27.30.33, which apparently also builds on anti-Israel texts (cf. especially 30,30 with 28,2).

<sup>(100)</sup> On the crying people, see also the mourners of Jer 41,5, probably wailing for the city Jerusalem.

<sup>(101)</sup> BEUKEN, "Jesaja 33", 16-17 recognised in v. 5-6 an allusion to Isa 11,1-10. The problem with this opinion is that the motif of רָחַם, which is so central to Isa 11, plays no role in 33,5-6. It is also difficult to explain why 33,5-6 would have picked out only these lexemes from Isa 11, and left other similarly important ones (e.g., בִּינָה, עֲצָה) unmentioned.

<sup>(102)</sup> Cf. Isa 26,1 and note 36 above.



76<sup>(103)</sup>. For instance, describing Jerusalem as מְרוֹמִים and מַצְדּוֹת סְלֵעִים in Isa 33,16 (cf. Ps 46,8) reminds one of Baal’s home is in the heights of Zaphon (*mrym spn / srrt*) and the watery place of 33,21 (cf. Ps 46,5) of the dwelling place of El at the headwaters of rivers (*nhrm*), at the confluence of depths (*‘dt / ‘apq thmtm*)<sup>(104)</sup>. It is even probable that אֶרֶץ מְרוֹחִים in 33,17 parallels the distant place of the divine mountain Zaphon (cf. הַר־צִיּוֹן יִרְכָּתִי צִפּוֹן in Ps 48,3; see also Jer 31,8). The fire imagery of 33,14 also resonates with mythological descriptions of the divine mountain<sup>(105)</sup>. According to Ezek 28,14-16 the blameless king of Tyre had lived among the fiery stones on the mountain of God from where he was removed when he was found violent and sinful. Formally speaking, the imperative in Ps 46,9 parallels Isa 33,20.

In vv. 33,18-19.21.23 the author appears to reinterpret and historicise this cultic-mythological imagery, pointing to a specific context in which it receives concrete validity. This means that this pericope needs to be read in an Isaianic (historic) perspective<sup>(106)</sup>. To mention some sporadic connections with Isa, אֶצֶר and חֵסֶן as ‘wealth’ and ‘treasure’ can be related to Isa 2,7: the land of Israel was filled with richness, which could not have saved them (2,20; cf. Jer 20,5), but Jerusalem’s new values will provide secure protection for the city (33,6). The fiery furnace on the mountain of God in 33,14 has other parallels in 31,9 and 30,33<sup>(107)</sup>. The list of Isa 33,15 hints at former iniquities of Israel’s ancestors in 1,15-17.21.23, and it may also contain an inverted allusion to 6,9-11<sup>(108)</sup>. Isa 33,19 referring to the foreign enemy with an unintelligible speech obviously points to 28,11. The ship imagery of 33,21.23, an expression of pride and reliance on one’s own power instead of YHWH, alludes to 2,16. The theme of healing (from sins) in 33,24 reminds us of 1,5-6 and 6,10.

<sup>(103)</sup> MOWINCKEL, *Psalmenstudien*, II, 236; VERMEYLEN, *Isaïe*, I, 435; ROBERTS, “Isaiah 33”, 22-23; BOSSHARD-NEPUSTIL, *Rezeptionen*, 187.

<sup>(104)</sup> M.S. SMITH, *The Ugaritic Baal Cycle* (SVT 55; Leiden 1994) I, 225-234. For the amalgamation of the two locations in the biblical tradition, see SMITH, *Baal*, 232-233. For the waters, cf. also Joel 4,18; Ezek 47,1-12; Zech 14,8.

<sup>(105)</sup> J.J.M. ROBERTS, “Zion in the Theology of the Davidic-Solomonic Empire”, *Studies in the Period of David and Solomon and Other Essays* (ed. T. ISHIDA) (Winona Lake, IN 1982) 101-102.

<sup>(106)</sup> Cf. also GUNKEL, “Jesaja 33”, 194; WASCHKE, “Jesaja 33”, 524.

<sup>(107)</sup> It is questionable that v. 14 would refer to Isa 6,7 (so BERGES, *Jesaja*, 245). In Isa 6 the motif of fire does not appear explicitly. Further, 33,14 alludes as an expansion of the previous pericope to vv. 11-12.

<sup>(108)</sup> KUSTÁR, *Krankheit*, 88; WASCHKE, “Jesaja 33”, 529.

Beside these, the imagery of kingship in Isa 33,13-24 is particularly important. As noted, vv. 17 and 21 presuppose an indirect form of theocracy. The human king appears to be an anti-type of the foreign ruler in several respects. First, the appearance of the new monarch in Jerusalem in v. 17 is contrasted with the disappearance of the oppressors in vv. 18-19<sup>(109)</sup>. Second, characterising the new king as אֲדִיר יְהוָה contrasts him with the Assyrian king, the former אֲדִיר [יהודה] of Isa 10,34 or חֹזֶק וְאִמְץ לְאֲדֹנָי of Isa 28,2 (Isa 28 was also cited by 33,19!). Third, presenting the new king as protective נְהַרִים and יְאֲרִים reminds the reader of Isaiah of Isa 8,7-8, in which Assyria is compared to a mighty river (הַנָּהָר הַעֲצוּמִים וְהַרְבִּיבִים), overflowing all its banks, swirling over and washing away the land of Immanuel. In the above mentioned 28,2.15.17-18, the enemy is a sweeping flood passing through YHWH's country, which feels itself secure without YHWH's protection<sup>(110)</sup>. נְהַרִים and יְאֲרִים may also allude to the Euphrates and the Nile, and implicitly to the northern and southern border of the empire of the new Davidic king<sup>(111)</sup>.

The description of Jerusalem as a royal city compared to a tent (אֹהֶל) shows a link with Isa 4,2-6; 16,4-5 and 32,1-2 (cf. also סֶכֶת דָּוִד in Am 9,11). Isa 4,2-6 combines the imagery of kingship (צֶמַח יְהוָה / פְּרִי הָאָרֶץ) with the protection offered to Zion. Over against the enemy symbolised as a rainstorm (28,2), 4,5-6 speaks about canopy (חֹפֶה), hut (סֶכֶה; cf. Ps 76,2), refuge (מִסְתוֹר) and shelter (מִחֻסָּה; cf. also Isa 25,4; Ps 46,2). In Isa 16,4-5, the king in the tent of David (אֹהֶל) offers protection for refugees. In Isa 32,1-2, the righteous king and his officers are compared to a shelter (סֶהָר) before a rainstorm and to streams of waters (פְּלִיגִימִים) on a dry place.

The secure dwelling alongside a watery place brings Isa 33,6+13-24 particularly close to Isa 32. The scene of destruction in 32,14 is expanded there with the promise of restoration, described in a language close to Isa 33. According to 32,18 the people live in a secure settlement (בְּנוֹהַ שְׁלוֹם) and an untroubled resting place (בְּמִנוּחַת שְׁאֲנוֹת; cf. נֹדָה שְׁאֵן in 33,20). The prosperity of its abode (מִשְׁכָּן; cf. אֹהֶל in 33,20) is to last for ever (עַד-עוֹלָם, 32,17; cf. 33,6.20). In both cases prosperity is the result of צְדָקָה (32,16-17) and both emphasise the presence of great rivers (32,20 | 33,21). These two texts, both formally designed

<sup>(109)</sup> Cf. “you will see” (v. 17), “you will not see” (v. 19).

<sup>(110)</sup> Cf. also Isa 17,12-13; Ps 77,17-20.

<sup>(111)</sup> See Gen 15,18; Deut 11,24; Jos 13,2-7; 2 Sam 8,3; 1 Kgs 4,21.

as reinterpretations of earlier prophecies, probably go back to the same author.

Several arguments were mentioned above which date this text to not long after 539. The topic is the return from exile, but Zion is still the distant land (v. 17). What the returnees will discover in the city will surprise them (vv. 18-19). Vv. 6 and 20 portraying Jerusalem in nomadic pictures, as a tent and a settlement whose security is warranted by YHWH and not by mighty walls, may allude to the period before the rebuilding of the city walls. The fact that the mighty one of YHWH is presented as great rivers is wholly understandable if it addresses people living alongside such rivers in Babylon (Jer 51,13)<sup>(112)</sup>. It was not easy for the deportees established in a country with secure walls and fertile lands to return to a desolated homeland. The purpose of this prophecy may have been exactly to convince Judaeans to go back to Zion. The expectation of the emergence of the new Davidic king on the throne of Jerusalem (vv. 17,21) corresponds to the realities of this early post-539 period.

A final comment should be made on the role of Isa 33 in relation to the formation of the book of Isaiah. As noted in the introduction, Isa 33 is considered a unique chapter in the process of the formation of the book of Isaiah. The limits of this essay do not permit to delve into an elaborate discussion at this point. However, the analysis of Isa 33 above must have made it clear that some previous views regarding the redactional role of Isa 33 need to be revised.

Insofar as there is any relationship between Isa 33 and 56–66, that is not of a nature that it would presuppose the secondary origin of Isa 33 with respect to 56–66<sup>(113)</sup>. It is not less questionable, however, that Isa 33 would have been written as a text bridging Isa 40–55 to 1–32. While it is assumed that Isa 33,24 directly hints at 40,1-2<sup>(114)</sup>, yet it becomes clear at a closer look that the only lexical connection between the two texts is limited to עָנָן. This would certainly be surprising if 33,24 was composed as a deliberate allusion to 40,2. While the date of Isa 33,13-24 would allow interaction with Deutero-Isaianic passages, the lexical relationship is extremely limited, and the connection is mostly confined to common theological ideas, or methods (such as making use of certain cultic literary forms)<sup>(115)</sup>.

<sup>(112)</sup> See also Nah 3,8. Cf. DILLMANN, *Jesaia*, 299; CLEMENTS, *Isaiah*, 270.

<sup>(113)</sup> In contrast to BEUKEN, see, e.g., WILLIAMSON, *Book*, 230-238.

<sup>(114)</sup> WILLIAMSON, *Book*, 225; BERGES, *Jesaja*, 248.

<sup>(115)</sup> Cf. WILLIAMSON, *Book*, 224-229.

Instead, it appears that Isa 33 can be perfectly understood from Isa 1–33. In one way, Isa 33 has always functioned as a closure text. Isa 33,1+4 was written to bring a previous collection of נבִּיאִי-prophecies in Isa 28–32 to a close in the late Assyrian period<sup>(116)</sup>. At a later stage, when this collection was re-evaluated in view of the Babylonian attack on Jerusalem, Isa 33 was updated with vv. 2-3.5.7-12. This revision also expresses awareness of other Isaianic texts, especially Isa 2 and 5, but intertextuality is a rather common literary phenomenon in other נבִּיאִי-texts of Isa 28-32 as well. The final revision in 33,6+13-24 tends to present this chapter in relation to Isa 1, and to make of 33,24 a kind of *inclusio* to 1,5-6<sup>(117)</sup>. It is possible that some passages of Isa 1 and 33,6+13-23 have common origin and that the framing of the First Isaianic collection by Isa 1 and 33 was the work of the same editor<sup>(118)</sup>.

### III. Conclusion

In contrast to the conclusion of most studies on Isa 33, this text presents far too many problems to be considered one literary unit. The textual complexities and the unevenness of this chapter can be solved neither by reckoning with isolate glosses, nor by presuming that Isa 33 follows a liturgical pattern, nor by viewing this text as a compendium of several intertexts.

As in other נבִּיאִי-prophecies in Isa 28–32, we have a short woe-cry at the bases of Isa 33, comprising vv. 1+4. These two verses concentrating on the fall of the unnamed oppressor reflect close theological and formal similarities. The basic idea of this utterance is that YHWH still

<sup>(116)</sup> At this stage other anti-Israel prophecies in 28–32 were also supplemented with anti-Assyrian material.

<sup>(117)</sup> KUSTÁR, *Krankheit*, 96-97. The importance of relating Isa 33 with Isa 1 was especially emphasised by WASCHKE, “Jesaja 33”, 525-529. One has to disagree with him, however, that Isa 33 would also parallel Isa 1 with regard to its structure (see, e.g., the different place of 1,4-5 and 33,24), or that the references to Isa 1 would be more important for Isa 33 than other Isaianic passages (cf. 5,16 and 33,5). The relationship with Isa 1 questions other assumptions that Isa 1 would have been composed as an introduction to Isa 1–66 as a whole.

<sup>(118)</sup> Whether Isa 33 also includes the work of Deutero-Isaiah, is among the possibilities, although — contrary to the suggestion of Williamson — that is hardly possible for the entire pericope. It even remains a question whether he could have been the final editor. The intricate relationship between Isa 33 and 36–39 must now be left out of discussion. See in this regard BOSSHARD-NEPUSTIL, *Rezeptionen*, 187-188; KUSTÁR, *Krankheit*, 92-96.

has some work to do through the enemy, but as soon as he will have finished this work (in the future), the enemy will be destroyed.

The first expansion of this text is a communal lament with a prayer summoning YHWH to take action (vv. 2-3), a presentation of the cause of the lamentation (vv. 5.7-9), and an oracle reacting to the prayer (vv. 10-12). This expansion takes up the former prediction at the moment which is considered the time that YHWH has completed his work in Jerusalem. Unlike it is generally assumed, Isa 33,5 deals with the judgment and not the salvation of Jerusalem. God's intervention in v. 5 is the deserved reaction to Judah's act of breaking the covenant and treaty obligations towards his vassal and implicitly towards his God. This first expansion of 33,1+4 presupposes that Jerusalem is under judgment and looks forward to the destruction of the enemy.

The second expansion of the text is 33,6+13-24. This pericope, presenting an expanded form of entrance liturgies, takes up motifs appearing in vv. 1-12, especially vs. 5, but interprets them in a new way. The theme of the prophecy also shifts from the destruction of the enemy to the topic of who may dwell in Jerusalem, the city about to be restored. The restoration of the city is described in imaginary pictures relying on cultic-mythological traditions. Vv. 17.21 presuppose that there will be a human king in the city, the handsome and mighty one of YHWH, offering security. The text of this layer of the prophecy suggests a distance in space from Zion.

As for the contextual aspect of Isa 33, it was pointed out that 33,1+4 presents close similarities with Assyria-related prophecies and should perhaps be dated to the late Assyrian era. The communal lament which has v. 5 as its central text, gives a renewed understanding of Isa 5,16 and 2,5-22. This text is related to an assault against Jerusalem sometimes around 598 or 587. The final expansion, 33,6+13-24, presents the human king of Jerusalem as an anti-type of the Assyrian monarch, “the strong and mighty one of the Lord” (10,34; 28,2) and “the sweeping flood” (8,7-8; 28,2.15.17-18). The similarities in the description of Jerusalem in 32,14-20 suggest that the two texts may derive from the same author. Isa 33,6+13-24 addresses Jewish people with different attitudes towards YHWH, who still live far away from Zion, whose walls have not yet been built. The disappearance of the enemy and the concern with the return to and dwelling in Jerusalem suggest that this expansion comes from not long after 539 B.C. It probably intended to convince exiles to return to Judah.

Isa 33 always functioned as a closing text — first when concluding

the יחזק-prophecies of the Assyrian period. But with the inclusion of vv. 13-24, it was demarcated as the final prophecy of the First-Isaianic collection. We have no compelling evidence that it would have been designed as a bridge connecting Isa 1-32 with subsequent sections of the developing corpus of Isaiah, namely 40–55 or 40–66.

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#### SUMMARY

In contrast to most opinions concerning Isa 33 this pericope is far too complex to be explained as one coherent literary unit. Isa 33 has a short anti-Assyrian woe-cry at its bases (vv. 1+4), which once closed the woe-cries of Isa 28–32. Vv. 1+4 were supplemented first (around 598 or 587) by a communal lament, vv. 2-3+5+7-12, bringing the idea of the punishment of Judah and the temporised destruction of the enemy in vv. 1+4 further. Second, (shortly after 539) vv. 1-5.7-12 were expanded by a salvation prophecy, vv. 6+13-24, concerning the returnees, the restoration of Jerusalem and the monarchy.