

A Textual Analysis of Isaiah 30

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I. Table of All Variants - Isaiah 30

Reference	MTT	1QIsa ^a	4QIsa ^c	Discussion
Isa 30:1	נָאֵם	נואם		Mater lectionis reflects different pronunciation.
Isa 30:3	לְכַלְמָה:	לכמה		Copying Error
Isa 30:4	כִּי־הִיוּ	כי היה		Difference in number. Significant variant
Isa 30:5	הַבְּאִישׁ הַבִּישׁ	באש		Confusion of aleph. Significant variant.
Isa 30:6	מֵהֶם	ואין מים		Scribal Emendation. Significant variant.
Isa 30:6		וציה		Omission. Significant Variant.
Isa 30:6	יִשְׂאוּ	ישא		Difference in number. Significant variant.
Isa 30:6	חִילָהֶם	אוצרותם		Emendation. Significant Variant.
Isa 30:7	לְזֹאת	לזואת		Mater lectionis – no difference in meaning.
Isa 30:7	רָהֵב הֵם	רהבהם		Significant Variant.
Isa 30:8	כְּתַבָּהּ	כתבהא	כתו]ב	Lack of 3 rd person, sing, fem., pronomial suffix in 4QIsa ^c .
Isa 30:8	אֹתָם	אותם		Significant Variant.
Isa 30:9	שְׂמוֹעַ	לשמוע		Addition of prepositional prefix.
Isa 30:10	מִהַתְלֹת	מתלות	[מחת]ל[ו]ת	Difference in Spelling. Scribal error.
Isa 30:11	סֹרוּ	תסירו	סורו	Difference in Form.
Isa 30:12	וְנִלְוֹז	ותעלוז	ו[נ]ל[וז]	Scribal emendation.
Isa 30:13	הֶעָזֹן	הע{ה}(ו)ן		Uncertain reading.

Isa 30:14	יְחַמְּלוּ	יחמלו		Difference in number. Significant variant.
Isa 30:14	וְלַחֲשׂוֹף	ולחסוף		Mater lectionis – no difference in meaning.
Isa 30:15	בְּשׁוּבָה	בשיבה	בשוב]ה	Difference in Spelling.
Isa 30:16	עַל	אל		Scribal error.
Isa 30:17	הַהָר	הר		Loss of definite article. Significant Variant.
Isa 30:18	יְרוּם	ירים		Qal vs. hiphil form. Significant variant.
Isa 30:19	תִּבְכֶּה	תבכו		Significant variant.
Isa 30:25	תֵּאֱמִינוּ	תיאמינו		Difference in pronunciation.
Isa 30:25	יִבְלִי	יובלי		Difference in pronunciation.
Isa 30:28	לְהִנָּפֵחַ	לנפה		Spelling difference.
Isa 30:28	גוֹיִם	גואים		Mater Lectionis.
Isa 30:28	לְחַיִּי	לוחי(י)		Spelling difference.
Isa 30:29	לְכֶם	לכמה		Spelling difference.
Isa 30:29	הַתְּקַדְּשׁ־ חַג	התקדישו חג		Difference in form. Significant Variant.
Isa 30:31	יִכֶּה	יאכו		Significant variant.
Isa 30:32	מוֹסְדָה	מוסדו		Spelling difference. Significant variant.
Isa 30:33	תִּפְתָּחַה	תפתח		Scribal error.
Isa 30:33	(הוא) [היא]	היה		Scribal emendation. Significant variant.
Isa 30:33	הוֹכֵן	יוכן הכיני		
Isa 30:33	הָעֵמִיק	והעמיקי		Spelling difference.
Isa 30:33	הִרְחַב	הרחיבי		Spelling difference
Isa 30:33	מְדַרְתָּהּ	מדורתה		Mater lectionis.

II. Table of Significant Variants – Isaiah 30

Reference	MTT	1QIsa ^a	Preferred Reading	Translation
Isa 30:5	כל הבאיש כל הבאיש	כלה באש	הביש כל	All are brought <i>to shame</i> because of a people that will not benefit them...
Isa 30:6	מהם	ואין מים	מהם	...a land of distress and pressure, <i>of which comes a lioness, and a lion...</i>
Isa 30:6	ישאו	ישא	ישאו	... <i>they carry their riches...</i>
Isa 30:6	חילהם	אוצרותם	חילהם	riches
Isa 30:7	רהב הם	רהבהם	רהב הם	<i>Rahab who is still.</i>
Isa 30:8	אתם	אותם	אתם	Before them
Isa 30:9	שמוע	לשמוע	שמוע	unwilling <i>to listen</i> to the law of God.
Isa 30:11	סורו	תסירו	סורו	<i>Turn from</i> the way
Isa 30:12	ונלוז	ותעלוז	ונלוז	perverseness
Isa 30:14	יחמל	יחמלו	יחמל	without sparing
Isa 30:15	בשובה	בשיבה	בשובה	returning
Isa 30:17	ההר	הר	ההר	On the top of the mountain...
Isa 30:18	ירום	ירים	ירום	<i>He is exalted</i> to show mercy to you
Isa 30:19	תבכה	תבכו	תבכה	<i>You will weep</i> no more...
Isa 30:25	תאמינו	תיאמינו	תיאמינו	When you turn to the right...
Isa 30:25	יבלי	יובלי	יבלי	Watercourses
Isa 30:29	לכם	לכמה	לכם	You will have a song in the night...
Isa 30:29	התקדש- חג	התקדשו חג	התקדש- חג	As when a feast is sanctified...
Isa 30:31	יכה	יאכו	יכה	he strikes
Isa 30:32	מוסדה	מוסדו	מוסדה	his appointed staff
Isa 30:33	תפתה	תפתח	תפתה	his tophet
Isa 30:33	הוא	היה	הוא	Indeed it [the tophet] is prepared for the king...

	הֵיא			
Isa 30:33	הוֹכֵן	יוֹכֵן הַכִּינִי	הוֹכֵן	It was prepared
Isa 30:33	הַעֲמִיק	והעמיקי	הַעֲמִיק	Made wide

III. Commentary

vs 1

The MT has נאם whereas the 1QIsa^a uses נואם. In regards to the different spelling, Kutscher states that the word was obviously pronounced *num* and not *naum*, “and hence it was immaterial whether the ן was written before or after the root נ...”¹

The MT uses מְנִי whereas the 1QIsa^a uses מַמְנִי. Kutscher states that in Aramaic מני always means מַמְנִי whereas in BH מני may also mean מן – usually in poetical texts. In our case, מַמְנִי and מְנִי mean the same.

vs 4

The MT has כִּי־הָיָה whereas the 1QIsa^a has כִּי הִיא. כִּי הִיא is the antecedent of שָׂרֵיָהּ thus it would seem that 1QIsa^a takes שָׂרֵיָהּ as singular: ‘his prince’. The LXX does not have the possessive but rather the stative: “For there are princes in Hanes, evil messengers.” (Isa 30:4 LXE). The confusion surrounding this verse may be due to uncertainty as to whether the princes and messengers belong to Hezekiah or to Pharaoh. We default to the MT reading of the text as there is no compelling reason to read it according to the DSS or the LXX.

vs 5

The MT *qere* has הַבִּיֵּשׁ (to put to shame) whereas the *ketiv* is הַבְּאִישׁ (to make odious). Kutscher states that באש is sometimes confused with בוש which in Aramaic means ‘bad’.² This may explain why 1QIsa^a amends the text בלה באש which Beuken suggests should be translated as ‘destroyed in fire’.³ This confusion is also reflected in the LXX. It is preferable to go with the *qere* reading הַבִּיֵּשׁ. The infinitive construct form of the word also appears in vs. 3 where it states that the protection of Pharaoh will be לְבִשָּׁתָהּ (for shame). This interpretation is supported by Ibn Ezra who likewise notes that that the aleph is superfluous”⁴

¹ Edward Yechezkel Kutscher, *The Language and Linguistic Background of the Isaiah Scroll (1 Q Is a [Superscript a])*, Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah (Leiden: Brill, 1974). 56

² Ibid. 222

³ Wim Beuken, *Isaiah*, Historical Commentary on the Old Testament (Leuven: Peeters, 2000). 135

⁴ Ibn Ezra translates it “everyone blamed” speaking of those that went down to Egypt.

vs 6

1QIsa^a has בארץ צרה וציה וצוקה. ציה is not in the MT or the LXX.

1QIsa^a has ואין מים in place of מְהֵם in the MT. The MT is difficult to read here as it is not clear what the antecedent for מְהֵם is. Wildberger takes מְהֵם to be a participle form of נהם (growling). In this case מהם is parallel to מְעוֹפְּףִי so that the growling of lions is compared to the flying of serpents.⁵ Beuken argues that the parallelism does not work well, and that in any case, מהם should be in the plural if it refers to both לְבִיא וְלִישׁ. He therefore suggests that מְהֵם refers to the land of distress in which is found lions and lionesses.⁶ The MT is certainly the more difficult reading, but there is no clear proof that the text is corrupted. 1QIsa^a seems to have made an emendation here to smooth the reading.

1QIsa^a has ישא instead of the ישאִי of the MTT. The antecedent for ישאִי may be the messengers and princes mentioned in vs. 3. It is not clear why 1QIsa^a should make it singular. Kutscher mentions this but does not have a solution.⁷

vs 7

The MTT has לְזֹאת whereas 1QIsa^a has לְזוֹאת. It is not clear why the feminine singular demonstrative pronoun is used in both cases. Ibn Ezra suggests that it be translated “to this” – ie. to Jerusalem.

More significantly, the MT has הֵם שְׁבֵתָהּ whereas 1QIsa^a has רַהַבֵּם שֶׁבֶת. Many modern commentaries take רַהַב to be a mythical creature that represents chaos and שֶׁבֶת as its opposite meaning “to cease, or be still.”⁸ It is possible to translate MT without emendation: “Rahav are they, sitting” or “Are they Rahab? Sitting still!”⁹ Another possibility is to amend the text to get הֵם שֶׁבֶתָהּ רַהַב which gives many options for the translator: ie. “Rahav,

⁵ Hans Wildberger, *Isaiah : A Continental Commentary*, 3 vols., vol. 3, Continental Commentaries (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991). in loc.

⁶ Beuken, *Isaiah*. 135

⁷ Kutscher, *The Language and Linguistic Background of the Isaiah Scroll (1 Q Isa[Superscript a])*. 403

⁸ Beuken, *Isaiah*. 134

⁹ John Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah. Chapters 1-39*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1986).

the one who sits”. Irwin takes הַם as ‘roar’ thereby translating the phrase as: “the roaring of Rahab is still”.¹⁰ Ibn Ezra takes שבת to be the infinitive construct of ישב meaning to sit, and הַם as a pronomial suffix of רַהַב. In this case רַהַב means ‘strength’ and the phrase may be translated: “their strength is to sit still”.¹¹ The phrase must then refer to those who stayed in Jerusalem as opposed to those who went down to Egypt to get help or to the Egyptians. The DSS also makes הַם a pronominal suffix of רַהַב. Pronominal suffixes are not usually attached to proper names which makes it unlikely that the scribe of 1QIsa^a understood רַהַב to be a proper name for a monster that personified chaos.

In our opinion, the MT is the better text in this instance. The juxtaposition of שבת alongside רַהַב suggests that there is an intentional play on words. The root שבת offers a better contrast than ישב to רַהַב – a name that appears elsewhere as a symbol of chaos. The MT seems to preserve more archaic language, it is the more difficult reading, and therefore should be preferred over 1QIsa^a.

The MT has אִתָּם whereas 1QIsa^a has אוֹתָם. The difference seems to be between inscribing something in a tablet ‘in their presence’ vs. inscribing ‘them’ in a tablet. The use of אִת with the meaning of ‘before’ is rare, but not unknown. (cf. Gen 20:16b, Mi 6:1; see also BDB אִת || 950 1.c) It is puzzling that כְּתִבָּה is used with לְיָחַד and סִפָּר with חִקָּה. One would have expected it to be the other way around.

vs 9

The MT has the infinitive construct שְׁמוּעַ whereas the DSS adds the prepositional prefix to form לְשִׁמוּעַ. The MT is the more difficult reading and is therefore preferred.

vs 10

The reconstruction of 4QIsa^c has ת[ו]ל[ח]מחח; the MT has מְהַתְּלוֹת; and 1QIsa^a has מתלות. If the root is הַתַּל as suggested by HALOT then the MT preserves the better reading.

¹⁰ Beuken, *Isaiah*. 134

¹¹ Abraham ben Meir Ibn Ezra and M. Friedländer, *The Commentary of Ibn Ezra on Isaiah*, 4 vols. (London,: Pub. by N. Trübner, 1873). 139

vs 11

The MT, 4QIsa^c and 1QIsa^b has סָוֵרוּ whereas 1QIsa^a has the hiphil (?) תסירו. The majority reading סָוֵרוּ is preferred.

vs 12

The MT, 4QIsa^c, and 1QIsa^b have the niph'al participle, masc., sing. form of the root וְנָלוּז – לוּז meaning “intrigue” whereas 1QIsa^a has וְהַעֲלוּז meaning “and you will exult” (HALOT 7036). Wildberger suggests that the 1QIsa^a scribe did not understand the rare word וְנָלוּז whose meaning remains ambiguous. Wildberger states, “It probably means roughly “something perverted, intrigue.”¹²

vs 14

The MTT has the qal, 3rd, masc., sing form יִחַמְלוּ whereas 1QIsa^a has the qal, 3rd, masc. plural form יִחַמְלוּ. 1QIsa^a has וְלַחְסוּף spelled with a ס instead of a ש. מַגְבָּא is spelled מגבה. Wildberger thinks that these are no more than instances of sloppy copying of the text.¹³

vs 15

1QIsa^a has בְּשִׁיבָה instead of בְּשׁוּבָה. The root seems to be שׁוּב. Wildberger notes that constructions such as שִׁיבָה are common in Rabbinic Hebrew. Many have looked for an etymology of שׁוּב that parallels נָחַת. For example Ibn Ezra translates בְּשׁוּבָה as “in rest” with the meaning, “You will find salvation at home, and you need not go down to Egypt.”¹⁴ Wildberger, on the other hand, notes that the traditional meaning of שׁוּב, meaning ‘return’, was in the prophet Isaiah’s lexicon and should be accepted in this instance.¹⁵

vs 17

1QIsa^a lacks the definite article ה before הַר – (ראש ההר vs. ראש הר). This is probably a copying error.

vs 18

לְחַנּוּכָם of the MT and לְחַוּנְכֶם of 1QIsa^a suggests the use of different roots: חוּן (meaning?) vs. חָנַן. לְחַנּוּכָם in the MT is the infinitive construct of חָנַן meaning “to show favor”.

¹² Wildberger, *Isaiah : A Continental Commentary*, 3. 149

¹³ *Ibid.* 149

¹⁴ Ibn Ezra and Friedländer, *The Commentary of Ibn Ezra on Isaiah*. 141

¹⁵ Wildberger, *Isaiah : A Continental Commentary*, 3.

1QIsa^a has ירים instead of ירום. The י and the ו are easily confused. In this case, the MT has the better reading.

vs 19

MT has the qal, yiktol, 2nd person, masc., sing verb תבִּכֶּה preceded with the infinitive absolute בִּכּוּ. 1QIsa^a has the plural form תבכו instead of תבִּכֶּה - a logical emendation. Wildberger notes that, “this manuscript frequently employs the plural verb when used with a collective noun.”¹⁶

vs 20

MT has יכִּנֶּה singular which does not agree with the plural subject מוֹרֵיךְ. This suggests that מוֹרֵיךְ should be repointed to make it singular. 1QIsa^a has the plural form indicating that it understood מוֹרֵיךְ to be plural. The MT is the favored reading on the basis of lexio difficilior.

vs 21

Wildberger suggests that תִּאֲמִינוּ in the MT should be repointed to conform with תיאמינו of 1QIsa^a. Ibn Ezra likewise notes that the א is frequently substituted for the י.¹⁷

vs 23

וְהָיָה of the MT and 1QIsa^b is the more difficult reading and should therefore be favored instead of יהיה of 1QIsa^a. In instances where the first bicolon stands in casus pendens relationship to what follows, it is common to find a ו.¹⁸

כַּר נְרָחַב in the MT functions as a ‘verbal accusative’.¹⁹ כר נרהב in 1QIsa^a is a scribal error as כר נרהב ‘stormy’ doesn’t make sense. Ibn Ezra suggested the text should be amended to ככר which means ‘broad plain’.²⁰ However, כר is found elsewhere with the meaning of ‘meadow’.

¹⁶ Ibid. 167

¹⁷ Ibn Ezra and Friedländer, *The Commentary of Ibn Ezra on Isaiah*. 142

¹⁸ Wildberger, *Isaiah : A Continental Commentary*, 3. 168

¹⁹ Ibid. 168

²⁰ Ibn Ezra and Friedländer, *The Commentary of Ibn Ezra on Isaiah*. 142

vs 25

1QIsa^a has יובלי מים whereas the MT and 1QIsa^b has יבלי־מים. Notscher took יובלי מים in 1QIsa^a as a qal plural construct participle (carriers of). Wildberger disagrees, noting that there is no instance of the use of the qal with the root יבל.²¹ The context suggests that ‘streams of water’ is the better reading.

vs 28

1QIsa^a has לנפה whereas the MT has the noun לנהנפה. The loss of the ה in Q^a also occurs in the MT. It seems to be case of the hiphil prefix merging with the preposition ל.²²

vs 29

התקדישו in 1QIsa^a – “they sanctified the festival,” whereas the MT has the construct התקדישו־תג.²³

vs 31

1QIsa^a יאבו smooth’s the reading by adding a 3rd, masc. sing. pronomial suffix. The MT lacks the direct object. Alternatively, it may be possible to read the ה in יבה of the MT as a 3rd, masc. sing. pronomial suffix. (see Wildberger – below vs. 32)

vs 32

1QIsa^a has מוסדו whereas the MT has מוסדה. The ה suffix in this instance should be read as a masculine pronominal suffix in line with 1QIsa^a. Likewise, the ktuv reading בה that follows נלחם in the MT.²⁴ The MT preserves a more archaic form and is therefore the preferred reading.

vs 33

1QIsa^a has תפתח whereas the MT has תפתח־ה. The inclusion of the ה is not expected as the word is spelled תפת elsewhere. Wildberger lists several suggestions that have been put forward to explain the ה: Gesenius suggests it was a paragogic ה; Ges-Buhl suspects that the ה is an interrogatory particle, to be taken with the following word. Wildberger argues that

²¹ Wildberger, *Isaiah : A Continental Commentary*, 3. in. loc.

²² Ibid. 186

²³ Ibn Ezra and Rashi, Targum Jonathan: “This rejoicing will come to you on the eve of Passover.” Ibn Ezra and Friedländer, *The Commentary of Ibn Ezra on Isaiah*. Note on pg. 144

²⁴ Wildberger, *Isaiah : A Continental Commentary*, 3.

this is still another example of a variant third masculine singular suffix.²⁵ (see vs. 32 above)
As noted above, this latter explanation also makes sense of the ה in מוֹסְפָהּ. It also agrees
with the ktuv reading of the MT הוּא that follows.

²⁵ Ibid. in. loc.

IV. Bibliography

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