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Homiletical Studies

ISAIAH 66:18

Many of the readers of this journal are currently preparing sermons on the sequence of pericopes which *Lutheran Worship* denominates as Series C, in which verses 18-23 of Isaiah 66 comprise the reading from the Old Testament which is appointed to the Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost. The undersigned in no way wishes to encourage the use in the main service of the week of the three-year series provided in *Lutheran Worship* or any other modern sequence of gospels and epistles in such a context. He would, on the contrary, continue to urge, on various grounds, fidelity to the pericopal tradition inherited from the ancient church by the church of the reformation and modified only slightly by the Blessed Reformer of the Church (as preserved in *The Lutheran Hymnal*), if one is speaking specifically of the gospels and epistles to be read in the main (eucharistic) service of the week. No comparable series of readings, on the other hand, from the Old Testament was either handed down from the ancient church or bestowed on us by the Blessed Reformer; nor, indeed, is there such a program of readings from the New Testament to be used in all the possible additional offices of any given week. In such cases, therefore, even such a traditionalist as the undersigned is able, with consistency, to make use of any pericope drawn from the region of Holy Scripture desired.

In terms of the traditional ecclesiastical year, to be sure, Isaiah 66:18-23 would seem to resonate most closely to the theme of the Twelfth Sunday after the Feast of the Holy Trinity (corresponding to the Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost), which (in this writer's view) is faithful witness to Jesus Christ. The evangelistic impetus, nevertheless, of the verses at hand relates with equal necessity, logically speaking (as an essential corollary to the general principle), to the theme (in this writer's view) of the Thirteenth Sunday of the Triune Season, namely, true love of others. The epistolary passage which *Lutheran Worship* appoints in Series C to the Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost (Hebrews 12:18-24) is, in fact, a useful one in understanding the ordinary significance of "Jerusalem" and its synonyms in such messianic prophecies as Isaiah 66:18-23. If, on the other hand, the prophecy is to be interpreted rightly, more caution must be exercised in relating it to the passage from the gospels listed in the same place (Luke 13:22-30), since verses 25-28 of Luke, unlike the particular verses of Isaiah studied here, speak specifically of eschatological condemnation, which, however, is certainly the final result of rejecting the salvation now being extended to everyone on earth through the gospel of Jesus Christ (in line with verses 22-24 and 29-30 of Luke 13).

Canto 7 of Isaiah (which embraces the chapters which we now

enumerate as 58 through 66), argues that the Lord is the only reasonable object of faith because, in addition to all the points previously presented, He gives a blessed future to His people in time and eternity. This future of bliss was to come, predicted Isaiah, in the messianic age (1.) through the repentance of Israel (chapters 58-60), (2.) through the word of the Messiah Himself (chapters 61:1-63:6), and (3.), again (in chiasmic fashion), through the repentance of Israel (chapters 63:7-66:24). The final three chapters of Isaiah speak of this Jewish repentance in terms (a.) of its necessity by reason of Israel's sinfulness (chapters 63:7-64:12), (b.) of its only alternative as being condemnation (chapter 65), and (c.), finally, of its circumstances (chapter 66 itself). The final chapter of Isaiah, then, predicts at least seven centuries beforehand the starkly contrasting circumstances which would attend the giving of a blessed future to the people of God through the repentance of ancient Israel. The three main sections of the chapter successively describe these circumstances as (1.) the rejection of Israel as a nation in a politico-racial sense (verses 1-4), (2.) the consolation of Israel, at the same time, in the sense of a repenting and believing minority (verses 5-11), and (3.) the evangelization of all peoples throughout the world (verses 12-24). The second section is divided from the first by the imperative clause *shim'u dbhar-yhwh* (verse 5: "Hear the word of the LORD"), while the third section begins, like the first, with *ko 'amar yhwh* (verses 1 and 12: "thus has the LORD said").

In this last and longest section Isaiah carries through the triadic schema at work here in this whole unit of his book to distinguish three more specific subsections which follow one on the other in terms of chronological reference. The first of these subsections (verses 12-17) connects the third section of Isaiah 66 logically with the previous two by locating the initiation of the evangelization of the world specifically in the spiritual minority of Israel which God would firstly create and nourish through the gospel (verses 12-14c) and then separate from the unrepenting majority of Israel by destroying the nation as such (verses 14d-17). These are predictions which have now been completely fulfilled in the course of the first century A.D. by such events as the foundation of the church of the New Testament in the midst of the Jews (including, above all, the sainted apostles of our Lord and His Blessed Virgin-Mother) and the destruction of Jerusalem by the armies of Rome. The final subdivision of the section, on the other hand, consists in but one verse (24), following the final *'amar yhwh* ("the LORD has said") which ends verse 23. This last subsection possesses, however, an importance quite disproportionate to its length by virtue of its closure of both chapter and book. The conclusion

to Isaiah brings us, clearly, all the way up to the end of the age of evangelism, which is to say to the general resurrection of both believers and unbelievers and the final separation of the believers from the unrepenting "violators" (*happosh'im*) who are doomed to eternal damnation.

The verses, then, which come in between 17 and 24 relate to the centuries and possibly (if the Lord tarry much longer) the millennia which intervene between the foundation of the church of the New Testament and the concluding day of history, which is to say the ongoing era of the New Testament in which we even now are living. Verses 18-23, in other words, speak of the evangelization of all the earth which began with the first coming of Messiah, is still in progress now, and will continue until His second coming. These verses, indeed, are speaking, in consequence, of an evangelization in which we too are to be engaged. In preaching on these verses, then, one could, by way of law, remind the congregation and oneself of the sacred duty and privilege of all believers to share (in various ways) the gospel of Christ Jesus with those who are not yet His. One would then proclaim again that very same gospel which has already gathered all who are now His to the Lord from out of all the peoples of this world. The preacher would wish, however, in such a sermon to make special use of the particular concepts and terms which are employed by Isaiah in the verses at hand. The general thesis of the six penultimate verses of Isaiah is enunciated concisely in verse 18, namely, the gathering of people to the Lord from all nations and languages in the days of the Messiah to come. We may assume, indeed, that it is specifically God the Son who is speaking in all six of the verses before us. He is the Lord who is cited four times (by means of the tetragrammaton which is reserved to the One True God), and to Him are all the pronouns and suffixes of the first person in these verses to be referred. For the general axiom of the synodical fathers remains worthy of all acceptance—that, whenever God speaks in Holy Scripture, the speaker is to be identified more specifically as God the Son unless the context or analogy of faith indicates that the passage is an instance of God the Father or (more rarely) the Holy Spirit bearing witness to the Son. Such an assumption is, among various considerations, already the necessary consequence of the continuing role of the Second Person of the Godhead as the one who ordinarily serves as the spokesman of the Holy Three when the Creator would address His creatures (as the undersigned has argued elsewhere).

Verse 18 is certainly the most difficult of the six verses syntactically by virtue of the first four words which involve an instance of *casus pendens*,

an uncommon usage of the common root *bw'*, and two intervening unattached nouns. Many and varied, in consequence, have been the interpretations of the verse from ancient times on, nor have modern scholars scrupled to simplify matters by altering the text. A. E. Cowley, for example, calls Isaiah 66:18, whatever else it may be, "certainly corrupt" (GKC, 506, section 167:3[c]). The editors, likewise, of the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* propose the deletion of the first two nouns *ma'asēhem ūmachshbhōthēhem* ("their works and their thoughts") and the emendation of *bā'āh* to *bā'* (BHS, 779). There are, however, no variations in the manuscripts of the original text to allow such simplifications of Isaiah 66:18. In actuality, while admittedly unusual, the syntax and diction of the verse are not only explicable, but also clearly of exegetical significance, precisely by reason of being out of the ordinary (although, unfortunately, even those commentators who see the rarities here as understandable still say nothing of Isaiah's special rationale in using them).

The first problem in verse 18 pertains to the relationship between the first and fourth words of the original text, *w'ānōkhī* ("I" preceded by a conjunction) and *bā'āh* ("coming"). The initial pronoun, technically speaking, is an example of *casus pendens* or nominative absolute, which Bruce Waltke and Michael O'Connor define as "a grammatical element isolated outside a clause, usually at the start of the clause" (WO, 692a). The emphatic position of the pronoun (the singular of the first person) at the beginning of the sentence stresses the definitive role of the Messiah Himself (since He is the one speaking) as the empowering force which is ultimately behind the process of evangelization described in verses 18 and following. The conjunction attached to a pronoun at the beginning of a clause is most often adversative, and it is certainly so in this case. The initial *w'ānōkhī*, then, requires a translation of this kind: "But as for Me." The idea is that the Messiah will in no way be deterred from His goal of a worldwide people by the rebellion of the majority of Israel and His necessary destruction, in consequence, of Israel *qua* nation (verses 14d-17). The destruction, indeed, of Israel which was required by the terms of the Mosaic Covenant would, in fact, so far from hindering, actually serve the plan of God to spread the benefits of His new testament to the men of all nations (in the fashion described in Romans 9-11 and elsewhere). The Authorized Version, therefore, and its various revisions (RSV, NASB, NKJV) fall short of the requirements of both common usage and context when they translate the conjunction as "for," and the New International Version strays further afield when it begins verse 18

with "and."

The connection, moreover, which many versions, both ancient and modern, forge between *w'ānōkhī* and *bā'āh* is quite impossible grammatically. The Revised Standard Version translates "I am coming" and the NIV "I am about to come." The RSV at least provides some idea of the original text in a footnote, whereas the NIV contents itself with this allegation: "The meaning of the Hebrew for this clause is uncertain." Already in ancient times, indeed, the Septuagint, Syriac Version, and Vulgate had translated in something of this fashion, and the paraphrase in the Targum had run along the same lines (more defensibly by virtue of its paraphrastic purpose). In actuality, however, the form *bā'āh* is feminine in gender and is also clearly separated from *w'ānōkhī* by the phrase *ma'asēhem ūmachshbhōthēhem* ("their works and their thoughts") to ensure that *bā'āh* should not be directly predicated of *w'ānōkhī*. There is, in fact, no feminine subject available to *bā'āh*, so that the feminine verb is clearly used here (as it frequently is) as tantamount to the neuter which Hebrew lacks and, more specifically, in an impersonal sense. The form *stricte dictu* (speaking only of the consonants and vowels in the massoretic text) could be construed as a perfect of the third person. In such a case, clearly, *bā'āh* would represent the variety of emphatic future which is called the "prophetic perfect" (*perfectum propheticum*). The basic idea of the prophetic perfect is to emphasize the definite future occurrence of something which God has already determined to do; the thing is as good as done. The translation, therefore, would be in this instance "it shall come about" (as opposed to the simple indicative "will"). Such was presumably the thinking behind the wording of the Authorized Version at this juncture, "it shall come," which the New King James Version modifies to "it shall be."

The massorettes, however, have placed the tone on the ultima rather than the penultimate syllable of *bā'āh*, making the form *milra'* rather than *mil'ēl*. They thereby identify the aspect as participial rather than perfective, and there is no good reason to call the traditional accentuation into question. Although, now, the participle may be used to indicate imminence (to say that something is about to happen), the basic idea of the participle is continuation of action, and here certainly there is no idea of a prophecy to be fulfilled in the immediate future. The point of using the participle is rather to stress the continuous and ineluctable approach, however long the intervening time might prove to be, of the gathering of which verse 18 speaks (the incorporation of people of all nationalities into the church of the New Testament which would, in fact, commence no

sooner than seven hundred years following the inclusion of this prophecy in the Book of Isaiah). In the end, therefore, the participle in verse 18 implies virtually as much as would a prophetic perfect the inevitable realization of the purposes of God, especially when it is amplified by the prophetic perfects which follow it in verses 19 and 20. A close paraphrase would be "the time is coming" (as the word is, in fact, rendered by the New American Standard Bible), since the impersonal use of *bā'āh* in all probability arises from the very common use of various forms of *bw'* with such temporal nouns as *yōm* ("day") and *'ēth* ("time") to prophesy future developments (BDB, 97b-99b; KBR, I, 112b-114b; TWOT, I, 93b-95b; TDOT, II, 38-49). Isaiah 39:6, for instance, employs the phrase "days are coming" which subsequently increases in frequency; and in Jeremiah 51:33 *bā'āh*, accented as the feminine perfect of *bw'*, is predicated of *'ēth*: "yet a little while and the time of her harvest shall come." The impersonal use of *bw'* (without such nouns) is rare, to be sure, but can be found elsewhere in the TaNaK. In Isaiah 27:6, for example, the plural participle *habbā'im* occurs adverbially to mean "in the times to come" (although the AV and its revisions unfortunately obscure the meaning of the word). Ezekiel, indeed, uses *bā'āh* itself in 39:8, "'Behold, it is coming and it shall be done,' is the oracle of my Lord, the LORD, 'that is the day of which I have spoken.'" The parallelism in the latter verse between *bā'āh* (again accented as a participle) and the feminine perfect of *hyh* provides, significantly, the same complementary relationship between the continuity of the participle and the definiteness of the prophetic perfect which we have already seen operative in verses 18-20 of Isaiah 66.

The question remains, however, as to why the Messiah should make His promise through Isaiah in this unusual way, saying "as for Me, the time is coming to gather" rather than simply stating "as for Me, I am coming to gather." Both He Himself, certainly, and the prophets in speaking of Him predicate forms of *bw'* of Him directly in so many passages that "the Coming One" became in time an alternative title of the Messiah (Psalm 118:26; Matthew 11:3; Luke 7:19-20). The impersonal use of *bw'* in this case, however, is explained by the following three verses. The conjunction, indeed, beginning verse 19 is clearly intended to begin a more specific explanation of that which is stated in quite general terms in verse 18 (so that the strong *waw* should be translated "and so" rather than being reduced to a mere "and," as in the AV, RSV, and NASB, or being omitted altogether, as in the NIV and NKJV). Verses 19 and 20 enunciate explicitly (as verse 21 also implies) that the Messiah would evangelize the

whole earth not directly, in His own visible and audible person, but rather indirectly, through the testimony of mortal messengers. The process of evangelism which, of course, the Messiah initiates and empowers is, nevertheless, predicated of others in the third person plural. The messengers employed are subsequently identified as the Messiah's church in general (verses 19-20) and, in particular, His public ministers (verse 21); but the point is here simply that the Messiah uses the impersonal form *bā'āh* to incorporate them as His chosen instruments in His evangelization of the world.

The second big problem in verse 18, in the opinion of the commentators, lies in the phrase which intervenes between *w'ānōkhī* and *bā'āh*, namely, *ma'asēhem ūmachshbhōthēhem*. The semantic significance of the two nouns is clear to everyone: "their works and their thoughts." It is the syntactic relation of the phrase to the verse in general which is regarded as so problematic. Some identify the verse, by virtue of the phrase in question, as being an example of anacoluthon, "the change from a construction which has been already begun to one of a different kind" which Cowley connects especially "with long parentheses, either because the speaker has either lost sight of the beginning of his sentence, or for the sake of clearness purposely makes a new beginning" (GKC, 505; section 167:2[b]). In this verse, of course, it is scarcely conceivable that the Messiah should have lost sight of the beginning of His sentence, nor would the parenthesis formed by two words be very long in any case. Franz Delitzsch, who calls the first three words of verse 18 "a harsh ellipsis," identifies the supposed ellipsis as an example of aposiopesis, which Cowley defines as "the concealment or suppression of entire sentences or clauses, which are of themselves necessary to complete the sense, and therefore must be supplied from the context" (GKC, 505; section 167:1[a]). Delitzsch ends up by this route expounding the clause thus: "and I, their works and their thoughts (I shall know how to punish)" (II, 508). Already in ancient times the Targum and the Syriac Version, as well as some forms of the Septuagint (as witnessed by Codex Sinaiticus and others), had charted a similar path which has subsequently been followed by the Authorized Version and all its revisions (RSV, NASB, and NKJV) with the insertion of "know": "I know their works and their thoughts." Although E. J. Young evinces the same thinking with his paraphrase, "inasmuch as I know their works and their thoughts" (III, 531), there is, in fact, no need of any additional verb. Even less acceptable is H. C. Leupold's way of treating the phrase, in effect, as a second *casus pendens*, so as to connect the two nouns with *bā'āh* despite the lack of

agreement in both gender and number: "their deeds and their thoughts have come to my attention" (II, 376). A second nominative absolute, moreover, would be needlessly confusing here; nor is there any parallel to such a use of *bā' dāh* elsewhere (as there is to the way in which it has been explained above). August Pieper comes close the mark when he identifies the phrase as "an adverbial accusative describing a condition or circumstance," but he still misses the target when he specifies the precise nature of the adverbial relation as one of means (697). He understands the Lord as saying here that the gentiles would see His glory by His "rebuke" of the thoughts and works of the apostate majority of Israel, "through His terrible judgment upon the rebellious members of His own chosen people" (*ibid.*). The same idea is reflected in the rendition of the NIV: "because of their actions and their imaginations."

As appears also from the "imaginings" of the NIV, the common assumption of modern exegesis is the necessary sinfulness of the "works" and "thoughts" in question, which the moderns then generally proceed to equate with the rebellious thoughts and deeds of Israel in particular. Both of these words are elsewhere, however, ascribed to God as well as men, and there is no necessity to invest either of them with any pejorative connotation in verse 18 (BDB, 795b-796a; 364a-b). Nor is there any need to refer the pronominal suffixes on the two nouns (translated as "their") back to the Jewish apostates of verses 14-17. Here in verses 18-21, in fact, none of the plurals of the third person (whether of suffixes, verbs, or nouns) are restricted to the "sons of Israel" except in the analogy of 20b, which assumes, indeed, that the preceding and ensuing cases are inclusive of people of all nationalities. Equally comprehensive is the scope of *zar'akhem* in verse 22 and of *khol-bāsār* in verse 23. Once the aforesaid untextual assumptions have been cleared away, one can find his way through verse 18 much more easily. The two initial nouns can be construed, quite simply, as adverbial accusatives of specification (in this writer's terminology), to circumscribe the particular sphere of reference in which the action described in the following clause is to take place. The most appropriate option here of the various words and phrases which Cowley suggests as common equivalents in English of the adverbial accusative in Hebrew would be "with regard to" the thing denoted (GKC, 372-376; section 118; especially 374; section 118:5[m]). Waltke and O'Connor (more explicitly than Cowley) use the phrase "accusative of state" to mean a substantive (or adjective or participle) which "specifies a feature of the verb's subject or object at the time of the verbal action" (while noting the usual indefiniteness of such accusatives [WO, 169-173;

section 10.2.2; especially 171; section 10.2.2d]). An example of a similar accusative with a pronominal suffix can be found in 1 Kings 15:23, where Asa in old age "became sick with regard to his feet," which, translated more idiomatically, becomes "was diseased in his feet" (KJV). The point, now, in Isaiah 66 relates to the kind of gathering which is there assured as something yet coming. It was not, then, in regard to geographical location that the Lord would gather people together of "all nations and tongues," as the chiliasts so often suppose when such language is used in the prophets. Men would, to the contrary, be gathered to the Lord in regard to their actions and, above all, their thoughts. The placing of *machshbhōthēhem* after *ma'asēhem* creates a sense of climax as one moves back of human actions to the thoughts which produce them, in this case back of the Christian life of sanctification to the faith in Jesus Christ through which He justifies individual people.

No basis remains, in consequence, to the conclusion so common in modern times that verse 18 is speaking of the revelation of the "glory" of God in His condemnation of Israel or of the world in general, whether in historical terms or eschatological. The phraseology utilized here, in fact, whereby people "come" and so "see" the "glory" of the Lord, is used elsewhere by Isaiah of coming to faith in the Messiah, nor do any of his prophecies of the Messiah in particular make a connection directly between *kābhōdh* and condemnation. Such a connection is, of course, legitimate and is explicitly made elsewhere in Holy Scripture, but the *usus loquendi* of Isaiah in particular, embracing so many instances of *kābhōdh* as it does, is due its own special consideration. Isaiah contains, in fact, more instances of *kābhōdh* than any other sacred book except the Psalter; and the section of Isaiah where the instances are most numerous is the final canto formed, as we have seen, by chapters 58-66. It seems, indeed, that Isaiah 66 in particular contains more instances of *kābhōdh* than any other chapter in Holy Scripture, three of the five times occurring here in verses 18 and 19 (Mandelkern, I, 528d-529d). Already, however, in the first edition of his book and in the first lustrum of his career Isaiah had consoled the penitents in Judah with a promise of Messiah commencing thus: "In that day shall the Branch of the LORD be for beauty and for glory" (4:2). The word *kābhōdh* recurs, indeed, only three verses on: "over all the glory will be a canopy" (verse 5). Three decades later, midway through his book and career, in the prophecy to which the Coming One Himself appealed as proof of His arrival (Matthew 11:3-5; Luke 7:20-22) people rejoice (35:2) and are given strength and confidence (verses 3-4) on this ground: "they will see the glory of the LORD, the

majesty of our God" (verse 2). Seeing the glory of the Lord is in this case clearly the same as the saving faith in the messianic ransom which is described in verse 10.

The noun *kābhōdh* recurs a full dozen times in the final canto of Isaiah in one form or another but is always connected with the salvation to be won by the Messiah (58:8; 59:19; 60:1, 2, 13; 61:6; 62:2; 66: 11, 12, 18, 19 [twice]). Even 59:19, "from the west will they fear the name of the LORD and His glory from the rising of the sun," must, in accord with the general use of *yr'* in such predications, be taken as a prophecy of international faith in the Messiah to come. Of special significance is Isaiah 60:1-2 since a form of *r'h* is, as here in 66:18, connected with "the glory of the LORD"; and the *kābhōdh-yhwh* is clearly there the saving work of the Messiah which is "seen" by faith in the message which those who are already believers share with those who were previously living in the darkness of unbelief. The following verse provides confirmation: "Nations shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." It is worth recalling that the noun *kābhōdh* has a much more comprehensive significance than the English "glory." The verbal root *kbd* signifies "be heavy, weighty"—originally in a physical sense and, ordinarily in classical Hebrew, in some mental sphere of meaning (BDB, 457a-458a; KB, 418b-419b). As with *kābhōdh* in particular, so in the use of its lexical family as a whole, Isaiah again comes in second only to the Psalter—and a very close second, with sixty-three instances as opposed to sixty-four (TWOT, I, 426a). The non-physical denotations of *kbd* would include the idea, associated especially with the *niphal* and *piel*, of "being weighty in the sense of being noteworthy or impressive," instances of which are commonly translated as "be honorable" and "give honor," "be glorious" and "glorify" (TWOT, I, 426b). Cognates include the adjective *kābhēdh* with a basic meaning of "heavy" and two nouns, one masculine (occurring four times) and one feminine (a *hapax legomenon*), which are used of "heaviness" in a physical sense (BDB, 458a; 458b; 458b; KB, 419b-420a; 420a), none of these words having any connotation of "honor" or "glory" at all.

Although, now, Francis Brown lists no passage in which a physical sense of "heaviness" is to be imputed to *kābhōdh*, Ludwig Koehler with good reason so regards Isaiah 22:24, although, of course, the usage occurs in the course of an allegory (BDB, 458b-459b; KB, 420b-422a). The basic significance, however, of *kābhōdh* in the TaNaK is "weightiness" in a mental sense, pertaining to the impression which someone or something imposes on others or, at any rate, ought to impose. Should we attempt to

find one single word in English which would correspond to *kābhōdh*, the closest in meaning would perhaps be "impressiveness," although such a choice obviously lacks the dramatic color of *kābhōdh* or its traditional translation as "glory." Thus, as Gerhard von Rad observes, "If in relation to man *kābhōdh* denotes that which makes him impressive and demands recognition, whether in terms of material possessions or striking *gravitas*, in relation to God it implies that which makes God impressive to man, the force of self-manifestation" (TDNT, II, 238 [238-242]). To speak more precisely, in fact, the phrase *kābhōdh-yhwh* and its equivalents (such as the *kbhōdhī* here) comes to have as its *usus loquendi* the external manifestation of the attributes of the One True God, which are all, of course, truly glorious beyond compare. The divine nature embraces, nevertheless, attributes which fall outside the semantic field which is ordinarily marked off by the word "glory" in English. For the attributes of God include, of course, not only "majesty" and "magnificence" and "effulgence of heavenly . . . splendour" and "exaltation" (COD, 522a-b), nor only, indeed, changeless eternity, omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence, justice, and holiness, but also benevolence, faithfulness, mercy, and, yes, grace and love (Exodus 34:6-7; 1 John 4:8). In the New Testament, too, the significance of *kābhōdh* has completely replaced the original conception of *doxa* which is witnessed in the classics (TWOT, I, 427b). As Gerhard Kittel observes (although failing to capture the quintessence of *doxa*), "the word is used" in the New Testament "in a sense for which there is no Greek analogy whatever" (TDNT, II, 237 [232-237, 242-255]).

Since, in line with the remarks above on the role of the Son as spokesman of the Triune God, the attributes of God are manifested fully in Jesus Christ alone, the special association in the New Testament between *doxa* and the Word become flesh comes as no surprise. Thus, of Him does the Apostle John testify: "we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (1:14, as elaborated by 17-18). The concepts, indeed, of glory and glorification are connected, not only with His miracles and state of exaltation, but also with His humiliation and passion (e.g., John 13:31 and 17:1). Such a usage is feasible and, indeed, reasonable by virtue of the supreme manifestation in the vicarious satisfaction of the divine attributes of holy justice, on the one hand, and gracious love, on the other. Such a realization, however, of the inextricable connection between the "glory" of God and the Messiah begins not in the New Testament but already in the Old Testament in two related ways. The theophanies, in the first

place, in which the Messiah appeared before His incarnation to the people of the Old Testament, are sometimes called the *kābhōdh-yhwh* or some variation thereon (e.g., Ezekiel 1:28 and 10:4). Even more importantly, however, the prophecies of the Messiah to come as the Word made flesh often, as here in Isaiah 66, denominate Him or His work or His word as, in the fullest sense possible, "the glory of the Lord."

The foregoing exegetical considerations result in the following rendition of verse 18 of Isaiah 66: "But as for Me, the time is coming, with regard to their works and their thoughts, to gather all of the nations and tongues, and so shall they come and so shall they see My glory." The "tongues" which translate the absolute plural of *lāshōn* denominate the various linguistic groups which are sometimes coterminous with the "nations" of the world, but may as easily constitute subdivisions or connections of such nationalities (BDB, 546a-b [section 2]). The use of such terminology implies, for one thing, that the "nations" here are not to be restricted to the gentiles, but are to be understood as including the Jews as well. For, even so, all of the languages of the world (which is the idea conveyed by the article prefixed to "tongues") include the Hebrew and Aramaic—as well as the Hellenistic Greek—in which the Messiah Himself would address the Jewish disciples who composed the nucleus of the church of the New Testament. The general thesis of the six penultimate verses of Isaiah is, then, as said above, stated concisely in verse 18, namely, the gathering of people to the Lord from all nations and languages in the days of the Messiah to come. Verse 19 reiterates this thesis in more elaborate terms which explicate, as intimated before, the more general phraseology of verse 18. Each of the following verses extrapolate some particular corollary from the general principle: spiritual purity (verse 20), special service (verse 21), eternal life (verse 22), and corporate worship (verse 23). The constraints of space, however, preclude the discussion of these verses from these pages at this time; a full exposition, therefore, although already complete, will have to be postponed to the future or published elsewhere.

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