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The Burden of Babylon. A Study Of Isaiah 13:2-14:23.

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[INAUTHENTIC MEANS IT COMES FROM ANOTHER TIME and another author than the text itself indicates, (Is. 13:2-14:23.) The clear words, "This is what Isaiah, the son of Amoz, saw concerning Babyon" (13:1) are said *not* to reflect the actual situation. [Isaiah 13:2-14:23 is considered a late insert into the book and thus inauthentic.] Even the rubric in 13:1 is not reliable, but is an even later insertion. Many other pericopes in the book of Isaiah have suffered similar fates. The origin and the composition of the prophetic books are still questions of Biblical scholarship. There are many difficulties. Part of the problem is establishing a clear chronological and logical outline, which should be evident in anything written with a purpose. Another problem is reconciling the contents with the situation of the prophet, alleged to be the author. Various theories have been put forth to explain the form of the prophetic books. The most common theories have taken as their point of departure two different fundamental assumptions: 1.) The book, from the beginning, was appreciably less extensive, though the content was clearly organized. Later, through many additions and repeated revisions, it acquired its present form. 2.) The book has come into existence by the successive expansion and combination of smaller collections of oracles originally independent of each other. The result is the product of a long evolution.

Thus it is assumed that the present form and content of the prophetic books is the result of a long process of development which culminated in an editorial revision at a much later time, and they are not works for which the prophets themselves are responsible. However, scholars have not been able to agree about how, for example, the developmental history of the book of Isaiah should be presented. Many different reconstructions have been suggested.

ISAIAH 1-39

For a long time Isaiah 1-39, the so-called 'First Isaiah,' was considered as a genuine product of Isaiah. Now Biblical scholars have complicated the picture by holding that Isaiah 1-39 contains a whole list of late interpolations and revisions. Thus today the generally accepted authentic sections are fewer than those considered inauthentic, at least according to some scholars. For this reason Is 1-39 is no longer dated in Isaiah's time, about 700 B.C. The date for the final redaction of the text is about the 5th century B.C., significantly after the time that is customarily given for Is 40-55 and 56-66 (about 550 and 500 B.C., respectively). Because of this change, how can one explain the fact that Is 40-55 and 56-66 existed as independent sections for a hundred years before Is 1-39 assumed its final form and then was joined to just this book?

THE BABYLON ORACLE. IS 13:2-14:23

Before going into the questions of the composition and authenticity of the book of Isaiah, I have found it appropriate in my dissertation, *The Burden of Babylon*, to analyze just this one passage. It serves as a point of departure for the dissection of the book of Isaiah. Any attempts showing that many sections of Isaiah were added to this book long after the prophet Isaiah's own time have great consequences for understanding the origin of the prophetic literature. Doubts about the reliability of the Biblical texts are increased. If the prophecy against Babylon has no basis for its claim that it comes from the prophet Isaiah (13:1), then we have demonstrated that there was no hesitation to ascribe to a great prophet a text which had been composed by some later theologian or prophet. But if, on the other hand, one can demonstrate that Is 13:2-14:23 does not come from an author later than Isaiah, and in fact such a hypothesis is without basis in fact and untrue, this in turn has consequences for a large number of other alleged late datings.

THE HEBREW TEXT

The point of departure for more exactly determining the origin and authenticity of the text is certainly an analysis of the Hebrew text. Are there various manuscripts or early translations of the text which show that we cannot determine the true wording of the text? In my second chapter, I have closely compared the Hebrew text with the Qumran texts, the Greek, Latin and Syriac translations. This examination has shown that there is no reason for calling into question the Hebrew text which the Massorettes have preserved. When the Septuagint departs from the meaning of the Hebrew text, this departure does not have its basis in a different original, as had previously often been believed. It is clear that we are dealing with an attempt to present in a better way, at the expense of the significance of the individual words, the ideas which the translators believed were to be found in the text. In certain cases the early translators were forced to guess at the meaning of the Hebrew words from the context, and in doing so they often misunderstood the meaning of the text. Differences can be explained by an attempt to reproduce the supposed meaning at the expense of an exact reproduction of the words themselves.

THE RESULT OF EARLIER INVESTIGATIONS:

In analyzing the contents of a certain text, it is a basic rule to first study in great detail the wider context of which this text forms a part. On the other hand, assuming that the section has been introduced into its present place at a later time, we must try to determine with which part the section was previously connected and then study this original context. But do we really find here any scholarly evidence indicating a more original context than the one which we now have? My third chapter is devoted to this question. This examination has shown that the various researchers of the texts in Is. 1-39 have come up with very different results. There is no unanimous opinions about the division of the individual parts of the section or about the

dating of these parts. A review of the exegetical opinions shows no agreed-upon results. Rather we are faced with a number of contradictory assertions even before we begin an analysis of the "Babylon prophecy."

METHODS AND CRITERIA

Because of the large number of conflicting opinions about the first part of the book of Isaiah (1-39) we are faced with the question about the nature of such criteria leading to so many different points of view. Under the heading, "Methods and Criteria," I have therefore shed some light on the methods of research used by the exegetes and the criteria which serve as a basis of the positions taken. Their approaches fall easily into three categories:

1. *The ideological-historical criterion* is the most common. This method assumes that the development of the ideological history of Israel determines the epoch from which a text derives. It is remarkable that this criterion has been so prominent, as the opinions about the development of Israel's ideological history are subjective and differ. As long as an idea cannot with certainty be assigned to a definite time, this criterion will be fragile and it easily leads to an argument in a circle. When one insists that a certain section is not genuine because it does not contain typical Isaianic ideas, one has already made a judgment of what is really Isaianic. To do this, one has already accepted and rejected certain texts in determining what the real ideas of Isaiah were.

2. *The historical criterion* can often be of great help. But here the problem is that the researcher too often easily finds a definite historical situation reflected in the text. This situation he reads into the text, even if the text itself contains no clear allusion to the situation in question. So, for example, J. Lindblom believes that Is. 23 reflects events in northern Palestine in the year 332 B.C. and as a consequence he dates the text in that time. Duhm dates Is. 19:16-25 about 160 B.C. since he believes that the text presupposes events which transpired in Maccabean times. That Is 13:2-14:23 is dated in the 550's B.C., just as Is. 21:1-10, is also the result of the opinion that the text presupposes the neo-Babylonian era. The varying dates offered by researchers to different sections often seem to have their basis in the different historical events in the text. To avoid a subjective use of historical criterion, it is first necessary to leave in abeyance different hypotheses about the historical background of the text and be limited to what is clear from the text. Relations to possible historical situations should come only after the text has been examined in detail. When different apriori theories concerning the text's historical background become more important, then the text is changed in order to agree with the theory (see examples in my dissertation). With this type of research we are studying a text that exists only in the researcher's own head.

3. *The linguistic criterion* ought to be able to lead to more definite results, but researchers likewise come to completely contradictory results even when they use this criterion. By isolating certain words, the date of a text can be adjusted. Concentrating on those

words which the text has in common with a later text shows that the text is late. Or by isolating older words, the text becomes early. Such subjective selection can partly explain the diversity of opinions about dating. Moreover, it is by no means certain that a linguistic similarity indicates the same author or the same time. The possibility of imitation of style cannot be excluded. Besides, variations in style can depend on reasons other than diversity of authorship. The liberal scholar G. W. Anderson has correctly said that "the critics might expect in the prophet an artificial standard of consistency, not allowing for the possibility that he might have had different things to say in different conditions, or changed his emphasis according to the need of the day." (*A Critical Introduction to the OT*, 1959, p. 99). Besides, it is difficult to establish with certainty that a word is "late," even when the word is not found in earlier texts to which we have access. And even if the word seems to be "late," this does not mean necessarily that the whole chapter is late or even that the whole sentence is late. It can mean that only the word itself is a late adaptation or that it is accidental that the word does not occur in earlier texts that we happen to be acquainted with.

BACK TO THE TEXT

After I showed in my dissertation a number of examples of how the researchers in part use the same criteria in different ways and in part do not keep clearly in mind the fragile quality of their criteria, I point out the necessity of a reconstruction where scholarly research into the prophets is concerned. We are at present surrounded by swarms of theories and hypotheses concerning the origin of the prophetic texts. When we already have a list of, let us say, 110 theories, it is meaningless to present a 111th, which is even more complicated, even if it were possible. In a situation where there is no consensus among researchers about the historical origin of a text, one can not hope to arrive at firmer conclusions by adopting a special theory as a point of departure in a more or less arbitrary way. By doing this the results of the investigation will be determined even before the investigation begins. The theory becomes more important than the analysis of the text. Is this scholarly? It would be much better to go back to the "given" i.e., the section of the text that lies before us and the context in which it now stands.

THE CONTEXT, IS. 13-23.

The disputed section, 13:2-14:23 forms the chief part of "the testimony against Babylon," which embraces 13:1-14:27. It introduces a number of "testimonies" in respect to foreign nations. It is therefore of some importance to go through all the testimonies in Isaiah 13 through 23 without allowing any particular theory regarding the history of the origin of these chapters to determine the direction of the analysis. This examination (the fourth chapter of the dissertation) produces, among other things, this result: The various testimonies in this context do not form a random collection. They are a consciously composed entity with unifying themes. The testimonies against the various nations are linked by these themes. Re-

markable is the fact that Assyria is not the object of a separate testimony, but the shadow cast by the Assyrian world power is reflected in all the testimonies of chapters 13-23. Just those nations are mentioned, which in one way or another, are involved in the Assyrian invasions. These are nations which have already been beaten by Assyria or which were threatened by that power. They are nations which were drawn into coalitions formed to overthrow the Assyrian occupation. This coalition policy also attracted Judah, whose leaders received ambassadors from the Philistines, Egypt, Ethiopia, and Babylon (see, e.g., 14:32; 18-19; 30-31; 39). But according to the prophet Isaiah, the people should trust in Jehovah and the promises He had given concerning Zion (ch. 2 and 4) and David (ch. 9 and 11), and not in human power blocks, which will come to nothing. The pericope which consists of chapter 13-23 thus does not stand in isolation in relation to the rest of the book. The threat from Assyria and the promises of JHWH to David and Zion dominate the design of chapters 1-12, and the coalition policy is illumined also in chapter 7 and chapters 28-31. The historical situation is portrayed in chapters 36-39.

ISAIAH 21:1-10

So far as the analysis of the various testimonies in chapters 13-23 is concerned, Is. 21:1-10 is of special interest, since this prophecy is usually connected with the Babylon-testimony in chapter 13 and 14, and is dated in the same period. From my analysis of Is. 21:1-10 I believe that it is impossible to maintain that this text deals with the fall of the neo-Babylon kingdom in the 6th century B.C., an event which brought joy to captive Jews, because of their liberation. Such an interpretation does violence to the text and is completely dependent on the interpretation one gives to verse 9. The mention of the fall of Babylon in v 9 has been incorrectly understood as a statement about the destruction of the neo-Babylonian Kingdom in 539 B.C. In turn this historical situation has been read into the rest of the text. However, if we allow the text to speak without any side glances to a particular historical situation, it becomes crystal clear that the prophet does not have a message of joy to proclaim. On the contrary, he began to shake with terror as a result of his vision (v 3-4). This would hardly be expected, if he had seen how the hour of freedom was approaching. Verse 2 says that "the faithful one deals faithlessly" and that "the devastator devastates." These terms are used together also in Is. 33:1 and there are applied to the Assyrian devastations in Palestine. This, together with many other items of evidence, indicates that the "devastator" here is also Assyria and not the neo-Babylon kingdom, as some erroneously concluded from v. 9. Through a long historical excursus I have shown that Elam and Media (v. 2) really were drawn into the fight against Assyria. Assigning this text to the events of the 550's B.C. forces us to assume that the two are symbolic names for Elam as well as Media had ceased to be kingdoms by that time. That Babylon is named in this connection (v. 9) connects the prophecy even more definitely to the historical events in the

Mideast about 700 B.C., when Babylon occupied a central position in the rebellions against Assyria.

Just as the rest of the prophecies in chapters 13-23 reflect the prophet's proclamation against a policy of coalition as the way to win freedom from the Assyrian yoke, so the difficult prophecy in chapter 21:1-10 makes clear that Babylon is not to be trusted in the battle against Assyria. In a terrifying vision the prophet has seen the unbelievable bloodbaths which the inhabitants of Babylon would experience and how the city would be completely razed. All this is well documented in the Assyrian sources. This message of Babylon's fall the prophet can give to his people the Jews, so sorely devastated by Assyria. Jewish leaders fixed their expectations on Babylon, Jerusalem had even received envoys from the rebel-king in Babylon, Marduk-apal-iddina, for negotiations (ch. 39). The prophet's words also very quickly come true. By 689 King Sennacherib had enough of Babylon's constant attempt to overthrow the Assyrian empire. After he had repeatedly punished the Chaldeans with violent bloodbaths, he permitted the full force of his wrath in that year to strike Babylon, the city which no one till then dared to violate. He permitted his soldiers to smash its gods, to level the city to the ground, and then to flood the city by conducting huge volumes of water over its ruins (14:23 and 21:9).

ISAIAH 23:13.

In connection with the review of Is. 23, the controverted verse 13 became the object of closer scrutiny. As a result I show that the translation in the Bible of the Church of Sweden is completely untenable, being conditioned by the assumption that this verse reflects the ravaging of the Chaldeans at the beginning of the sixth century. This obsession with the events of the sixth century only results in a violation of the wording of the text. The verse very clearly refers to Assyria's devastations in southern Babylonia, the land of the Chaldees. This was to serve as a warning to Phoenicia, together with the cities of Tyre and Sidon, that the same thing could happen to them. We have many historical testimonies to the Assyrian's bloody campaigns of devastation among the rebellious Chaldeans (see above). The prophet thus wants to maintain that just as the Chaldeans' attempts at rebellion against Assyria were not crowned with success, but instead led to their devastation, so the coalition with Tyre and Sidon against Assyria would not succeed. A literal translation of the verse reads: "See the land of the Chaldeans,—this is the people which is no more, Assyria has assigned it to the desert animals. . . . He has made it a heap of ruins."

ANALYSIS OF IS. 13:2-14:23.

Now that the historical context of chapters 13-23 is clear, we may proceed to a more precise analysis of Is. 13:2-14:23 (the fifth chapter) in order to see if this text really fits into this broader historical context or if it has a content and a purpose which isolates it from this context. It would take too long to reproduce this analysis in detail in this article. (Those interested are referred to the dissertation).

THE CHARACTER OF THE PROPHECY

In a text which carries the heading "A Prophecy against Babylon" one expects that the content will deal directly with Babylon from the first to the last line. So far as this prophecy is concerned, however, one finds that the introductory unit, 13:2-18, does not say one word about Babylon. Not until 13:19-22 do we find a direct proclamation of the impending doom of the city of Babylon (21:9). After this section, 14:1ff once more takes up the thought of 13:2-18 and speaks in positive terms about the crushing of the proud (13:11). This collapse of the proud (14:4b-21) brings with it salvation for the nation and is a result of JHWH's mercy toward His people (14:1-4). The only concrete mention of the nation in 14:1-21 is "Babylon's king" in the introduction to the song (14:34a). These sparse mentions of Babylon stands in sharp contrast to the Babylon prophecy in Jer. 50-51, where Babylon is mentioned fifty times and is clearly defined as a reference to the Chaldean kingdom. The relationship to Jer. 50-51 is discussed below.

THE KEY

The conclusion of the prophecy, 14:22-27, however, contains the key to the understanding of the whole oracle 13:1-14:27, for it makes clear in which sense this text is a prophecy against Babylon. In emphatic terms it is hammered home that JHWH will make Babylon completely desolate (14:22b-23). This harks back to 13:19-22. He shall crush Assyria and take away from His people the Assyrian yoke (14:24-27 illumines 13:2-18 and 14:1-21). The "Prophecy against Babylon" thus speaks about the futility of putting ones hope in Babylon. JHWH will Himself take pity on His people and crush proud Assyria. Babylon itself will very shortly lie in ruins (13:19-22).

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

This combination of Babylon and Assyria corresponds well with the actual situation in Isaiah's time. This is made clear in a long historical excursus in the dissertation. Babylon itself is the core of the Assyrian world empire ca. 700 B.C. Through its pride it stood as a symbol of the Assyrian tyrants (10:5ff). But in the oracle against Babylon, which Isaiah, the son of Amoz, saw (13:1-14:27) Babylon plays a different role. Babylon was at the same time one of the most serious threats to the Assyrian empire as a consequence of the powerful position of the priest of Marduk and their cooperation with the rebel movements against Assyria. Babylon could thus offer to JHWH's people a different way of salvation from oppression than the one proclaimed by JHWH's prophet. Through a policy of coalition, Babylon, under Marduk-apal-iddina's leadership, sought to co-ordinate the rebel movements in the east and west and in this way to overthrow the Assyrian tyrant Sennacherib and his empire.

THE CONSTRUCTION AND CONTENT OF THE TEXT

The unit from vv. 2 to 18 in chapter 13 is constructed in this way, that verses 2-5 and 14 to 18 form a parenthesis for the powerful portrayal of JHWH's day of wrath in vv 6-13. Vv 2-5 depict with

many typical Isaianic terms JHWH Himself, mobilizing his warriors so that they as the instruments of His wrath may carry out His judgment. This judgment has the "whole earth" in view, (v 5), an expression which is used again in the conclusion of the prophecy (14:26), where JHWH's decision against the "whole earth" is connected with JHWH crushing Assyria (14:24-27). In vv 14-18 we are given more concrete details about how the warriors whom JHWH has summoned to battle punish the proud with the terrifying horrors of war. In this connection, the "Medes" are mentioned (v 17) as those who on instructions from JHWH will punish the proud without mercy. The kernel in the unit 13:2-18, especially 6-13, magnificently pictures this punishment as a day of judgment from JHWH. In line with other portrayals of the day of JHWH, those who are punished are not identified with any particular people, but the judgment is applied in more general terms to the wicked, arrogant and haughty perpetrators of violence (v 11). Which offenders the writer has in mind must be decided by the context.

The following unit, 13:19-22, is clearly demarcated from what precedes and what follows, and deals exclusively with the impending destruction of the city of Babylon. Just as the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha were overthrown by God, so shall Babylon lie in ruins. A fatal flaw in the understanding of the construction of the text develops when 13:17 is arbitrarily combined with 13:19. When v 17 says that JHWH will raise up the Medes "against them," this "them" is not to be correlated with "Babylon" in v 19, but rather with the haughty and arrogant perpetrators of violence who are named in 13:11.

14:1-27 explains in greater detail what has already been said in chapter 13. 14:1-2 makes clear that JHWH's assault on the perpetrators of violence implies that he is showing mercy to Jacob and Israel. Here it is asserted that the perpetrators of violence have committed outrage on God's people and were their tormentors (v 2). But when JHWH makes an end to the occupation (v 3), Jacob shall be able to strike up a song of joy because the occupation has been cast down into hell (of i.e., Sheol-vv. 4 ff.) Such expressions do not mean only Judah. The expression "Jacob and Israel" refers to the whole people that has been struck by these tormentors. This actually was the case in the eighth century, during the supremacy of Assyria (9:4).

The song in 14:4b-21 is as previously established, the portrayal of Assyria the tyrant, in spite of the mention of "the king of Babylon." This type of tyranny fits no neo-Babylonian king, but such tyranny was demonstrated by many Assyrian kings. The portrayal of the king's haughtiness has many similarities with the portrayal of the Assyrian king Sennacherib in Is. 37:22ff. Is it the tyrant's pride and the self-deification which earns him the title of the king of Babylon? Babylon early became a symbol for pride as Gen. 11 shows. But the designation of an Assyrian tyrant as "the king of Babylon" has also a factual, historical basis. Beginning with Tiglath-pileser III (745-727), many of the Assyrian tyrants allowed themselves to be addressed as "king of Babylon." So Tiglath-pileser in 729 acquired the name

Pulu, (also mentioned in the OT, 2 Ki. 15:19 and 1 Chron. 5:26) (Hebr. Pul). Also Sargon and Sennacherib bore the title "King of Babylon," but they had difficulties in maintaining their control over Babylon as a consequence of the powerful opposition of the priests of Maruk and their cooperation with Marduk-apal-iddina, who also on many occasions succeeded in holding the position of king of Babylon and conspired constantly against the Assyrian empire.

THE INTERPRETATION OF THE PROPHECY AGAINST BABYLON

If one loses sight of the whole context, lost is the clarity of 13:2-18 and 14:1-21, which bracket the proclamation of the impending fall of Babylon. Because the great role that Babylon played in history about 700 B.C. and the significance of its destruction in 689 were long overlooked, 13:19-22 was interpreted as a prophecy concerning the destruction of the neo-Babylonian Kingdom of the sixth century. This interpretation then led without further thought to a combination of 13:17 and 13:19. From this combination it was concluded that the Medes would attack Babylon. The expression "the Medes" was interpreted as referring to the troops of Cyrus. But then the prophecy became inaccurate according to this interpretation, since the troops of Cyrus did not totally destroy Babylon in 539, as God had destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah (13:19-22) was not given much serious thought. The song in 14:4b-21 was still held to speak about an Assyrian tyrant. This difficulty led to various explanations. But when the last part of the prophecy, 14:24-27, clearly showed that the entire text dealt with the crushing of Assyria, most scholars took the easy way out and claimed that this part did not belong here. Rather it was by mistake placed in this context by an ignorant redactor. This forced point of view, still very commonly held, is a pure fabrication.

If we, however, are interested in trying to understand the text as it actually reads, the ones guilty of doing violence to the people in 13:2-18 and 14:1-21 are the Assyrians. Thereby the text is connected to 10:5ff and the other passages, where the pride of the king of Assyria is portrayed. JHWH shall thus allow his judgment to strike the haughty Assyrians (13:2-18). As a result of the apostasy of Israel, Assyria had received the assignment of punishing the nation, but because of pride it had gone far beyond the assignment (15:5ff). The Jews should not form alliances with other powers to escape the Assyrian yoke. To JHWH they should remain faithful and in His promises they should trust. He shall punish the haughty Assyrians. His counsel is valid for the whole earth (14:26; 13:5). Relying on Babylonia to gain freedom is meaningless for the Jews. The prophecies concerning the Ethiopians and the Egyptians (18-19, 30:1-7 and 31:1-3) show that it is meaningless to trust in these powers, because they will themselves be beaten by the Assyrians. The prophecy concerning Babylon is the same. Already in 689 Babylon was struck by the wrath of the Assyrian tyrant Sennacherib, with not one stone left upon another. So the epilog of the prophecy (14:22ff) summarizes the content of the prophecy in the following way:

So shall I most certainly stand up against them (that is to say, against the descendants of the Assyrian tyrant, who are named in the foregoing verse), says JHWH Sabaoth, and so far as Babylon is concerned, I shall certainly root out name and remnant, child and descendant, says JHWH. I shall make her (the city of Babylon) a place for qippod (perhaps hedgehogs or some kind of bird) and a marsh. I shall sweep her away with the broom of destruction, says JHWH Sabaoth. JHWH Sabaoth has sworn and said, Surely, as I have thought, so shall it happen, and as I have decided, so it shall transpire. I shall crush Assyria. . . .

Because it was customary among earlier scholars to explain all prophetic texts which named Babylon as referring to the neo-Babylonian kingdom in the sixth century, the consequence was that the prophets were made to appear completely ignorant of the great role which Babylon played at the close of the eighth century B.C. and its fall in 689, the most remarkable event of that time. This scholarly opinion is not in accord with the facts. Babylon's great role is not only mentioned by Isaiah, but its fall has also clearly been predicted. "The Prophecy against Babylon, which Isaiah the son of Amoz, saw" (13:1) is not a late interpolation into the book of Isaiah incorrectly ascribed to the prophet Isaiah. The prophecy makes clear on whom Israel should set its hope regarding salvation. This is not a prophecy against Babel in the sense that Babylon must be the occupying power, on the contrary it is a prophecy against the attempt on Babylon's part to offer salvation from Assyria through a political alliance. The prophet makes clear that it is JHWH who will crush the Assyrians through the Medes. (This happened in 612.) (13:19-22: 14:23, 21:9). JHWH shall through His mercy take away the yoke of oppression just as He did in the rescue out of Egypt (14:1-4). Just as the nation at that time was permitted to strike up a song of victory (Ex. 15), so they shall after the judgment over the haughty Assyrian tyrant be permitted to strike up a song of victory (14:4b-21, 30:29). No one can set aside JHWH's decision that He Himself will crush Assyria (14:24-27). Consequently proud Babylon will not be able to do this either.

LANGUAGE AND MOTIF

In the fifth chapter of the dissertation, I have thus tried to show that Is. 13:1-14:27 in a very natural way introduces the prophecies concerning foreign nations. It fits well into the whole context of these chapters and their function in the book of Isaiah. The historical criterion simply cannot support the removal of 13:2-14:27 from this context. A neo-Babylonian dating is now impossible. Now the question of linguistic criterion must be asked. Does not the choice of words, the phraseology and the motif of the prophecy show that it fits with later texts? The sixth chapter of the dissertation tries to answer this question. On the basis of a detailed analysis involving the choice of words, the diction, and the choice of motifs in the prophecy, it seems impossible to come to any other conclusion than that the text's author is Isaiah. The prophecy contains expressions typical of

those of Isaiah, accepted as authentic by all, and motifs, which outside of Is. 13-14 occur only in those parts of the book of Isaiah which are generally regarded as coming from this prophet. So, e.g., the pride motif connects this prophecy very closely to Is. 2:6ff and 5:14ff.

THE THEORY OF UPDATING AND JER. 50-51.

A common idea in modern OT research is that the prophetic texts were changed. A prophetic word in new situation was reinterpreted by addition, revision, and the like. In order to throw light on this theory and to bring the text in Is. 13-14 into clear focus, the seventh chapter of the dissertation contains a comparative analysis between Is. 13-14 and the text concerning Babylon found in Jer. 50-51. This analysis has led to important conclusions. Through a comparative analysis of Is. 13-14 and Jer. 50-51, it becomes crystal clear that Is. 13-14 was in existence in its present form when Jer. 50-51 came into being. The fact is that Jer. 50-51 uses a large number of expressions and phrases taken from Is. 13-14. Is. 13-14 is formulated in very general terms. Jer. 50-51 on the other hand is quite specific. The text itself gives the year 594 B.C. as its time of origin (Jer. 51:59) and it speaks plainly about Nebuchadnezzar and the Chaldean invasion. When expressions and phrases of Is. 13-14 are applied to this later situation, they are augmented to make them more precise and extensive to fit the alleged later date in the sixth century. The expression from Is. 13:2ff is about a summons to war *against Babylon*. When Is. 13:5 speaks of a devastation of the "whole earth," Jer. speaks about a devastation of "the whole land of the *Chaldeans*." Jer. 50:1 itself adds to "Babylon" the phrase "the land of the *Chaldeans*," so that it may be very clear that the reference is to the neo-Babylonian empire of the sixth century and not the city of Babylon, as was the case in Isaiah. The expression in Is. 14:24ff concerning JHWH's decision to crush Assyria is used, but applied to Babylon, etc.

Because we have access to Jer. 50-51, we can thus show what a text which deals with the neo-Babylonian kingdom looks like. It is evident that Is. 13-14 cannot be applied to the neo-Babylonian situation. In comparing the neo-Babylonian situation as treated in Jer. 50-51 with Is. 13-14, it is clear that no revision of the text in Isaiah took place to make it correspond more closely to the neo-Babylonian situation. The text is not changed but still is valid for Jeremiah. Jer. 50-51 shows that the contents of Is. 13-14 did not become insignificant just because of Babylon's ruin in 689 and Assyria's defeat in 612. JHWH's word against the proud and against Babylon's pride in offering different salvation than JHWH's is current so long as there are proud men who offer salvation by different means. In the same way that Is. 9:4 stands against the background of the Assyrian occupation, it also points far beyond the events of the eighth century. Jer. 50-51 thus shows clearly that a middle sixth century dating for Is. 13-14 is impossible and that the theory about the successive revision of the text through updating does not find support in a comparative analysis of Is. 13-14 and Jer. 50-51.

RENEWAL OF PROPHETIC RESEARCH

My examination of "the prophecy concerning Babylon" has thus demonstrated that this prophecy is in no way a later interpolation. The arguments which are adduced for its inauthenticity prove to be untenable on point after point. The prophecy which scholars attribute to a writer after Isaiah actually belongs together with the prophecies recognized as his in the rest of the book. There is good reason to take another look at the other texts which as many scholars consider to be later. Since the date of Is. 13-14 provided primary impetus for dating other pericopes in the book as late, reexamination becomes mandatory. The task is now urgent to subject the accepted scholarly theories regarding the prophetic literature to a renewed examination. The object of this research is that each pericope should be allowed to speak without the preconceived notions of the scholars. This fresh analysis of the whole book of Isaiah ought to begin soon.

Editor's Note: The above article is an abridgement of Professor Erlandsson's doctoral dissertation presented to the theological faculty of the University of Uppsala, Sweden, where he is licensed as a lecturer. The original dissertation is published in English under the same title as this article. The unity of Isaiah is a classical question among Biblical scholars with many claiming three "Isaiahs" and more interpolators. Erlandsson's concentrated study on one section of Isaiah is perhaps the first step to reconsidering the option that Isaiah does come from only one author. The arguments offered by Erlandsson are historical rather than theological and it is therefore hoped that his article and dissertation will invoke serious consideration by pastors and scholars alike.