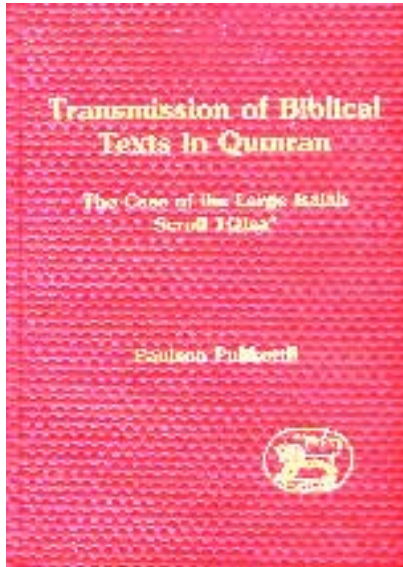


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**Pulikottil, Paulson**

*Transmission of Biblical Texts in Qumran: The Case of the Large Isaiah Scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>*

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This study, a revised version of the author's doctoral dissertation written under the direction of Professor P. R. Davies at the University of Sheffield, contains four chapters and a conclusion. It also includes three tables, a bibliography, an index of references to the Old Testament, to Qumran texts, and to rabbinic sources, and an index of authors. The author advances his thesis that the scribe of 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> was an editor who reshaped the text along ideological lines, best described as "Yahad" ideology.

In chapter 1, Pulikottil reviews the history of research on 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>. He alleges that all previous studies of 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> shared the view that deviations from the text of the MT were due primarily to scribal error and not to scribal innovation. By contrast, Pulikottil views the scribe of 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> as an author or editor, not just a copyist. He is particularly critical of the work of E. Y. Kutscher.

In chapter 2, Pulikottil treats scribal activity evidenced in the scroll (harmonization, explication, updating of language, and contextual smoothing). Some textual differences between the scroll and the MT that appear on the surface to be mechanical errors are, in fact, not. Rather, they are changes intentionally made by the scribe. For example, the reading of the scroll בִּדְעַתְךָ "in your knowledge" for MT בְּרַעַתְךָ "in your wickedness" in Isa 47:10a, at first blush a mechanical error of *dalet* for *resh*, is, in the opinion of Pulikottil, an intentional harmonization by the scribe with the rest of the verse, where

דעת “knowledge” appears again. The scribe at times brought the text of Isaiah into line with biblical idioms and phraseology known elsewhere, especially when Isaiah contains unique language. At times, the scribe altered his text to add clarity for the reader.

In chapter 3, he discusses the *traditio* of the scroll, that is, the interpretative contribution of the scribe to the text he received, his *traditum*. The scribe of the scroll made certain changes to bring about a historically and theologically “accurate” text. Pulikottil treats a number of themes separately, where he believes that deliberate scribal activity can be discerned, including the task of the prophet, the conception of temple, the concept of Zion, the importance and seat of Torah, messianic themes, and divine judgment

In chapter 4, he studies the milieu of the scroll and suggests that the scribe exhibited “Yahad” ideology, that is, that the scroll exhibits a definite conceptual orientation that it shares uniquely with the Qumran Yahad documents. At the same time, Pulikottil rejects the idea that 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> is “sectarian.” Pulikottil alleges that the Yahad sensibilities of the scribe are evident in his treatment of the adverb יחד and in ideological changes he introduced to the text of Isaiah regarding temple and the study of Torah, separation of the community, antagonism toward “outsiders,” the role of foreigners, and violence.

In my opinion, misrepresentation of previous research and tendentiousness seriously flaw this publication. Many of Pulikottil’s criticisms of the monumental work of E. Y. Kutscher (*The Language and Linguistic Background of the Isaiah Scroll* [Leiden: Brill, 1974]) are unjustified, due in part to his misreading of Kutscher. For example, with regard to the change of the perfect to the participle (רדו for רדים) in Isa 14:2, Pulikottil (29) charges Kutscher with disregard for the context in explaining changes in the text. He states: “Kutscher considers the change ... as the scribe changing his mind in the middle of writing” instead of consulting the contextual sequence ... ורדו ... ויהיו שבים. However, what Kutscher actually says is that the scribe did harmonize the form רדים with the preceding participle שבים, just like Pulikottil. But, writes Kutscher, the fact that רדים is written defectively (that is, without the *waw*, to wit, not רודים) may be the result of the scribe deciding to change from a perfect to the participle while writing the word. Pulikottil misreads Kutscher and uses his misreading to cast the work of Kutscher in poor light.

Pulikottil also forces many pieces of evidence into his mold when they do not fit. For example, Pulikottil claims that the scribe substituted the root יהב for the MT’s root בוא at Isa 16:3, where the scroll reads הביו עצה “give counsel,” the verb being from the root יהב according to Pulikottil (66), for MT Kethib הביאו עצה “bring counsel.” But, contra Pulikottil, according to rules of Hebrew morphology, the masculine plural imperative of the root יהב is הבו; it could never be הביו for a I-*yod* verb! In reality, the form הביו is from הביאו, the *aleph* being elided because it was not pronounced. In his translation of

the well-known expression **כי מציון תצא תורה** in Isa 2:3, Pulikotttil translates the form **תצא** in the scroll as past tense without any justification (“for the law has departed/proceeded from Zion”) but in the MT as present (“for from Zion proceeds the law” [144]). He then concludes that “the scribe considered that the Torah is no more resident in Zion” (173). Further, Pulikotttil translates the Hebrew **עמים רבים** of Isa 14:2, where 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> adds the adjective, as “Rabbim people” rather than “many peoples” (180). Moreover, against the majority of Hebrew grammarians, Pulikotttil incorrectly interprets the direct object marker **את** as an emphatic particle in Isa 36:16, which he renders “itself” (100).

His key argument for his major thesis that the changes in the scroll are due to the scribe’s Yahad ideology is found in the scroll’s treatment of the Hebrew adverb **יחד**. Pulikotttil argues that the scribe changed the spelling **יחד** to **יחדיו** or **יחדו** to prevent the reader from misunderstanding the form as the noun **יחד** “community.” This is exactly what Kutscher says, except that for Pulikotttil this reflects an ideology, while for Kutscher it is an updating of the language without any ideological reason. Another key argument has to do with the reading **יסירני** “he turned me” (from the root **סור**) at Isa 8:11 instead of MT **ויסרני** “and he warned me” (from the root **יסר**). Pulikotttil alleges that the scribe made this change because of his ideology that the community was to be separated from the rest of the nation (178–79). Kutscher had suggested that the reason for the change was the scribe’s unfamiliarity with the expression **יסר מן** and his acquaintance with the expression **סור מן**. Moshe Goshen-Gottstein believes that the readings of the LXX and Symmachus derive from the Hebrew root **סור**, just as in 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> (*Hebrew University Bible: The Book of Isaiah* [Jerusalem: Magnes, 1975]). If this is the case, the reading of the scroll is not unique and so should not be used to support an ideological distinctive.

To sum up, misrepresentation of previous research and tendentiousness seriously flaw this publication. Accordingly, the present reviewer cannot endorse this volume as a sound piece of research.