

RESURRECTION AS METAPHOR:
PAUL'S INTERTEXTUAL USE OF ISA 26:19 IN ROM 11:15 AND HOPE FOR THE
RESTORATION OF ISRAEL

Chase Dilworth

Lincoln Christian University

A paper submitted to the Stone-Campbell Journal

Conference for Spring 2019

Outline

1.	Abbreviations	3
2.	Abstract	4
3.	Introduction	4
	a. Locating Isa 26 in its Literary Context	5
	b. Locating Isa 26:19 within its Immediate Context	7
4.	Death in Ancient Israel	9
5.	Death to Life as Metaphor in Paul	12
6.	A Metaphor Singled Out: Isa 26:19	13
7.	Conclusion	17
8.	Bibliography	18

Abbreviations

<i>IntBC</i>	<i>Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching</i>
LUP	Leuven University Press
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
NAC	New American Commentary
NICOT	New International Commentary on the Old Testament
<i>NIVAC</i>	<i>The NIV Application Commentary</i>
OTL	The Old Testament Library
OUP	Oxford University Press
PNTC	Pillar New Testament Commentaries
<i>RevExp</i>	<i>Review & Expositor</i>
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
SBLacBib	Society of Biblical Literature Academia Biblica
SBLAILL	Society of Biblical Literature Ancient Israel and Its Literature
<i>TRu</i>	<i>Theologische Rundschau</i>
YUP	Yale University Press

Abstract

Historical NT scholarship has frequently enjoyed the gregarious company of those willing to categorize and compartmentalize the particular meanings of texts to fit existing paradigms. One text that has fallen prey to this common phenomenon is the OT prophecy of Isa 26:19 and its consistent application as a late, transparent, witness to the evidence of resurrection theology among ancient Israel. For many OT scholars, Isa 26:19 has additionally fit within the category of a metaphorical resurrection—namely, that the politically overthrown and religiously unfaithful Israel would be restored as if from death to life. What if this category of metaphorical resurrection was available for consumption elsewhere? What if Paul knew of, and echoed, Isa 26:19 in his own metaphorical plea for Israel? The main aim of this analysis is to reexamine the metaphorical implication of Isa 26:19 and argue for Paul’s application of such a usage in Rom 11:15. This study will draw from the recent scholarly enthusiasm for intertextuality hoping to resurface a long buried echo and add another NT allusion to the prophecies of Isaiah.

Introduction

Isaiah 26:19, located within the Apocalypse of Isaiah, is not new to interpretive tension or to the mountainous scrutiny of biblical scholarship. Not to add to the contemporary pile of tantalizing conjectures, the focus of the current essay is not to offer a new interpretation, but to pick up where others have left off and chart their trajectory to a new opportunity. The interpretive options for reconciling the life from death imagery in Isa 26:19 have long been twofold: (1) Isaiah’s prophecy speaks in tune with the dubbed Apocalypse and envisions a bodily resurrection

of the faithful deceased at or around the final judgment on the day of the Lord, and (2) the imagery Isaiah procures speaks not to a physical resurrection of the individual, but of a collective renewal (or resurrection) of the nation. The current essay will argue in favor of the latter option and extend its trajectory of a metaphorical resurrection for ethnic Israel into the NT. First, in order to ground the metaphorical application of v. 19 within Isaiah 26 itself an analysis of the literary context will take precedence. As a further reinforcement to this OT interpretation the second section will address the concept and function of מוֹת, death itself, for both Israel and YHWH. Finally, the third stage of this analysis will seek to substantiate Paul's use of the death to life metaphor of Isa 26:19 within his own argumentation for Israel's repentance in Rom 11:15.

I. Locating Isa 26 in its Literary Context

The levels of literary context surrounding Isa 26:19 are vast and the intent of this section is to give brief focus to two significant divisions that color the immediate context of Isa 26. Beginning with the larger context of Isa 13–33, the final compilation of the prophecies of Isaiah situates the current text in the midst of an exposition arguing for the superiority of God. This context itself can be subdivided into two smaller units: (1) 13–23, and (2) 28–33. The preceding context of Isa 13–23 is widely recognized by the repetitious use of אָמַר (ESV “oracle”) to begin each new pronouncement against the nation.¹ What soon becomes clear about these oracles is that their grouping has more to do with function than geographical location. John Oswalt suggests that the function of such chapters is precisely to “demonstrate the folly of trusting in nations whose doom is already sealed.”² Israel is to trust in YHWH, the master of nations. This theme continues in the

¹ See 13:1; 14:28; 15:1; 17:1; 21:1, 11, 13; 22:1; 23:1. See also William D. Mounce, *Mounce's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old & New Testament Words* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2006), 985.

² John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 1–39*, NICOT (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1986), 298–299.

following chapters of 28–33 as they progress the prophet’s rhetoric toward Israel.³ The prophet’s words reiterate the initial judgments brought against Israel in the book’s introduction (chs. 1–5) depicting the people as offering insincere praise and worship (29:13; cf. 1:11–15) and even returning to their derisive identity as “stubborn children” (30:1, 9; cf. 1:2–4).⁴ The combined force of this surrounding context situates the narrower 24–27 within an appeal for Israel to choose YHWH precisely as a return from the nations.

The Apocalypse of Isaiah,⁵ as situated above, must fit within the relational triad of Israel, YHWH, and the nations.⁶ This is accomplished in 24–27 by broadening the focus of YHWH’s reign to the ארץ (“earth”)⁷ and flattening the previous concentration on illustrative nations in 13–23 (e.g., Babylon, Moab, Damascus, Tyre, et al) to the גוים (“nations”).⁸ This transition is explained by Oswalt as moving from particular statements in 13–23 to a broader, more generalized statement of God’s lordship over the earth.⁹ The relationship is further elaborated by

³ In contrast to 13–25 and returning once more to the historical narrative of 6–12, it is generally assumed that these chapters provided greater reconstruction of the political events occurring during the life of the eighth century prophet. See Oswalt, *Isaiah*, 504.

⁴ All scripture quotations will be taken from the ESV unless otherwise noted.

⁵ For a review of the current appraisal of Isa 24–27 as an Apocalypse see Becker Uwe, “Tendenzen der Jesajaforschung 1998–2007,” *TRu* 74 (2009): 196–228.

⁶ This is similar to the three primary actants proposed by Brian Doyle in recourse to the theme of disaster and salvation: YHWH, ארץ, and the inhabitants. See Brian Doyle, “A Literary Analysis of Isaiah 25, 10A,” 173–193 in *Studies in the Book of Isaiah: Festschrift Willem A. M. Beuken*, eds. J. Van Ruiten and M. Ver Venne (Leuven: LUP, 1997), 176–177.

⁷ See 24:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 13, 16, 19, 20, 21; 25:8; 26:9, 18, 19, 21.

⁸ See 25:3, 7; cf. גוים for Gentile nations in 24:13. These nations/peoples are contrasted by the righteous nation (goyim) in 26:2 and a preferred people (גוים) in 26:11.

⁹ Oswalt, *Isaiah*, 440. In this view he draws on the early correction of German theologian Franz Delitzsch who characterizes 24–27 not as a separate self-contained entity, but as a finale and thus justly must be interpreted in light of the preceding section. Oswalt reiterates as much: “Like a finale, the chapters can be read by themselves, but their greatest contribution is made within the total piece.” *Isaiah*, 441; see also Franz Delitzsch, *Biblical Commentary on the Prophecies of Isaiah*, vol. 1, trans. James Martin (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1873); Otto Kaiser, *Isaiah 13–39: A Commentary*, trans. R. A. Wilson (Philadelphia, Penn.: The Westminster Press, 1974), 177; who goes so far as to argue that 24:7–26:1ff. has no previous history or *sitz in Leben* outside of their current position.

the image of a ruined city (24:10, 12; 25:2, 12; 27:10) versus the strong city/mountain of the Lord (25:6, 10; 26:1). Such an image provides dramatic irony within the context of 13–33 as God declares that he will lay waste to the very cities which his people have sought shelter. In this turn of fortune, God’s chosen people have allied with the enemy and will fall victim to the wrath of YHWH’s defense. What 24–27 provides is a call to repentance providing idealized songs of hope (26:1–21) and expectant penitence (27:6–11). Isaiah’s words are to become that of Israel’s:

Behold, this is our God;

we have waited for him, that he might save us.

This is the LORD;

we have waited for him;

let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation” (25:9).

II. Locating Isa 26:19 within its Immediate Context

The function of Isa 26 as indicated above is that of an idealized song for the hope of Israel.¹⁰ The song begins by contrasting Israel as the “righteous nation” (גִּי צְדִיקָה; v. 2) with the nations that fell to the judgment of the earth in Isa 24. Moreover, while some commentators see a division between vv. 1–6 and 7–21,¹¹ the very recurrence of צְדִיקָה (“righteous”) twice in v. 7 speaks to continuity of theme (cf. v. 10). This theme of an idealized faithfulness of Israel is kept up in vv.

Contra. Philip C. Schmitz, who suggests that 24 – 27 make a distinct unit because of critical reception: (1) absence of connection with the Neo-Assyrian period, (2) distinct vocab and syntax, and (3) themes and images generally associated with later periods in Israel’s history; “The Grammar of Resurrection in Isaiah 26:19a–c,” *JBL* 122 (2003): 145.

¹⁰ For further discussion on Isa 26 as a psalm (26:1) and its coherence with other psalms in this section see Christopher R. Seitz, *Isaiah 1–39*, IntBC (Louisville, Tenn.: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993), 193ff.

¹¹ Brevard S. Childs, *Isaiah*, OTL (Louisville, Tenn.: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 188. While the strict division of text in Isa 6 is unnecessary, Child’s does offer helpful insight in the prophet’s contrasting of Isa 25 and 26 and their perspective on the appropriate response to God’s judgment. He suggests that Isa 25 follows a specific portrayal of a heavenly festival while Isa 26 suggests prayer and lengthy reflection by the community as the wrath of God still instantiates fear (v. 20); *Isaiah*, 189.

12–13 as the prophet portrays Israel as faithful throughout their captivities to other lords (אֲדֹנָי), “but your name alone we bring to remembrance” (contra. 2 Kgs 16:1–18; Isa 9:8–21). The occurrence of בְּלִי־יָהוּי (NASB “the dead will not live”) in v. 14 intrinsically link it with v. 19 on semantic and thematic grounds (יָהוּי מֵתִים; “your dead shall live”); thus, care in handling one verse must evoke response from the other.

In the case of v. 14 many modern commentators note the uncanny connection made with Ugaritic parallels surrounding the term רִפְאִים (cf. Isa 14:9). In context, Matthew McAfee affirms: “It may be that Isa 26:14 represents a prophetic polemic against popular Judean beliefs similar to those embraced at Ugarit, namely that departed monarchs acquire a quasi-divine status and are able to then confer blessings upon devotees.¹² In short, as Isa 26 functions as an idealized song, v. 14 presents YHWH throwing off the false rulers (אֲדֹנָי; v. 13) with sardonic rhetoric and imagery to boot. The relation to v. 19 lies precisely in reversing the initial imagery—God’s people who were once dead shall now live.

The above context raises the question whether Isa 26:19 is to be understood in a literal sense of resurrection at the judgment or metaphorically for repentance and a revived faithfulness. Two contextual reasons can be given in favor of the latter. First, while it is true that יָקוּמוּן (“will live”) and יָהוּי (“will rise”) are in the imperfect state, the nature of perspective and

¹² Matthew McAfee, “Rephaim, Whisperers, and the Dead in Isaiah 26:13–19: A Ugaritic Parallel,” *JBL* 135 (2016): 87. The רִפְאִים in particular were divine figures into whose ranks royal ancestors were inducted and who were thus summoned in royal ritual. Cf. Stephen L. Cook, “Deliverance as Fertility and Resurrection: Echoes of Second Isaiah in Isaiah 26,” pages 165–182 in *Formation and Intertextuality in Isaiah 24–27*, eds. J. Todd Hibbard and Hyun Chul Paul Kim. SBLAHL 17. Atlanta, G.A: SBL, 2013), 171–172.

In the related terminology and text of Isa 14, R. Mark Shipp notes that it follows the thematic ideology of an ANE royal dirge most closely when concerning the deaths of foreign kings (i.e., Babylon and Egypt), but are parodies at that. Thus, the prophets royal dirge was only used within Israel in order to parody foreign kings. Shipp rightly affirms that his particularly usage is not surprising considering the purpose of such royal dirges, as opposed to common dirges which bemoan and memorialize, is to legitimize the dynasty [divinely] and reflect the privileged status of the king in the netherworld. See R. Mark Shipp, *Of Dead Kings and Dirges: Myth and Meaning in Isaiah 14:4b–21* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 60–66.

temporal character within prophetic poetry is often markedly flexible.¹³ Secondly, if the Ugaritic myth behind the *רפאים* is present in vv. 14 and 19 as observed above, a bodily resurrection is out of place. The role of the *רפאים* and the deceased kings was twofold: (1) to be summoned during royal funerary ritual, and (2) to confer favor and blessings upon living king and country¹⁴—hardly a parallel for a general resurrection from the dead.¹⁵ Rather, as Albert Barnes captured so vividly:

They had been dead; that is, civilly dead in Babylon; they were cut off from their privileges, torn away from their homes, made captives in a foreign land. Their king had been dethroned; their temple demolished; their princes, priests, and people made captive; their name blotted from the list of nations; and to all intents and purposes, as a people, they were deceased.¹⁶

Death in Ancient Israel

The above literary analysis has revealed the prominence of death within Isa 26 centered on the twin vv. 14 and 19. These two verses are natural counterparts within the song of Israel's idyllic

¹³ For example, Paul Redditt notes how the prophet's message changes from vv. 1–6 from speaking to God to speaking about God in vv. 7–19. See Paul Redditt, "Isaiah 26," *RevExp* 88 (1991): 196. See also Kaiser, *Isaiah*, 215; who reiterates: "One has to read this short passage several times in order to become really aware of the irritation caused by the change of possessive pronouns."

¹⁴ See McAfee, "Rephaim," 84. However, MacAfee then mystifyingly goes on to conclude that Isa 26:19 depicts a bodily resurrection in contrast with the Rephaim as a means of further solidifying Israelite allegiance to YHWH alone ("Rephaim," 94).

¹⁵ Robert Chisholm makes the case that while Dan 12:2 is in fact dependent on Isa 26:19, it only adopts the imagery and alone refers to a literal resurrection. See Robert B. Chisholm, *Handbook on the Prophets* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2002), 123–124.

¹⁶ Albert Barnes, *Notes on the Book of the Prophet Isaiah*, vol. 1, New Improved Ed. (New York, N.Y.: Leavitt & Allen, 1853), 434. Contra. Cook, "Deliverance," 171. See also, Schmitz, "Grammar," 148; where he envisions a political revival of the battered Judahites metaphorically and only by analogy of personal eschatology. "The morbid nation, like the deceased at the end of days, will be reconstituted (v. 19a), at first insensate and lifeless (v. 19b), but then revived, active and joyful (v. 19v)"; and J. Alec Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah: An Introduction & Commentary* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 219; he navigates the proposal that Isa 26:19 is foremost a figurative resurrection of the wicked to salvation; nevertheless, in cooperation with 25:7–8 it is hardly outside the realm of possibilities that Isaiah both knew and draw upon the God who would one day abolish death itself.

hope; both compare the dead to the living; both reflect Israel's socio-political context; both are in agreement on the role of God to bear life or death. It is then appropriate to offer a brief sketch of the conception and function of death in Ancient Israel.

Death is presented as a common denominator throughout Hebrew scripture (with men like Enoch and Elijah being notable exceptions) and all are presented as eventually being received by its clutches. Thus, when talking about death the conversation quickly turns to the issue of afterlife, or in the blandest terms, of a final state. The records of the patriarchs to Israel's kings record a similar expression of being gathered to ones people or fathers (Gen 35:29; 49:29–33; 50:25; Josh 24:32; 1 Kgs 2:10; 11:43; 16:28 et al); however, it is frequently evident within these texts that such descriptions entail a familial resting place on this side of death (cf. same texts). What occurs on the other side of death is described by considerably inactivity in the Hebrew text and reflects a monotone view of the afterlife compared to many other ANE cultures. Christopher Hays advocates that the uncertain, or limited extent of, descriptive attestations in the biblical text is most likely the result of theological determination by Yahwistic scribes.¹⁷ The purpose for such decisions is speculative, but to suggest that Israel knew nothing of the notions of ancestor cults and other afterlife activities is to remove them from their historical context. Hays further concludes:

The late Iron Age in Judah, the cradle of the book of Isaiah, was a point of convergence, a beach washed by the various currents of the whole Near East. In the matter of beliefs and practices surrounding death, the complex pattern left

¹⁷ Christopher B. Hays, *A Covenant with Death: Death in the Iron Age II and Its Rhetorical Uses in Proto-Isaiah* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2011), 190.

behind in the sand shows similarities to each of the surrounding cultures, but also differences. This was the situation into which the prophets waded.¹⁸

In light of this, it is possible to foresee Hays' "Yahwistic scribes" as promoting a certain finality to death (i.e., inactivity) with the rhetorical intent to squelch potentially unorthodox afterlife activities from encroaching nations.¹⁹

It is natural, then, to ask what YHWH's role was in relationship to death. At this point there seem to be not a few texts that allude to YHWH's ability to rescue individuals from the "pit" (cf. Ps. 28:1; 30; 3; 88:4–7, 10–13). Moreover, YHWH's control over the realm of the dead seems to be presumed upon the actions taken by the prophets Elijah and Elisha who both perform acts of revivification (1 Kgs 17:17–24; 2 Kgs 4:32–37). Moreover, in the case of Elijah, it was only after the raising of her son that she acknowledged the definite affiliation of the prophet with YHWH, "Now I know that you are a man of God, and that the word of the LORD in your mouth is truth" (17:24). The witness of these texts and others inform Hays opinion when he states:

It is no doubt true that Israelite thought about the restoration from death became more elaborate and central over times, but it is also true that from the early stages of biblical literature, YHWH was always portrayed as a god who had the power to save from death, and who was quite able to access and control the underworld, even if such actions were seen as exceptional. *Surely expressions of belief in the raising of the dead have always been extravagant expressions of faith.*²⁰

¹⁸ Hays, *Covenant*, 190.

¹⁹ Hays goes on to suggest that the historical situation of the eighth-century prophets—as contemporaries to Hezekiah's reforms critiquing such death cults—seems to evince the most plausible reconstruction of the texts. *Covenant*, 192.

²⁰ Hays, *Covenant*, 188 (emphasis added).

Hays' final statement elicits the two-way interpretation that takes place in discussing YHWH's divine role and authority in relationship to his people. In the same way that YHWH's power to raise the dead is a manifestation of faith, such activity becomes an illustration by which to describe repentant faith itself. In other words, God's ability to resurrect not only applies to the physically dead but also the metaphysically unfaithful.

Death to Life as Metaphor in Paul

For if their rejection means the reconciliation of the world,

what will their acceptance mean but life from the dead? (Rom 11:15)

The metaphor of life through death—resurrection—examined throughout the OT above is also observable in the NT writings of Paul.²¹ For the apostle, however, this metaphor most often finds its origin in both the generally understood resurrection of the dead on the day of the Lord and specifically in the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ. The eschatological hope that is the inheritance of believers was activated in the central events of Christ's death and resurrection in which he became the firstborn from the dead (1 Cor 15:20). For those trusting in Christ, this inordinate reality of his resurrected life has become the basis for faith, the redemption of sin, and the ingathering of the gentiles. Paul attests to the preeminent position of Christ's resurrection in 1 Cor 15:17 by pointing out the believer's stake in its truthfulness: "And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins." It is from this perspective that Paul is able to deduce the metaphor of life from death—a theological protrusion of eternal life back into the life of the living. In other words, the believer is characterized within their current mortal life as moving from a spiritual state of faithlessness, in which the eternal reality is death, to a state of

²¹ The metaphorical usage of death in particular is found among various NT authors in addition to Paul. Several of the varied uses include reference to the dead (i.e., lifeless) works of the law (Heb 6:1; 9:14), dead faith unaccompanied by works (Jas 2:17, 26), as even as a direct simile for John's state before the Son of Man in his apocalypse (Rev 1:17). Paul, however, more often than all the rest picks up this metaphor for the spiritual condition of various groups.

faithfulness by which they might receive eternal life.²² Hence, Paul's typical metaphor of a resurrection (or restoration) of faith *now* is a result of his belief in a metaphysical resurrection *then*.

A Metaphor Singled Out: Isa 26:19

Having briefly established the standard physical referent (i.e., Christ's resurrection) behind Paul's practice of using the death to life metaphor, attention may be given to Rom 11:15 as introduced above. More specifically, is it possible that Paul draws his metaphor in this text not from his typical usage, but from a different OT source? The analysis will now turn to Paul's echo of Isa 26:19 within his argument for the salvation of the Jews.²³ Three lines of evidence suggest this to be the case. First, the immediate context of Rom 11:15 proposes that the metaphor is directed toward ethnic Jews in specific rather than the people of God at large. Rehearsing the greater context of Rom 9–11 let alone 1:18–11:36 is beyond the scope of the current essay;²⁴

²² Paul's most simplistic usage of such metaphorical terminology surrounding the theme of death/life pertains to individuals or groups currently and/or previous weighed down by transgression. In Eph 2:1 he asserts that all were in a state of degenerated sinfulness against God before being made alive (συνήγειρεν) with Christ (also Eph 2:5, 6; Col 2:12–13; cf. 1 Pet 1:3). The image of this newness of life in the flesh is harvested from and compared to (often in literary proximity) the central image of Christ's bodily resurrection; the fullness of such imagery coming in Rom 6:3–4. In this specific text believers are portrayed as baptized with Christ in death (θάνατον), raised alongside him (ἠγέρθη), and enabled to walk in newness of life (καινότητι ζωῆς). The imagery conjured by this description is nothing short of resurrection to which Paul immediately turns in 6:5 suggesting that those united in Christ's death (θανάτου) will also be united in his resurrection (ἀναστάσεως).

²³ It is important to note here that the following argument for Paul's potential echo is indebted to the work of Richard Hays in which he analyzes the varied hermeneutical approaches to intertextuality. In short: (1) Paul intends the hermeneutical event, (2) Paul's original audience interpret the hermeneutical event, (3) the hermeneutical event convincingly occurs in the text itself without knowledge of Paul or his audience, (4) Paul's modern (individual) reader assesses the personal hermeneutical event, and (5) Paul's modern (collective) reading communities assess the validity of the hermeneutical event. See Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven, Conn.: YUP, 1989), 26. The current section will lean towards the middle (i.e., third) approach. [Paragraph] Further, Hays offers a simplification of the terminological distinction between allusion and echo based upon his synthesis of the above approaches. In this way he characterizes the former as and obvious intertextual reference and the latter merely a subtler one. Hays, *Echoes*, 29. It may be suggested that this is an oversimplification, but to create a more formal distinction by trying to judge Paul's intentional and unintentional applications of a previous text would likely do more harm than good. Therefore, in what follows Paul's potential uses of Isa 26:19 in Rom 11:15 will be referred to as an echo.

²⁴ For a short summary of Paul's exposition and defense of the gospel in 1:18–11:36 see Colin G. Kruse, *Paul's Letter to the Romans*, PNTC (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2012), 81. As for the

nevertheless, it will do well to state that the immediate context of Rom 11 is quite clear by attending to the next item in Paul's diatribe: What then is the salvation for Israel? (11:1).²⁵ This focus is borne out by two instantiations of the same often misunderstood argument. In vv. 12 and 15 Paul announces that salvation has come to the gentiles by stating, "Now if their trespass means riches for world, and if their failure means riches for the Gentiles. . . . For if their rejection means the reconciliation of the world." The synonymous parallelism of the initial bicola in v. 12 reveals that the world in v. 15 is in fact the gentiles and distinguishes them from ethnic Israel in the final cola of v. 15, "what will their acceptance mean but life from the dead?" At this point, the significance of this shift is often described as a lesser-to-greater argument. However, is Paul really expecting his proportionally Gentile readers to follow the logic that the salvation of the Jews is greater (in kind) than the salvation of the rest of the world? Rather, both vv. 12 and 15 exhibit what can be identified as an argument from hardening within Paul's literary context (cf. 11:25). Israel's hardening meant salvation for others in spite of their own death while a repentance from hardening would mean a renewal of life. In the words of Richard Hays: "In each case, the rejection/acceptance pattern plays itself out to the vicarious benefit of others."²⁶ Within

often acknowledged unit of Rom 9–11, many commentators have sought to bracket off this section as speaking primarily about the Gentiles. Robert Mounce for instance argues that the major theme of Rom 9–11 is less concerned with the fate of Israel than a warning against the Gentiles not to presume their newfound position among God's people. See *Romans*, NAC (Nashville, Tenn.: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 218. Contra Hays, *Echoes*, 61. Despite this insistence, it is not necessary to limit Paul to a single message as two things can be true at once: Paul is perturbed by any notion of haughtiness among the gentiles while remaining vitally concerned that his Jewish brothers turned back to Christ.

²⁵ This question is projected in two ways by Paul dividing the chapter into two sections: 11:1–10 and 11:11–36. First, Paul questions God's rejection of his own chosen people in the immediate succession of Abrahamic descent. To this query Paul offers both his own life testimony as a Jew for Christ and the historic parallel of Elijah to suggest that God has retained a remnant who professes belief in the messiah, Jesus. The natural response to open the second section is whether the ethnic Jew, then, stumbled so far as to lose a salvific position among God's people. Paul again responds in kind suggesting that whatever hardening came of Israel it produced faith in the gentiles (11:12, 25; cf. 9:14–29), will eventually give way to envy, and still yet produce a fruitful return among ethnic Israel (albeit based on covenantal faith in Christ).

²⁶ Hays, *Echoes*, 62

the context of 11:15, Paul's echo of "life from the dead" is poised to address the salvation of these others, namely, ethnic Israelites.

A second line of evidence points to the fact that all of Paul's other iterations of the death/life metaphor coincide in close literary proximity with the central image of Christ's own resurrection. Contrarily, while God's raising of Christ Jesus from the dead is indeed found throughout the book of Romans, no such imagery is found in Rom 11. Paul's metaphor stands uniquely unattended carried solely by the weight of ζωῆ and νεκρῶν. As noted above, the corresponding Hebrew terms יָחַי (lex. מוֹת) and יָצַי (lex. הָיָה) play a significant role in Isa 26:19 (cf. 26:14) and provide apt catchwords for Paul's subtle allusion. It is worth reiteration that such an allusion likely points to Paul's use of the Hebrew text as opposed to the LXX due to the textual liberties taken by the latter. While both vv.14 and 19 of LXX Isa 26 retain the noun νεκροί, v. 19 takes the liberty to express those as living from the death precisely as those being resurrected (ἀναστήσονται).

A third line of evidence bolsters Paul's echo of Isa 26:19 in Rom 11:15 by recognizing a related image in the surrounding literary context of each passage. In the Isaian passage prior to v. 19 specific praise is given to God's increasing of the nation within the tricola of 26:15,

But you have increased the nation, O LORD,
 you have increased the nation; you are glorified;
 you have enlarged all the borders of the land.

The prophet's acclamation depicts Israel as being returned to its fullness by the complimentary images of increasing population and reestablishment of its land. Similarly, Paul presents a comparable image in the final cola of Rom 11:12, "How much more will their full inclusion mean?" Paul's usage of πλήρωμα in this context is not entirely clear; nevertheless, in keeping

with the poetic parallelism of these verses it must have direct implications on the salvation of Paul's fellow Israelites. Paul uses this same term (πλήρωμα) in 11:25 fits neatly with the notion of increasing the nation and enlarging the borders of the land in Isa 26. Interestingly, while there is no precise verbal parallel between these two images, such thematic connection is again only available to Paul through the Hebrew text. In fact, the entire portrait of praise concerning both people and land is wholly absent from LXX Isa 26:15. Such imagery has been reinterpreted and reappropriated in continuity with v. 14,

But the dead will not see life,
 nor will physicians raise them up;
 because of this you have brought them and
 destroyed them
 and taken away all their males.
 Increase evils on them, O Lord;
 increase evils on the glorious ones of the earth.²⁷

In this way, then, the thematic connection of enlarging and filling not only bolster the allusive character of Paul's primary metaphor in Rom 11:15 but also provided indication that any allusion by Paul favored the earlier Hebrew tradition.²⁸

²⁷ Translation produced by Albert Pietersma and Benjamin G. Wright, eds. *New English Translation of the Septuagint* (New York, N.Y.: OUP, 2007).

²⁸ This assertion is evidenced by the early attestation of the MT for Isa 26:15 in the Great Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa): "You have added to the nation LORD, you have added to the nation, you are glorified, you have placed far off all the ends of the earth."

Conclusion

The following analysis has argued firstly, that a metaphorical reading of resurrection in Isa 26:19 is justified both within its own literary context as well as within the concept and function of death in Israel's history. Secondly, and to the greater impact of this study, it has been argued that Isa 26:19 is a likely echo for Rom 11:15. Paul's concern for ethnic Israel is not put aside for being a minister to the gentiles; rather, it is through this mystery (and even jealousy) of the gospel that Paul wishes to urge his kinsmen on to repentance. In so doing, Paul echoes and reapplies the prophecy according to Isa 26:19 in order to suggest that should the Jews return from their rejection of God in Christ he might work a resurrection in their present lives.

Bibliography

- Childs, Brevard S. *Isaiah*. The Old Testament Library. Louisville, Tenn.: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001.
- Chisholm, Robert B. *Handbook on the Prophets*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2002.
- Cook, Stephen L. "Deliverance as Fertility and Resurrection: Echoes of Second Isaiah in Isaiah 26." Pages 165–182 in *Formation and Intertextuality in Isaiah 24–27*, eds. J. Todd Hibbard and Hyun Chul Paul Kim. Ancient Israel and Its Literature 17. Atlanta, G.A.: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013.
- Delitzsch, Franz. *Biblical Commentary on the Prophecies of Isaiah*. Vol. 1, Trans. James Martin. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1873.
- Doyle, Brian. "A Literary Analysis of Isaiah 25, 10A." 173–193 in *Studies in the Book of Isaiah: Festschrift Willem A. M. Beuken*, eds. J. Van Ruiten and M. Ver Venne. Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1997.
- Hays, Christopher B. *A Covenant with Death: Death in the Iron Age II and Its Rhetorical Uses in Proto-Isaiah*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2011.
- Hays, Richard B. *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1989.
- Kaiser, Otto. *Isaiah 13–39: A Commentary*. Trans. R. A. Wilson. Philadelphia, Penn.: The Westminster Press, 1974.
- Keller, Hosea. *Metaphor and Rhetoric in Historical Perspective*. Academia Biblica 20. Atlanta, G.A.: Society of Biblical Literature, 2005.
- Kruse, Colin G. *Paul's Letter to the Romans*. Pillar New Testament Commentaries. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2012.

- McAfee, Matthew. "Rephaim, Whisperers, and the Dead in Isaiah 26:13–19: A Ugaritic Parallel." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 135 (2016): 73–94.
- Motyer, J. Alec. *The Prophecy of Isaiah: An Introduction & Commentary*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1993.
- Mounce, Robert. *Romans*. New American Commentary. Nashville, Tenn.: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995.
- Mounce, William D. *Mounce's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old & New Testament Words*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2006.
- Oswalt, John N. *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 1–39*. New International Commentary on the Old Testament. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1986.
- Pietersma, Albert and Benjamin G. Wright, eds. *New English Translation of the Septuagint*. New York, N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 2007.
- Redditt, Paul. "Isaiah 26." *Review & Expositor* 88 (1991): 195–199.
- Schmitz, Philip C. "The Grammar of Resurrection in Isaiah 26:19a–c." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 122 (2003): 145–149.
- Seitz, Christopher R. *Isaiah 1–39. Interpretation*. Louisville, Tenn.: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993.
- Shipp, R. Mark. *Of Dead Kings and Dirges: Myth and Meaning in Isaiah 14:4b–21*. Leiden: Brill, 2002.
- Uwe, Becker. "Tendenzen der Jesajaforschung 1998–2007." *Theologische Rundschau* 74 (2009): 196–228.