

OT751 Isaiah
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Essay 7: Discuss an interesting feature of the text.

An interesting feature of the text in this week's portion of Isaiah is the use of relational terminology. (Oswalt, 490) In these passages, God demonstrates His supremacy over the idols and promises to rescue Israel. At the same time, He is calling them into a relationship with Him. (Oswalt, 490) God reveals His identity in relation to Israel, and they are called to know, believe, and understand who He is as His witness and servant. (Isa 43:10) In various forms that emphasize אני (I) and אתה (you), the Hebrew text brings out the intimate connection between God and His people.

One form that appeared frequently is the addition of a suffixed personal pronoun on a substantive to indicate possession and relationship (William's Hebrew Syntax, 111). For example, in Isaiah 43:3 when God formally declares His identity, He states:

אני יהוה אלהיך, קדוש ישראל מושיעך

(I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your savior)

The suffix ך, which indicates "your"/ "belonging to you" is added to אלהים (God) and מושיע (Savior). God could have simply stated that He is God and the only savior, but He chooses to announce His identity as the God and savior of Israel. The same pattern appears intensively centering around chapter 43 (sometimes in plural form), such as גאלכם/גאלך (your redeemer, 43:14, 44:24), קדושכם (your Holy One, 43:15), מלכם (your king, 43:15). Similarly, the suffix י, which indicates "my"/ "belonging to me" is used when God addresses Israel, such as עדי (my witness) and עבדי (my servant) (43:10).

Another way that the Hebrew text reflects the intimate relationship between God and His people is to directly connect אני and אתה with a preposition. For example, (43:1) לי-אתה and (43:2) אני-אתך. The possessive ל (William's 270) directly connects "you" as belonging to "me" (Thus, "you are mine") and the את of accompaniment (William's 338) shows that "I am with you". The simplicity and directness of the language brings out God's love and passion towards His people in a powerful way. He is not only the almighty God with whom no other can compare, He is also our God who desires to relate with us in a personal, passionate and loving manner.