

“The Sectional Divisions in 1QIsa-b and the Leningrad Codex: A Comparative Study”
Thesis Abstract

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The analysis of the Dead Sea Scrolls has led scholars like Emanuel Tov to ascribe textual affiliations of the biblical scrolls with other witnesses of the Hebrew Bible. Within Tov’s categories, 1QIsa^b has been labeled as “proto-Masoretic” due to the similarity of its consonantal text with the Masoretic Text. This thesis applies Tov’s designation for 1QIsa^b to the division of the text into sections and finds that 1QIsa^b also reflects organizational affiliation with the Leningrad Codex—one of the main extant manuscripts of the Masoretic tradition.

The central comparison of these two manuscripts suggests a significant correlation in the location of the divisions. Further analysis of 1QIsa^b and the Leningradensis regarding the character of the divisions, or type of interval, evidences a more limited agreement in the visual representation of a space in within the text. This study suggests that the sections in 1QIsa^b do not reflect a systematic approach to sense divisions similar to the later rabbinic prescriptions for “open” and “closed” sections. Instead, the comparative study finds that the organizational style of 1QIsa^b closer to the other Isaiah scrolls from Qumran than it is to the Leningrad Codex.

The historical progression in textual layout from the scroll to the codex has clearly had a significant impact on early modes of organization. The evidence from the comparative study of the sense divisions in 1QIsa^b presents a complex picture of organizational correlation and disparity to the Leningrad Codex revealing much regarding scribal practice and the textual transmission of Isaiah at the turn of the common era and the Middle Ages. Textual layout in modern critical editions of the Hebrew Bible, such as the BHS, have lost much of the ancient representation of units within a text. The present study invites us to revisit the meaningful

organization of Isaiah at the beginning of the common era thus regaining a valuable witness, through intentional sense divisions, to the scribe and traditions behind 1QIsa^b.