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**Review of Brittany Kim, "Lengthen Your Tent-Cords": The Metaphorical World of Israel's Household in the Book of Isaiah. University Park, PA: Eisenbrauns, 2018. (Siphrut: Literature and Theology of the Hebrew Scriptures, 23)**

Korpel, M.C.A.

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Brittany KIM, *“Lengthen Your Tent-Cords”*. The Metaphorical World of Israel’s Household in the Book of Isaiah (Siphrut: Literature and Theology of the Hebrew Scriptures 23). University Park, PA, Eisenbrauns, 2018. vii-245 p. 16 × 24. €64.95

This study represents the revision of Brittany Kim’s doctoral dissertation (2014), defended at Wheaton College, under the guidance of Richard Schultz. The central idea in this book is the root metaphor of YHWH’s household, as used in the book of Isaiah. Generally, metaphors related to this root metaphor have been treated separately. The broader approach adopted by Kim gives her the opportunity to include both the metaphor of Zion as daughter, wife and mother, as well as the metaphor of the servant. Thus, she takes more seriously the integral role of the Servant Songs. Of course, one might say that the household metaphor is not compatible with gender equality, especially when focusing on the metaphor of the wife as part of the household, but Kim is right in taking seriously the ancient Near Eastern family rules in her discussion. We cannot change ancient family patterns in the Bible; we only can interpret them differently for modern times (rightly defended by Kim, 185-186).

In four chapters the major metaphors are discussed: the people/Zion as Sons/Children (Chapter 2), as Daughter(s) (Chapter 3), as Mother/Wife (Chapter 4) and as the Servant (Chapter 5). In contrast to earlier studies, Kim also investigates the interrelationship among the four metaphors (Chapter 6). The presentation is clearly structured. Each chapter begins with an overview of the literal use of the metaphor elsewhere in the Bible (associated commonplaces), along with comparable uses of the metaphor in the ancient Near East. This evidence is important for understanding the “cognitive environment” of the metaphor. The major part of each chapter investigates the use of the metaphor in the book of Isaiah, followed by a summary and some conclusions with regard to a possible development of the discussed metaphor in Isaiah.

Chapter 1 begins with a short introduction on metaphor. Already much has been written on this topic in previous studies, and so it is fully justified that this discussion has been kept relatively short. Kim cites the method of analysis proposed by George Kennedy for rhetorical criticism (14-15): 1) delimitation of each rhetorical unit; 2) rhetorical situation of the unit; 3) kind of rhetoric in the light of its aim; 4) observations concerning the arrangement and style of the passage. However, it remains quite difficult to see how these steps are followed in Kim’s discussions of the relevant texts from Isaiah. Apparently, the steps are integrated into the investigation, but not visibly worked out.

In Chapter 2, Kim first discusses texts that refer to the people of Israel as YHWH’s children (e.g., Isa 1,2,4; 30,1-9; 43,6; 45,11; 63,8,16; 64,7). She points out the overlapping metaphors of parent and redeemer (27) which emphasize “YHWH’s role as the people’s advocate and defender”. The second half of the chapter turns to an investigation of texts that present Israel as Zion’s Sons/Children (e.g., Isa 37,3; 50,1-3; 51,17-20; 54,1,13; 57,3; 60,4,9; 62,5; 66,8). Though Kim in her introduction states that in general she translates the Hebrew בניִם as “children” and uses “sons” only when the context requires this option (17-18), she does not single out these exceptional texts. For example, in Isa 51,18 בניִם is rightly translated “sons” (41), even though the discussion starts with a reference to “Mother Zion, and her children”. The decision to translate the text with “sons” needs to be explained.

Two arguments could have been put forward: 1) grammar (masculine participles), and 2) as Kim herself mentions, it was the task of a son to escort his drunken parents home. In the next paragraph, introducing Isa 54,1.13, Kim explicitly mentions Zion's incapacitated "sons". Maybe the pressure that is put on a PhD work can be seen here?

An interesting conclusion from Chapter 2 is that the people of Israel are never depicted as children of YHWH and Zion together, whereas the separate metaphors (children of YHWH, and children of Zion) are quite common. Here, however, a reader would be interested to read some sort of explanation. Are we to find here the deliberate avoidance of the idea of God as one who creates by procreation, in contrast to the ideas that were common in Israel's Umwelt? Kim refutes Roland Frye's claim that God is described with motherly features only with similes, so as to create a distance between YHWH and the image of a mother (33). However, she misses the point that several prophets, in presenting the Exile as God's punishment, seem to accuse especially women for their continuing veneration of goddesses like Ashera. If that is correct, then this could be an argument for a more careful use of female similes for God to prevent misunderstanding.

It is stated that from Isaiah 49 on the mother-child metaphor comes to the fore (35). Given Kim's accurate analysis of the ordered sequence of metaphors in the book of Isaiah, it would have been interesting to consider how the differences and changes in Isaiah may have corresponded to certain historical changes. For example, one might ask whether the emphasis on the mother-child metaphor could be related to the historical situation of exile. Even nowadays, mothers often are the ones who have to take care of their children in times of war.

In Chapter 3, Kim discusses the well-known phrase *בת-שן* (among the discussed texts are Isa 1,8; 10,32; 16,1; 37,22; 49,15; 52,2; 62,11). In the discussion of 49,15, Kim admits that the verse may seem to incorporate the metaphor of God as the husband; however, she points out that this cannot be the intended meaning here (71-72), because the marriage metaphor has not yet appeared at this point in Isaiah. The daughter metaphor would be implicitly present here, which is an interesting analysis. Kim is right that, in fact, no clear mention is made of a marital status of Zion. Furthermore, she discusses the specific phrase "daughter my people" (Isa 22,4), the women of Israel as Zion's daughters (Isa 3,16-17; 4,4; 49,22; 60,4), and finally the women of Israel as YHWH's daughters (Isa 43,6). Kim concludes that the parent-child relationship is in the foreground in each of the discussed texts, even while the daughter metaphor is used in a flexible way.

Several times some intriguing observations are made. For example, Kim points out that Zion is addressed as "daughter" even though her "parents" are never mentioned or implied. A specific aspect of the daughter metaphor is the use of *בת* as a metaphor for cities (57). In the discussion of this metaphor, the opposite use seems to be missing, namely the fact that women also could represent cities. This is clearly the case in a Ugaritic text (KTU 1.40) where the *bt. 'ugrt* "daughter of Ugarit" is not only addressed, with parallel references to the walls of Ugarit and by the gates of Ugarit, but also summoned to take the lead in sacrificing. This makes it clear that in this ritual text the queen of Ugarit is representing the city of Ugarit. Another text that presents a woman as a metaphor for a city is Mic 4,8-10, where the queen of Israel (wife of Achaz, presumably pregnant with Hezekiah) seems to be described as the representation of the city of Zion. Likewise, in the apocryphal Book of Judith the woman Dinah, once raped by Shechem (Gen 34,1-5), is depicted as the representation of the defiled daughter of Zion (Jdt 9,8; see

I. Fischer, *Women Who Wrestled With God*. Biblical Stories of Israel's Beginnings [Collegeville, MN 2005] 98).

Chapter 4 presents Zion as mother and wife. In this chapter three groups of texts are described: Zion as mother of the people of Israel (among the discussed texts are Isa 3,16-17; 4,4; 37,3; 49,17-25; 50,1; 51,17-20; 54,1-3.13; 57,3; 60,4-5; 62,5; 66,7-12), followed by a part on Zion as YHWH's wife (Isa 50,1; 54,5-8; 57,3-13; 62,3-5), as well as Zion as wife of her sons (Isa 62,4-5). After considering carefully the evidence from ancient Near Eastern cultures, Kim concludes that several parallels from outside Israel might be adduced; she points out, however, that all of these texts "emphasize the aspect of sexuality and often imply multiple partners, while the latter [biblical-MK] highlights exclusivity and longevity" (111).

Finally, Chapter 5 discusses the surprising metaphor of the Servant of YHWH, which fits Kim's decision to work out the root metaphor of the household, i.e., the house of the father. According to Kim, the singular servant as a metaphor for a nation is not attested outside Israel (135), but here the ancient Near Eastern idea of the so-called "corporate personality" is overlooked. Often women have been taken as representatives for an entire people (see, e.g., A.M. Wetter, *On Her Account*. Reconfiguring Israel in Ruth, Esther, and Judith [London 2015]). The chapter is divided into four parts: Jacob/Israel as YHWH's servant (among the discussed texts are: Isa 41,8-9; 42,1-7; 42,18-21; 43,8-10; 43,23-24; 44,1-5.24-26; 45,4; 48,20); a second part on an unnamed representative of Israel as YHWH's servant (among the discussed texts are: Isa 49,1-9; 50,4-10; 51,1-8; 52,13 – 53,12); a third part on Zion as YHWH's servant (Isa 51,22); and a fourth on the faithful people as YHWH's servants (Isa 54,17; 56,1-8; 63,16-19; 66,14). In the discussion of Isa 42,1-7 (138-139), dealing with Israel as YHWH's servant, several arguments are made in defense of viewing Israel as the servant, such as the use of the plural in 42,9. The defense would have been more convincing if notice were taken of the Masoretic unit division: the Hebrew text (also Qumran), as well as Greek and Syriac manuscripts, take 42,1-9 as a unit, whereas the division after 42,7 is only rarely supported (in some Greek and Latin manuscripts).

Chapter 6 concludes the study. A sharp distinction is made between the individual servant, portrayed as highly active in working out YHWH's deliverance, and Zion, presented more as a passive servant. Thus, in Kim's words, "the servant and mother images portray two aspects of the same reality — YHWH's restoration of the remnant and of their land" (184). The book closes with very helpful distribution charts showing the occurrences of the discussed metaphors in the book of Isaiah, followed by a bibliography, an index of authors and of scriptural citations.

This study contains well-written and scholarly honest exegetical discussions that might be of help for any scholar interested in these metaphors in the book of Isaiah. The use of recent publications in the detailed textual investigations is impressive. Several times this study opens up new vistas. A good example is the discussion of Isa 62,4-5 with the complicated mixed metaphors of Zion as wife of YHWH as well as of her sons in light of the conceptual blending theory (129-131). This book is a must for all those working on biblical metaphors or on the exegesis of the book of Isaiah.

Protestant Theological University  
Oude Ebbingestraat  
N-9712 HA Groningen  
m.c.a.korpel@pthu.nl

Marjo C. A. KORPEL