Primary text editions in the field of biblical studies are a rarity. Barring the discovery of a new trove of manuscripts and aside from the occasional ostracon found in controlled excavations, the well-known dump from the Al-Aqsa mosque renovation, or on the antiquities market, we have little new and exciting to anticipate. It is thus understandable that when a text edition does appear, reader expectations are very high. Happily, Ulrich and Flint's DJD volume on the Isaiah Scrolls meets—indeed, surpasses—almost every possible expectation.

This work is a landmark in Scrolls studies. Of the first seven scrolls found in 1947, 1QapGen was the only one of the seven to be presented in the DJD series, and then only partially.[1] More was published in 1956 by Nahman Avigad and Yigael Yadin.[2] Millar Burrows published the initial editions of the remaining three “St. Mark's Monastery Scrolls”: 1QpHab and 1QIsa\(^a\) in 1950 and 1QS in 1951, as monographs from the American Schools of Oriental Research.[3] The other three “Hebrew University Scrolls,” 1QH\(^a\), 1QM, and 1QIsa\(^b\), were first published by Eleazar Sukenik (posthumously) in a Hebrew University monograph in 1954 (in Hebrew; the English edition appeared in 1955).[4] Thus, with DJD 32, the two biblical texts of the initial Scrolls discovery are added to the authoritative series. Additionally, with appearance of this volume, the DJD series is formally concluded, bringing closure to a publication history marked by drama (including large dramatic pauses!), tales of conspiracy, academic misbehavior, theological biases, and the emergence of digital reconstructions. That this process ends with the magisterial volume produced by Ulrich and Flint serves as a healing salve and signals that the task has now shifted entirely to the synthetic work of contextualizing and interpreting the Scrolls and their implications.

*The Isaiah Scrolls* is in two volumes, which gives it a unique format in the DJD series. In the first volume, Ulrich and Flint present the photos and transcriptions of the two Isaiah texts from Cave 1: 1QIsa\(^a\) and 1QIsa\(^b\); in the second, the authors introduce the two manuscripts, comment on various physical and linguistic features, and provide nearly one hundred pages of discussion on the textual variants represented by these Isaiah texts. As the authors note, the two-volume format allows the reader to view a plate and its transcription on facing pages in Volume One and have Volume Two open to the corresponding notes regarding textual variants.

Volume One includes a brief preface and then presents the fifty-four plates and transcriptions for the fifty-four columns of 1QIsa\(^a\) followed by twenty plates and transcriptions for the twenty-six columns of 1QIsa\(^b\). Volume Two begins with a fifty-six page general introduction and select bibliography. This introduction covers the discovery of Cave 1 and first seven scrolls and the early history of the two Cave 1 Isaiah scrolls after they were found (pp. 1–14), as well as the history of the various sets of photographs (pp. 15–24). The introduction concludes with a contribution by Martin Abegg on the linguistic profile of the two Isaiah scrolls (pp. 25–41).

The presentation of both Isaiah scrolls follows the general introduction. For each scroll, Ulrich and Flint provide a specific introduction (pp. 59–95 for 1QIsa\(^a\) and pp. 197–211 for 1QIsa\(^b\)) in which they cover the physical description and content, the palaeography and date (including tables comparing the orthography of a variety of forms with those in the Masoretic text of the Leningrad codex), sense divisions, and textual character. For the longer text of 1QIsa\(^a\), they add sections on scribal marks, the Old Greek translation (which they claim “look[ed] generally like 1QIsa\(^a\)” [p. 92]), and the scribe(s) behind the text. It is this last
addition that reflects most fully the many years the authors have studied the text of 1QIsa. Rather than subscribing to the view that different scribes copied columns I–XXVII and columns XXVIII–LIV, they conclude that “a single scribe originally copied the entire book, and a series of subsequent hands made a few corrections and inserted expansions” (p. 63). They provide three primary reasons for their conclusion: 1) many of the distinctions between the two halves “could, and probably should, be attributed more to the parent text” (p. 63); 2) the letter forms in both halves are virtually identical; and 3) similar scribal idiosyncrasies are displayed in both halves.

Following the introduction to each text is the heart of Volume Two: the Notes and Readings and the list of Textual Variants for each Scroll (pp. 97–118 and 119–93 for 1QIsa and pp. 214–33 and 235–53 for 1QIsa).

This work is at once a pleasure to use and a challenge to review, but for the same reason: it has been done so well that there is pathetically little with which to find fault. The beautiful photographs, the detailed lists of variants, the measured commentary, and the thoughtful layout in two volumes—everything in this work is exemplary. For example, although I have read numerous accounts of the fascinating history of the Scrolls discovery, I learned additional details from this focused account of the Cave 1 Isaiah scrolls. Even the history of the photographs was an interesting read.

Similarly, the linguistic profile should be read carefully by anyone interested in historical Hebrew linguistics. I will here mention only two of the many features that caught my attention. First, Abegg states that the “conjunctive waw alone accounts for 349 variations in 1QIsa and 29 in the smaller 1QIsa; 1QIsa in and of itself contains 45% of the corpus-wide total of approximately 800 variations involving waw” (p. 36). Abegg notes that nearly half of these variations reflect the addition of a waw to “nearly every verbal form” (p. 37), that there was also a “penchant for adding waw before the particle לא (p. 37), and that the issue as a whole requires further study. I agree that the issue is worthy of focused study and I wonder whether these patterns reflect the same general phenomenon: the increasing use of the waw as a general phrase-edge marker, whether the highest phrase level (clause) or a lower one (verb phrase).[5]

The second feature of Abegg's study that I will mention is the linguistic evidence for a “bifurcation between columns XXVII and XXVIII that corresponds with the end of Isaiah chapter 33” (p. 40). After listing the evidence (for example, differences between the two halves with regard to the use of the longer 2ms clitic pronoun ν₂, the particle יפ spelled normally or as נ, and the presence of the paragogic nun), he concludes that “the scroll displays in the second half a higher percentage of spellings and forms [than (RDH)] which are common in the nonbiblical manuscripts from Qumran” (p. 40). It is on this issue that I will offer the first of my two hesitantly critical comments.

While Abegg presents linguistic evidence for some sort of textual seam between chapters 33 and 34 (columns XXVII and XXVIII) in the 1QIsa copy of Isaiah, Flint and Ulrich argue that the scroll is primarily the product of a single scribe, for the three reasons mentioned above. The second (similarity of letter forms) and third (similarity of idiosyncrasies) reasons are compelling, but their first reason, that the parent texts differed, while possible, leaves too much unexplained. It is perplexing that their interaction with Abegg's linguistic evidence is superficial: “The tendency in the second half of the scroll toward later orthographic and morphological forms may perhaps be attributed to the fact that Second Isaiah was originally a separate work” (p. 63). Moreover, identifying Isa 34 with the beginning of Second Isaiah does not reflect the near consensus critical view that Second Isaiah consists of Isa 40–55.[6] It is possible that there is no good recoverable explanation for the linguistic evidence that distinguishes the two halves of the scroll, but rather than admit this or suggest some promising direction for investigating the issue further, Ulrich and Flint have, to put it colloquially, punted on first down. That being said, I must admit that this is the only whiff of a criticism I can muster for Volume Two.

I also have no substantive criticism of Volume One, but I will raise an issue involving how readers should use the photographs. There is no doubt that pouring over the photographs in this work is the closest any
current or future scholar (excepting the preservation experts in Israel) will get to the actual artifacts. Thankfully, the clarity of the plates is breathtaking—the reader can visually feel the texture of the vellum and the stitches, creases, and tears in the manuscripts. Yet, readers must use these images with caution, even readers who primarily work with the transcriptions and consult the photographs only on specific points to note, for example, a letter shape or a scribal correction. First, the reader must be aware that the plates represent digitally re-mastered images from early sets of photographs: for 1QIsa\(^a\) they use John C. Trever’s 1948 color photographs and Helena Bieberkraut’s 1949 and Najib Albina’s 1952 photographs for 1QIsa\(^b\).[7] The authors acknowledge and specify the precise nature of the digital editing at the outset (Vol 2, pp. 20, 24): the color was lightened to increase the contrast between the leather and ink, the bottom portions of ten columns were cropped (although no text was omitted), the blue background of Trever’s original photographs of 1QIsa\(^a\) was removed, blemishes produced by air bubbles on the negatives were removed, and an artificial shadow has been added in order to create the perception of depth while the shadows created by Trever’s use of multiple light sources have been removed.

All these digital changes produce beautiful images that nearly jump off the page. But this process also creates a potentially disturbing situation: while the unadulterated images would certainly obscure some features of the artifact itself, the digitally enhanced images present something that simply does not exist. Most readers will likely not mind the enhancements, but they should at least be aware that they are not looking either at Trever’s (or Bieberkraut’s or Albina’s) original photographs or at the scrolls themselves. Moreover, for all the intense work that clearly went into the digital re-mastering, a detail by the first word on line 19 of the first column of 1QIsa\(^a\) should warn the reader that, as outstanding as these images are, they should not be used without recourse to other available visual sources (such as the Israel Museum’s on-line edition or the digital edition of Trever’s photographs in Accordance Bible Software).[8]

<table>
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<tr>
<th>DJD 32 (Trever, re-mastered)</th>
<th>Israel Museum (Bar-Hama)</th>
<th>Accordance (Trever, re-mastered)</th>
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<tr>
<td><img src="image1" alt="Plate" /></td>
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First, even from the poor quality digital selections, the color difference is clear, with the Israel Museum copy offering the most realistic coloring, whereas the Trever images in both DJD 32 and the Accordance module present the most legible writing. Second, the blue background of Trever’s photographs is clear in the Accordance image, while it has been erased in the DJD 32 image (and presumably the 2004–2006 Bar-Hama photographs were taken against a white background). Third, an even clearer difference between the three images is the presence of an extra mark on the DJD 32 plate, the black “one-eyed smiley face” below the final two consonants of the word פָּנָי. Although this was by far the most prominent extra mark I found, there were numerous other small “smudges” (e.g., Column 28, below lines 4, 5, and 8) or “hairs” (e.g., Column 11, bottom right, Column 24, before line 8) throughout the plates. These marks were not on either other set of the photographs and, puzzlingly, sometimes a mark towards the edge of one of the DJD images appears on one plate but not the overlapping section of the next plate (e.g., the dark smudge on Plate 29 at the end of line 16 from Column 28, but not present on Plate 28). All this being the case, let me be crystal clear: none of these marks interfere with reading the text. But they should serve to remind the reader to keep the nature of the photographs always in mind and to check any specific feature of the Scroll against the other available images.

In conclusion, Ulrich and Flint should be commended for producing a truly impressive work. Given the work’s scope and quality, my critical comments above are admittedly nit-picky and should be read with
that caveat in mind. For anyone interested in the Scrolls, textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible, or Isaiah, consulting these two volumes is a must.

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