



Reflections of Empire in Isaiah 1–39 Responses to Assyrian Ideology

Shawn Zelig Aster

Explore the hidden polemic within the majestic prophecies of Isaiah

In this new book Shawn Zelig Aster relates the prophecies found in First Isaiah to the historical events of the eighth century BCE, when Assyria controlled much of the ancient Near East. Aster elucidates the arguments of Isaiah 1–2, 6–8, 10–12, 14, 19, 31, and 36–37 by explaining that the passages contain hidden polemic against the imperial propaganda of the Assyrian Empire. Aster illustrates that the prophet adapts motifs from Assyrian propaganda, while subverting Assyrian claims to universal dominion, and argues that Isaiah does this in order to promote belief in a single omnipotent God who is more powerful than any human empire. The book exposes the meaning behind these passages in Isaiah, as well as the history of Judah and Israel in the period 745–701 BCE.

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Features:

- A critique of the predominant scholarly position that dates the material of First Isaiah to the Babylonian period and later
- An analysis of the theology of First Isaiah in relation to Assyrian imperial propaganda
- A strong case for dating First Isaiah to the time of Tiglath-pileser III, Sargon, and Sennacherib

Shawn Zelig Aster is Senior Lecturer in Land of Israel and Biblical Studies at Bar-Ilan University, in Israel. He is the author of *The Unbeatable Light: Melammu and Its Biblical Parallels* (Ugarit-Verlag) and many articles.

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