**Variants due to Graphical Similarity Evidencing a Bisection of 1QIsaa**

The division of the Isaiah Scroll into two parts (columns 1-27 and columns 28-54) has been the subject of considerable scholarly discussion, and multiple explanations have been offered for it. Scholars have offered a number of justifications for the claim that the two parts of the scroll should be considered separate: the presence of a three-line gap at the end of column 27; different orthographic peculiarities in each part; and differences in the frequency of scribal corrections and omission of guttural letters. In this lecture, I will present another piece of evidence that reinforces the theory of the scroll's division into two parts. Surprisingly, this evidence has not yet been dealt with sufficiently in the scholarly literature.

My central claim is that it is possible to discern a difference between the sections in the frequency of interchange of letters due to graphical similarity: These interchanges are twice as frequent in the first half of the scroll as compared to the second half. This discovery presents a novel contribution to the unresolved scholarly debate regarding whether there is a bisection between the first and second halves of 1QIsaa, or whether there is no such division and the ostensible difference is merely a result of scribal inconsistency. The lecture will further strengthen the argument for bisection, by presenting a new criterion that clearly points to a distinction between the parts.

The lecture will detail the interchange of letters between the Masoretic version of the text and 1QIsaa, describe the frequency of these interchanges, and analyze them from a paleographic perspective.