

**Empathy, Metaphor and Symbol:  
A Rhetorical Study of the Servant Songs in their Deutero-Isaianic Context  
Based on the Work of D. J. A. Clines**

**by  
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She taught me what her uncle once taught her:  
How easily the biggest coal block split  
If you got the grain and hammer angled right.

The sound of that relaxed alluring blow,  
Its co-opted and obliterated echo,  
Taught me to hit, taught me to loosen,

Taught me between the hammer and the block  
To face the music. Teach me now to listen,  
To strike it rich behind the linear black.

from *Clearances*  
by Seamus Heaney

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I hereby declare that I have composed this thesis and that the work contained herein is my own.

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## Abbreviations

AB	Anchor Bible
<i>AJBI</i>	<i>Annual of the Japanese Biblical Institute</i>
AnBib	Analecta Biblica
ATANT	Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments
BDB	<i>Brown, Driver and Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon</i>
BETL	Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologiarum lovaniensium
<i>BibSac</i>	<i>Bibliotheca Sacra</i>
BIS	Biblical Interpretation Series
<i>BJRL</i>	<i>Bulletin of the John Rylands Library</i>
BKAT	Biblischer Kommentar: Altes Testament
BWANT	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten and Neuen Testament
BZAW	Beihefte zur <i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
CB	Coniectanea Biblica
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CBQMS	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i> Monograph Series
<i>ETL</i>	<i>Ephemerides theologicae lovanienses</i>
<i>EvQ</i>	<i>Evangelical Quarterly</i>
<i>ExpTimes</i>	<i>Expository Times</i>
FAT	Forschungen zum Alten Testament
FIOTL	Formation and Interpretation of Old Testament Literature
FThL	Forum theologicae linguisticae
GKC	<i>Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar</i> , ed. by E. Kautzsch and trans. by A. E. Cowley
<i>HTR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
<i>HUCA</i>	<i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>
ICC	The International Critical Commentary
<i>Int</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
<i>JAOS</i>	<i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JJS</i>	<i>Journal of Jewish Studies</i>
<i>JNES</i>	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>
<i>JNSL</i>	<i>Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages</i>
<i>JQR</i>	<i>Jewish Quarterly Review</i>
JSNTSup.	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i> Supplement Series
<i>JSOT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
JSOTSup.	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i> Supplement Series
<i>JSS</i>	<i>Journal of Semitic Studies</i>
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
KAT	Kommentar zum Alten Testament
LCL	Loebe Classical Library
LXX	Septuagint
MT	Massoretic Text
NICOT	The New International Commentary on the Old Testament

OBT	Overtures to Biblical Theology
OTL	Old Testament Library
OTS	Oudtestamentische Studiën
<i>RB</i>	<i>Revue biblique</i>
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
<i>SJT</i>	<i>Scottish Journal of Theology</i>
<i>StTh</i>	<i>Studia theologica</i>
<i>ThWAT</i>	<i>Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament</i>
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
<i>VT</i>	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
VTSup.	Supplement to <i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
<i>ZAW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
<i>ZThK</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche</i>

## Abstract

The introductory chapter mentions the work of B. Duhamel on the book of Isaiah and his arguments for the existence of four servant songs (Isa. 42.1-4; 49.1-6; 50.4-9; and 52.13-53.12) within chs. 40-55. These chapters are now frequently referred to Deutero-Isaiah (DI). Several works summarising proposals for the identity of the servant in DI are discussed, and recent opinions disputing the distinctiveness of the songs within their DI context are presented. The trend towards an interpretation of the songs within DI is not unrelated to rhetorical criticism and a short overview of the work of some scholars using this method in DI is provided. Several works in the last few years have noted the rhetorical study of Isa. 52.13-53.12 (Isa. 53) offered by D. J. A. Clines, *I, He, We, and They*. Clines' study is summarised and reactions to it are given. It is suggested that his approach may provide a model for studying the other songs and a starting point in order to obtain further insight into the possible identity of the servant and the relationship between the songs and the wider DI context. The next chapter provides and discusses a translation of the notoriously difficult Isa. 53. Chapter 3 presents an overview of rhetorical criticism, and Isa. 53 is then studied according to its precepts. Clines had argued that the poem centres on the servant but it is proposed that the poem also centres on the first person plural persona, Clines' *we*. His proposals concerning the effect of the servant on the reader are modified. Definitions of empathy are given and it is argued that the poem elicits empathy for both the servant and *us*. It is then suggested that empathy informs other relationships described in the poem. In the next two chapters it is proposed that empathy informs relationships depicted within 42.1-4 and 49.1-6 and that these poems too elicit empathy from the reader. In chapter 6 it is argued that Isa. 50.4-11 can be interpreted as a poetic unit, one which similarly describes relationships informed by empathy and elicits empathy. Chapter 7 argues that empathy connects the songs with the wider DI context. In chapter 8, a study of first and third person language related to the servant suggests that these are poems distinct within DI, thereby creating a tension with the preceding chapter. It is further suggested that the poems containing first person language may function like soliloquies and all of the poems may particularly focus on empathy. Chapter 9 notes the trend towards the identification of the servant as a metaphor and symbol, and suggests that this terminology requires clarification. Definitions of both are presented. The next chapter summarises recent ideas concerning the provenance of DI and argues that DI sought to create the concept of Israel. It is also noted that Jacob/Israel, the 2mpl found throughout DI and the servant of the songs are described with a host of metaphors. The task of creation and the variety of metaphors are consistent with the creative function of metaphors. The servant may be a symbolic vehicle within a metaphorical statement. In the final chapter, it is argued that the songs evoke several metaphors in which the servant is the vehicle, and the songs themselves function as artistic symbols whose meaning is the very participation in them. Empathy thus encourages participation, exists within participation and is one vital aspect of the meaning of the songs. Areas for further research related to empathy are proposed.

## Chapter 1

### Introduction

#### 1.1 B. Duhm

Bernard Duhm's commentary, *Das Buch Jesaia* (1892),<sup>1</sup> generated a century of debate which has had far reaching ramifications for the conception of the Book of Isaiah and its contents. He argued that the Book of Isaiah developed from a collection of chs. 1-12 and 13-23; the binding of these chapters with chs. 24-35 and their conclusion through the supplement of chapters 36-39; and the addition of chs. 40-66.<sup>2</sup> Each of the three sections, he suggests, had its own prehistory and only in 70 BCE was the book drawn to a conclusion.<sup>3</sup>

Duhm found three levels of redaction in chs. 40-66 and his interpretation of this section has been particularly influential. Chapters 40-55, written by an author dubbed 'Deutero-Isaiah'<sup>4</sup> in Lebanon in approximately 540 BCE, constitute the oldest section (excluding later additions). A later, post-exilic section deriving from the work of another poet<sup>5</sup> is found in 42.1-4; 49.1-6; 50.4-9 and 52.12-53.12. These Ebed-Jahwe Lieder, often called servant songs,<sup>6</sup> are probably older than chs. 56-66 but were not accepted as an original part of chs. 40-55. They were lost or were not suitable. The form and content of chs. 56-66 suggest another writer, whom Duhm labels 'Trito-Isaiah',<sup>7</sup> and the possible division of this section into two smaller units (chs. 56-60 and 61-66) may result from a redactor.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Originally published in 1892, the last edition is used here: B. Duhm, *Das Buch Jesaia*, 5th ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1968) [Henceforth: Duhm].

<sup>2</sup> Duhm, pp. 8-10.

<sup>3</sup> Duhm, p. 15.

<sup>4</sup> Henceforth, DI.

<sup>5</sup> In the introduction to 42.1-4, Duhm argues that the additions to the poems found in 42.5-7 and 50.10, 11 suggest that the songs probably formed a special book. The additions, he suggests, came from the author who inserted the poems into DI where room on the border was found or between paragraphs, taking no consideration of the connection with DI (Duhm, p. 311).

<sup>6</sup> While previous examinations of Duhm's songs have frequently capitalised both 'Servant' and 'Songs' (cf. C. R. North, *The Suffering Servant in Deutero-Isaiah*, 2nd edn. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1956) [Henceforth: North, *Suffering Servant*]), the following discussion will refer to them without capitalisation.

<sup>7</sup> Henceforth, TI.

<sup>8</sup> Duhm, pp. 14-15.

According to Duhm, the songs may rely on Jeremiah, DI and Job, and were apparently read by TI and the author of Malachi. Probably composed in the first half of the 5th century BCE in the midst of a Jewish community, they depict a historical teacher of the Torah and pastor.<sup>9</sup> The songs contain similarities in language and thought to DI but a number of characteristics suggest their secondary nature. The excision of the songs from the context would leave no gap in the text. They can be distinguished from their context by virtue of their style, their quiet language and the symmetry of the stichoi and strophes. Their principal topic, the servant of God, is not foreign to DI but it is altered. In DI, the servant Israel is chosen for a wonderful future but is now blind, deaf and plundered; the hero of the songs is an innocent disciple of Yahweh, not a prophet but a prophetic disciple, appointed for a mission to the people and to the heathen. This hero goes about his task in a silence contrasting with the noise of DI. He suffers from a leprosy caused by Yahweh, a suffering dissimilar to the abuse Job or Jeremiah received at the hands of the unbelieving people or that which Israel experienced from a foreign oppressor.<sup>10</sup>

## 1.2 The Duhmian Legacy

C. R. Seitz has written that Duhm “published what has come to be regarded as an ‘epoch-making’ commentary on the Book of Isaiah”.<sup>11</sup> Scholars prior to Duhm had noted the differences between chapters 1-39 and 40-66<sup>12</sup> but it was his distinction between DI and TI which provided “a much sharper profile for Deutero-Isaiah”.<sup>13</sup> Recent studies in Isaiah have attempted to locate connections amongst the three divisions proposed by Duhm and explain the manner in which the book has developed.

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<sup>9</sup> Duhm, p. 19.

<sup>10</sup> Duhm, p. 311.

<sup>11</sup> C. R. Seitz, *Zion's Final Destiny: The Development of the Book of Isaiah* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), p. 1 [Henceforth: Seitz, *Zion's Final Destiny*].

<sup>12</sup> Seitz, *Zion's Final Destiny*, p. 2.

<sup>13</sup> Seitz, *Zion's Final Destiny*, p. 1. The relationship between scholarly presumptions, the provenance of DI and the prophet amongst the exiles is discussed by H. M. Barstad in *The Babylonian Captivity of the Book of Isaiah: 'Exilic' Judah and the Provenance of Isaiah 40-55* (Oslo: Novus Forlag, 1997). This topic will be considered in greater detail in chapter 10.

The literature on this topic is growing steadily<sup>14</sup> and it would be fair to suggest that this wider concern with the entire book provides the framework within which any Isaiah study takes place.

This interest in the Book of Isaiah has ramifications for the present study. R. J. Coggins has recently asked whether we still need a DI in light of this recent research. He notes that the term DI might refer to the group of oracles found in chapters 40-55 or the proposed anonymous prophet located by many scholars in Babylon in approximately 540 BCE. To speak of DI as a body of oracles when a substantial Proto-Isaiah<sup>15</sup> existed might have been acceptable previously, but such presumptions will no longer suffice due to the complex redactional process found in PI.<sup>16</sup> So too, the unity of DI cannot necessarily be assumed.<sup>17</sup> He further argues that there “is no external evidence to support the proposal” that DI existed amongst the Judaeen exiles in Babylon ca. 542 BCE.<sup>18</sup> To study DI or any group of passages within DI therefore requires some argument that 40-55 can be distinguished within the wider Isaianic context even if they cannot or should not be separated completely.<sup>19</sup> Arguments in favour of a delimitation of chapters 40-55 within 1-66 will be provided in chapter 7 with due recognition that the boundaries may be porous. If, as Coggins suggests, these chapters did not originate in Babylon with a prophet in exile, then the presumptions made by many previous scholars cannot necessarily be accepted uncritically. Questions of provenance will be addressed briefly in the penultimate chapter, after the literature itself has been examined.

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<sup>14</sup> For excellent summaries of the recent scholarship, see Seitz, *Zion's Final Destiny*, pp. 1-35; H. G. M. Williamson, *The Book Called Isaiah: Deutero-Isaiah's Role in Composition and Redaction* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), pp. 1-18; M. E. Tate, 'The Book of Isaiah in Recent Study' in *Forming Prophetic Literature: Essays on Isaiah and the Twelve in Honor of J. D. W. Watts* (JSOTSup. 235; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), pp. 27-56. Many examples of work which attempt to delineate these connections can be found in *The Book of Isaiah/Le livre d'Isaïe*, ed. by J. Vermeylen (BETL 81; Leuven: University Press, 1989) and in *Writing and Reading the Scroll of Isaiah: Studies of an Interpretive Tradition*, vol. 1, ed. by C. C. Broyles and C. A. Evans (FIOT 1; Leiden: Brill, 1997).

<sup>15</sup> Henceforth, PI.

<sup>16</sup> R. J. Coggins, 'Do We Still Need Deutero-Isaiah?', *JSOT* 80 (1998), pp. 77-92 (pp. 78-79) [Henceforth: Coggins].

<sup>17</sup> Coggins, p. 79.

<sup>18</sup> Coggins, p. 91.

<sup>19</sup> Coggins himself notes that some literary and theological features differentiate these chapters from most that precedes, though it is difficult to establish the weight that should be granted to such characteristics (Coggins, p. 86). He does not describe what these features are.



## 1.3 Identity of the Servant of Yahweh

### 1.3.1 Introduction

In his proposed identification of the servant Duhm is no different from those who have preceded and followed him. An array of identities and supporting arguments has been proposed through the centuries and since the time of Duhm. An analysis of this material might constitute a major work in itself and thus any work on the servant songs must contend with the vast quantity of material. In light of this consideration, two observations might be made. Firstly, a study of the servant songs which does not specifically propose to analyse the scholarly materials is best initiated with a brief description of a selection of the summaries of the proposed identity of the servant. This task will be undertaken presently. Secondly, any new work on the songs might attempt to build quite consciously on the comments made by previous scholars lest it become lost in the quantity of material. Thus, any introduction to any new work might be more effective if it attempts to legitimate the task in light of recent scholarship rather than provide a comprehensive review of all of the materials. In light of these considerations, a presentation of selected scholars who have analysed the field will precede an attempt to identify space for a contribution to the studies on the songs.

### 1.3.2 Summaries of Identifications

In 1948 C. R. North provided a study of the myriad of suggested identities for the servant.<sup>20</sup> He provides an excellent description of the proposed identities that had been offered before the time of Duhm<sup>21</sup> and those that have been proposed since Duhm.<sup>22</sup> The variety of proposals is staggering and thus North helpfully initiates the study with a summary of the four theories which most widely accepted at the time: the servant as an anonymous contemporary of DI; the servant as DI himself; the collective

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<sup>20</sup> C. R. North, *The Suffering Servant in Deutero-Isaiah* (London: Oxford University Press, 1948) [Henceforth: North, *Suffering Servant*<sup>1</sup>]. The second edition, mentioned in n. 6, was published in 1956 and contains only a few corrections to the first, as mentioned in the preface. The later edition is used here.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. pp. 6-46.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. pp. 47-116.

theory; and the messianic theory.<sup>23</sup> In his own examination of the songs, he argues that they originate from the same hand as the remainder of DI, though possibly at a later date.<sup>24</sup> He concludes his examination of the materials with a suggestion, based partly on the work of H. Wheeler Robinson,<sup>25</sup> that there is a direction of DI's thought about the servant, "from collective Israel to an individual who was neither himself nor anyone else who had lived hitherto".<sup>26</sup>

Some years later, H. H. Rowley referred to North's work as "a masterly review" of the materials.<sup>27</sup> Rowley then offers a summary of the materials which is not entirely dissimilar to that offered by North, with a clutch of proposals mentioned. He notes the connections between the songs and the DI context<sup>28</sup> and further suggests that North appeared to find only linear progress in the movement from collective to individual. Rowley favours a development "from the thought that Israel is the servant to the thought of an individual Servant *par excellence*, without abandoning the thought of Israel as still the Servant". He thus sees an oscillation in the thought of the prophet.<sup>29</sup> The individual servant *par excellence* is a future figure<sup>30</sup> and he thus has much sympathy with the messianic interpretation.<sup>31</sup>

In 1978 C. G. Kruse provided an overview of interpretive trends on the servant songs since North.<sup>32</sup> He focusses on those articles which "present fresh interpretations

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<sup>23</sup> North, *Suffering Servant*<sup>2</sup>, pp. 3-5.

<sup>24</sup> North, *Suffering Servant*<sup>2</sup>, pp. 137-188.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. H. Wheeler Robinson, *Corporate Personality in Ancient Israel*, rev. edn. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1981). J. W. Rogerson offers perceptive comments on and criticisms of the work of Lévy Bruhl, on whom Wheeler Robinson based much of his analysis, and of questions some of the assumptions made by Wheeler Robinson (J. W. Rogerson, *Anthropology and the Old Testament* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1984), esp. pp. 54-59). Note too those made by Clements more recently (R. E. Clements, 'Isaiah 53 and the Restoration of Israel' in *Jesus and the Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 and Christian Origins*, ed. by W. H. Bellinger, Jr. and W. R. Farmer (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1998), pp. 39-54 (p. 43)).

<sup>26</sup> North, *Suffering Servant*<sup>2</sup>, p. 216.

<sup>27</sup> H. H. Rowley, 'The Servant of the Lord in the Light of Three Decades of Criticism', in *The Servant of the Lord and Other Essays on the Old Testament*, 2nd edn., rev. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1965), pp. 3-60 (p. 3) [Henceforth: Rowley].

<sup>28</sup> Rowley, pp. 51-52.

<sup>29</sup> Rowley, p. 56.

<sup>30</sup> Rowley, p. 54.

<sup>31</sup> Rowley, p. 59.

<sup>32</sup> C. G. Kruse, 'The Servant Songs: Interpretive Trends Since C. R. North', *Studia Biblica et Theologica* 8 (1978), pp. 3-27 [Henceforth: Kruse].

or additional evidence in support of an older position”.<sup>33</sup> He then reviews 18 articles which fit his criteria and provides a useful summary of the trends which he has spotted between North and his own writing. He suggests that there is “a strikingly widespread return to the view that the servant songs belong with the rest of Deutero-Isaiah. Most modern scholars are unhappy with the trend, started by Duhm, to separate the songs from their literary context”.<sup>34</sup> Kruse argues that there has been an “almost universal abandoning of the identification of the servant as Israel” and thus “the individual traits of the servant are now widely acknowledged”. Few scholars, however, wish to identify the servant with some historic person or persons, though there are a few exceptions.<sup>35</sup> Some have noted the influence of Near Eastern ritual myths on the songs but this affinity may be superficial rather than fundamental. Some have argued that the anonymity of the servant is intentional and others continue to emphasise the ‘extra dimension’ of the songs, in which the servant idea “goes beyond its own historic context and points prophetically to the future”.<sup>36</sup>

In 1985 H. Haag offered another comprehensive summary of interpretations of the servant.<sup>37</sup> His approach is not dissimilar to that of North, placing the various proposals concerning the identity of the servant under appropriate headings. In the paragraph concluding a survey of the most recent material he notes the five most common identifications: the corporate personality; Israel; a messianic figure; the prophet DI; and a character whose identity has been consciously veiled.<sup>38</sup> In this distillation he echoes the comments made by North at the beginning of his review, though some differences are apparent. North interprets the corporate personality theory as one of the collective interpretations,<sup>39</sup> the contemporary of DI has apparently become less prominent and an emphasis on the veiled identity has become conspicuous.

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<sup>33</sup> Kruse, p. 3.

<sup>34</sup> Kruse, p. 24.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. his comments on p. 24.

<sup>36</sup> Kruse, p. 25.

<sup>37</sup> H. Haag, *Der Gottesknecht bei Deuterojesaja* (Erträge der Forschung 233; Darmstadt: Wissenschaftlichen Buchgesellschaft, 1985) [Henceforth: Haag].

<sup>38</sup> Haag, p. 156.

<sup>39</sup> North, *Suffering Servant*<sup>2</sup>, pp. 103-110.

S. Sekine has quite recently provided yet another overview of proposals of the identity of the servant<sup>40</sup> in which he presents the variety of interpretations in a number of categories similar to those found in the preceding summaries.<sup>41</sup> His discussion is of less use than the scholars mentioned above, however. Though his observations are not irrelevant to the other songs, he focusses primarily on the fourth servant song and he is interested in the redaction of the song and of DI rather than a presentation of the proposed identities.<sup>42</sup>

This brief presentation of some summaries of the proposed identities of the servant simply provides a flavour of the vastness and complexity of the discussion. Not only is there a multitude of identities from which to choose, but conclusions drawn by some of these scholars who have surveyed the field have been questioned. Rowley wonders if North's conclusion is adequate; some of the observations of Kruse are directly contradicted by more recent scholars;<sup>43</sup> and an examination of Sekine's study leads one to wonder if he has summarised each scholar appropriately.<sup>44</sup> These summaries are nevertheless helpful in providing an overview of the scholarly efforts which have been exerted in the discussion of the servant and the background which must be acknowledged in any discussion of the servant.

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<sup>40</sup> S. Sekine, 'Identity and Authorship in the Fourth Song of the Servant: A Redactional Attempt at the Second Isaianic Theology of Redemption: Part 1', *AJBI* 21 (1995), pp. 29-56 [Henceforth: Sekine, Part 1] and 'Identity and Authorship in the Fourth Song of the Servant: A Redactional Attempt at the Second Isaianic Theology of Redemption: Part 2', *AJBI* 22 (1996), pp. 3-30 [Henceforth: Sekine, Part 2].

<sup>41</sup> The collective, subdivided into the collective and ideal or minority; the individual, subdivided into the messianic, the unspecified individual, the historically specified and DI; and the fluid, essentially the corporate personality theory.

<sup>42</sup> The first three songs were co-authored by DI and a redactor-disciple who then added extra sections; the fourth song was written by a disciple of DI (Sekine, Part 1, pp. 54-56). The servant as originally described was the messiah but the redactor interpreted the messianic servant to be DI. In the present context the servant is DI and also Israel with DI at its nucleus (Sekine, Part 2, pp. 7-8; cf. pp. 14-15).

<sup>43</sup> Reventlow has recently argued that the majority of modern scholars accept Duhm's proposal that the four songs originate from a separate source (H. G. Reventlow, 'Basic Issues in the Interpretation of Isaiah 53' in *Jesus and the Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 and Christian Origins*, ed. by W. H. Bellinger, Jr. and W. R. Farmer (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1998), pp. 23-38 (p. 24)).

<sup>44</sup> For example, he notes that Clines favours an interpretation in which the identity of the servant remains unspecified. Sekine includes him with other scholars who think that this anonymity facilitates a tie to Christ. Though Clines' diagram of the relationships in the poem and his concluding observations might be creatively used to support such an interpretation, clear connections with Christ do not seem to inform his discussion (D. J. A. Clines, *I, He, We, and They: A Literary Approach to Isaiah 53* (JSOTSup. 1; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1976), pp. 39; 64-65 [Henceforth: Clines]).

## 1.4 The Songs and Their Context

### 1.4.1 Introduction

Duhm separated the servant songs from their DI context, as mentioned in Section 1. This proposal has spawned a virtual industry as scholars have attempted to dispute, support and/or refine his arguments. In the preceding discussion, North and Rowley interpreted the songs within their DI context and Kruse too had suggested that numerous scholars prefer to read the songs in this context. Landy has recently offered a relevant observation:

German scholarship tends to isolate the servant songs from the rest of Deutero-Isaiah, to see them as a separate collection...In English scholarship, in contrast, we encounter increasing scepticism about the very existence of the servant songs, a refusal to isolate them from their Deutero-Isaianic context and the Isaianic tradition as a whole...<sup>45</sup>

The resistance towards an isolation of the songs has been expressed by a number of recent scholars. H. M. Barstad has stridently opposed Duhm's theory. He argues that the songs belong to their context and the scholarly myth of the songs grew out of Duhm's "haphazard allegations".<sup>46</sup> The scholarly tradition has placed itself between the text and reader, replacing the text as authority. He wonders if the theory of the songs provided a continuing particularity after critical examinations of the text cast doubt on the idea that the songs prophesy Jesus. Theological concerns may have played a role in the development of the theory.<sup>47</sup> Barstad unfortunately does not adequately address Duhm's admittedly general observations, mentioned in Section 1, nor does he address in any suitable manner the frequently proposed distinctions between the servant of the

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<sup>45</sup> F. Landy, 'The Construction of the Subject and the Symbolic Order: A Reading of the Last Three Suffering Servant Songs', in *Among the Prophets: Language, Image and Structure in the Prophetic Writings*, ed. by P. R. Davies and D. J. A. Clines (JSOTSup.144; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), pp. 60-71 (p. 61) [Henceforth: Landy].

<sup>46</sup> H. M. Barstad, 'The Future of the Servant Songs: Some Reflections on the Relationship of Biblical Scholarship to its own Tradition' in *Language, Theology, and the Bible: Essays in Honour of James Barr*, ed. by S. E. Balentine and J. Barton (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), pp. 261-270 (p. 268) [Henceforth: Barstad, Future].

<sup>47</sup> Barstad, Future, pp. 268-270.

songs and those in the remainder of DI.<sup>48</sup> R. J. Clifford provides comments on the suitability of Duhm's method. He suggests that Duhm's hypotheses concerning the sources of DI and the reconstruction of the sources indicate the influence of Wellhausen. Tools appropriate for the Pentateuch are not necessarily appropriate for the other parts of the Hebrew Bible and one cannot assume that DI was composed in a manner analogous to the Pentateuch. He therefore suggests that "Duhm and many who followed in his steps did not keep in mind that *Literaturkritik* is a procedure found useful for the Pentateuch; it is not a pure method universally applicable to every kind of biblical literature".<sup>49</sup> In 1995 P. T. Willey summarised quite succinctly some of the difficulties with Duhm's proposals. The four passages "do not share enough formal similarities to belong to a common *Gattung* distinct from the rest of Second Isaiah"<sup>50</sup> and "Duhm's assertion that major differences in language and content render these texts discontinuous from their immediate contexts is widely recognised as insupportable, especially in the case of the first three 'songs'".<sup>51</sup> Also, "many have challenged the notion that these four passages can be distinguished in any decisive way from the other passages in Second Isaiah that deal with YHWH's servant".<sup>52</sup> Thus, some think that Duhm's creation of "a separate category for these passages proceeds from--and bolsters--the impulse to understand YHWH's servant as someone other than what they consider the obvious reading, 'my servant Israel'".<sup>53</sup> Lastly, the notion of the songs "has not helped clarify who the servant is".<sup>54</sup> The preceding discussion of the summaries only serves to

<sup>48</sup> J. Muilenburg, in his assertion that the servant is Israel, provides a helpful discussion of the distinctions that have been proposed between the two servants (J. Muilenburg, 'Isaiah 40-66' in *The Interpreter's Bible*, vol. 5, ed. by G.A. Buttrick (New York: Abingdon Press, 1956), pp. 381-773 (pp. 408-410) [Henceforth: Muilenburg, Isaiah 40-66]).

<sup>49</sup> R. J. Clifford, *Fair Spoken and Persuading: An Interpretation of Second Isaiah* (New York: Paulist Press, 1984), pp. 31-32 [Henceforth: Clifford].

<sup>50</sup> P. T. Willey, 'The Servant of YHWH and Daughter Zion: Alternating Visions of YHWH's Community', *The SBL 1995 Seminar Papers* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995), pp. 267-303 (p. 267) [Henceforth: Willey, Servant of YHWH]. She refers to the work of R. Melugin (*The Formation of the Book of Isaiah* (BZAW 141; New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1976), pp. 64-74).

<sup>51</sup> She refers to the work of North, mentioned above, and that of Muilenburg (Isaiah 40-66, p. 407).

<sup>52</sup> She refers to the work of O. Eissfeldt, *The Old Testament: An Introduction*, trans. by P. Ackroyd (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), pp. 340-341.

<sup>53</sup> She notes Barstad's comments which were presented above and the recent work of T. N. D. Mettinger (*A Farewell to the Servant Songs: A Critical Examination of an Exegetical Axiom* (Lund: CWK Gleerup, 1983), pp. 44-45).

<sup>54</sup> Willey, Servant of YHWH, pp. 267-268.

highlight this point. Willey then suggests that some developments in biblical studies have had an impact on the study of the servant: the rise of rhetorical and literary criticism; the interest in female imagery; and the recognition that prophets are less solitary inspired figures than individuals “rooted in tradition”.<sup>55</sup>

Thus, it might be suggested that a strong but by no means unanimous current of opinion in biblical studies prefers to interpret the songs in their DI context. This trend is not unrelated to the school of rhetorical criticism mentioned by Willey. She specifically mentions the work of Muilenburg, “an early, and highly influential, contribution to literary understanding of Second Isaiah”.<sup>56</sup> She similarly notes the work of Clifford, Y. Gitay<sup>57</sup> and D. J. A. Clines.<sup>58</sup> Muilenburg and these scholars have been of some influence in current studies of DI and the songs and their ideas deserve further attention.

#### 1.4.2 Rhetorical Criticism and the Songs

Muilenburg’s commentary was published in 1956 and was followed in 1969 by a seminal article entitled ‘Form Criticism and Beyond’.<sup>59</sup> In the commentary Muilenburg shifts attention from the concerns of form criticism, with its tendency to divide texts into small units, arguing that many of the poems are in fact far longer than often presumed.<sup>60</sup> The units in DI “are often more extensive than has generally been

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<sup>55</sup> Willey, *Servant of YHWH*, pp. 268-269. She presents these same arguments in more condensed form in her later work (P. T. Willey, *Remember the Former Things: The Recollection of Previous Texts in Second Isaiah* (SBLDS 161; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997), p. 176, n. 2 [Henceforth: Willey, *Remember the Former Things*]).

<sup>56</sup> Willey, *Servant of YHWH*, p. 268, n. 7.

<sup>57</sup> Y. Gitay, *Prophecy and Persuasion: A Study of Isaiah 40-48* (FThL 14; Bonn: Linguistica Biblica, 1981) [Henceforth: Gitay].

<sup>58</sup> The work is that on Isa. 52.13-53.12, mentioned in n.44.

<sup>59</sup> J. Muilenburg, ‘Form Criticism and Beyond’, *JBL* 88 (1969), pp. 1-18 [Henceforth: Muilenburg, *Form*].

<sup>60</sup> “The current atomization of the poems into fragments and pieces has been one of the major difficulties in apprehending the true significance of the prophet in the history of Israel’s thought” (Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 391). In 1969 he argued that form criticism gave too little attention to the ‘unique and unrepeatable, upon the particularity of the formation’ (Muilenburg, *Form*, p. 5). A few years later C. R. North wryly remarked, amidst a rather bemused description of the number of individual units found by form-critics (the largest being Köhler’s 70 and the average 50), that Eissfeldt could “fragmentize with anybody” (C. R. North, *Second Isaiah* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1964), pp. 4-9 [Henceforth: North, *Second Isaiah*]). Almost 30 years after Muilenburg’s comment an echo is found in Clifford’s condemnation of the form-critical “atomization of the chapter into small units” (Clifford, p. 34).

supposed. What are construed as independent poems are in reality strophes or subordinate units in a longer poem”.<sup>61</sup> He similarly discusses the poetic techniques which contribute to an understanding of the meaning and intention of the text.<sup>62</sup> His article, which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 3, suggests that form and content are inextricably connected and thus an analysis of the structural patterns of the literature will point towards its intended meaning. This approach he calls rhetorical criticism.<sup>63</sup>

Muilenburg argued forcefully that the songs belong to their DI context and should be interpreted within this context. He suggested that the excision of the songs added to difficulties in interpretation; he presents a list of parallel terminology between 42.1-4, 49.1-6 and other passages in DI; many motifs connect the songs to the context;<sup>64</sup> vocabulary provides strong ties;<sup>65</sup> and the songs and the servant poems have the same literary relationships in language and literary type.<sup>66</sup> He writes of the intelligible “progress of thought” perceptible when the dominant themes are known<sup>67</sup> and thus presents the 21 poems which form DI, along with their subordinate strophes, in a table in order to highlight this progression.<sup>68</sup> The first three songs, he argues, are vital sections of longer poems.<sup>69</sup> Isa. 42.1-4 is the final strophe of a poem that begins in 41.1; 49.1-6, which is formed by three strophes, initiates the second half of the book (49.1-55.13) and a longer poem comprised of chapter 49; and 50.4-9 possesses two strophes of the wider poem formed by chapter 50. Isa. 52.13-53.12 is in itself a poem formed by five strophes. If the songs are a part of the larger poetic composition, then the servant must

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<sup>61</sup> Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 385.

<sup>62</sup> Cf. his discussion on pp. 386-393.

<sup>63</sup> Muilenburg, *Form*, pp. 5, 8.

<sup>64</sup> Justice; law/teaching; nations/peoples/coastlands; the weakness of Israel compared to the strength of God; the arm of Yahweh; the birth of the servant; and the concept of salvation.

<sup>65</sup> He notes the work of North (*Suffering Servant*<sup>1</sup>, pp. 168-169).

<sup>66</sup> Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, pp. 406-408.

<sup>67</sup> Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 385.

<sup>68</sup> Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, pp. 415ff.

<sup>69</sup> Cf. Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, pp. 412, 415-417 and his discussions of the songs themselves (pp. 463-466; 564-569; 582-588; 614-631).



be Israel. To those arguments that the servant cannot be Israel in all cases, particularly 49.1-6, he provides a host of counter arguments, as alluded to above.<sup>70</sup>

In 1976 Clines provided the literary reading of Isa. 53<sup>71</sup> mentioned above, one which quite consciously draws on the assumptions of rhetorical criticism. He wonders if historical-critical scholarship is appropriate for the study of the text<sup>72</sup> and notes the difficulties in answering a host of questions frequently asked of the poem: who is 'he'?; what did 'he' suffer?; did 'he' die?; who are 'we'?; what led 'we' to change their minds about the servant?; and who are 'they'?<sup>73</sup> He therefore opts for the rhetorical critical method, which works on "the premise of the unity of form and content of a work of art".<sup>74</sup> He analyses the poem *qua* poem with minimal reference to its literary or historical context<sup>75</sup> and within this study he focusses on six themes: the relationships amongst the personae; seeing; act/agent; speech; affect; and time.<sup>76</sup> Of these, he places particular emphasis on the relationships amongst the personae, in which the servant exists in the middle,<sup>77</sup> and the importance of seeing the servant.<sup>78</sup> He argues that the poem is a language-event which destroys the world of the reader and replaces it with a new one. Within this process the servant seizes the reader and bends him "to a new understanding of himself and the direction of his life". The servant similarly questions conceptions of servanthood.<sup>79</sup> Clines' work has prompted some comments in recent years and these will be mentioned in more detail presently.

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<sup>70</sup> Cf. n. 48 above and Muilenburg, Isaiah 40-66, pp. 408-410. Not all of his arguments are convincing, particularly his reading of Isa. 49.5-6. Isa. 49.1-6 will be discussed in chapter 5.

<sup>71</sup> He refers to the poem found in 52.13-53.12 as Isa. 53 (Clines, p. 11) and this terminology will be followed here.

<sup>72</sup> Cf. Clines, p. 25.

<sup>73</sup> Clines, pp. 25-33. Because of the difficulties in identification, he uses the 'he' to designate the servant, the 'we' to designate the first person plural and 'they' to describe the plural entities in 52.13-15 and 53.10-12. He also uses 'I' to designate Yahweh, though he does comment that the poem 'barely entitles' him to do so (p. 33, n. 46).

<sup>74</sup> Clines, p. 37.

<sup>75</sup> He does make a passing reference to Isa. 54 in his discussion of affect (Clines, p. 44).

<sup>76</sup> Clines, pp. 37-49.

<sup>77</sup> Note his diagram on p. 39.

<sup>78</sup> Clines, pp. 37-38; 41.

<sup>79</sup> Clines, pp. 63-65.

In 1981 Gitay used the tools of classical rhetoric to analyse chapters 40-48.<sup>80</sup> He suggests that “all literary research which calls attention to the principles of selection used to appeal to the audience (or the reader) is a rhetorical study”.<sup>81</sup> He concludes that these chapters are a chain of arguments reflecting “DI’s attempt to persuade the exiles that Babylon’s fall and Cyrus’s success are integral elements in their redemption”.<sup>82</sup> These nine chapters are arranged into 10 rhetorical units<sup>83</sup> which contain a certain order in which “one rhetorical situation usually leads to another”.<sup>84</sup> Within this structure, 42.1-4 introduces 42.1-13, providing the thesis of a poem meant to convince the audience “that they have a significant function” in the political events involving Cyrus. It is a spiritual rather than political function.<sup>85</sup> Formal elements connect 42.1-4 with its context: *משפט*; the parallels in phraseology between 42.1-4 and 41.8-13; vv. 4 and 12 are connected by similar structures<sup>86</sup> and the use of the verb *שׁים*; vv.10-12 respond to vv. 1-4;<sup>87</sup> and vv. 1 and 6 convey a sense of intimacy.<sup>88</sup> He grants little space to the discussion of identity, assuming that the servant is Israel.<sup>89</sup>

In 1984 Clifford quite consciously drew on the work of Muilenburg and Gitay in his rhetorical study of DI.<sup>90</sup> He suggests that Muilenburg was more interested in the medium rather than the environment and Clifford is more attracted to the emphasis on poet as persuader and orator.<sup>91</sup> Because the speeches necessary for persuasion must “develop, not merely mention, serious ideas”,<sup>92</sup> Clifford sees a strong logical link between sections: “Second Isaiah in a few closely argued speeches of considerable length urges his fellow Judahites to join him in that act [departing Babylon] through

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<sup>80</sup> Gitay, esp. pp. 36-41.

<sup>81</sup> Gitay, p. 36.

<sup>82</sup> Gitay, pp. 229, 232.

<sup>83</sup> 40.1-11; 40.12-31; 41.1-29; 42.1-13; 42.14-43.13; 43.14-44.23; 44.24-45.13; 45.14-46.13; 47.1-15; 48.1-22 (Gitay, p. 231).

<sup>84</sup> Gitay, pp. 232-233.

<sup>85</sup> Gitay, pp. 124-125.

<sup>86</sup> He notes the parallels between v.4c and v.12b.

<sup>87</sup> In v.2 the servant will not shout out but in v.11b the nations will open their mouths loudly.

<sup>88</sup> Gitay, pp. 121-126.

<sup>89</sup> Gitay, p. 122.

<sup>90</sup> Clifford, p. 6.

<sup>91</sup> Clifford, pp. 35-36.

<sup>92</sup> Clifford, p. 4.

which they will become Israel”.<sup>93</sup> He contends that the songs should be read in the context of DI. Isa. 42.1-4 parallels 41.8-20 and the commission described in 42.1-9 is more explicit than that in 41.8-20. The *הקים* of 49.8 reflects that in 49.6 and 49.8-12 specifies the task given to the servant in 49.1-6. Isa. 50.8 is connected with 51.5 by *קרוּב*; the idea of a worn out garment binds 50.9cd and 51.6, 8; the servant of 50.4-11 sees the train of thought in 50.1-3 correctly, in which the dismissal is temporary and not due to the weakness of Yahweh; the concept of the weary is found in 40. 28-31; and 51.1 seems to allude the the advice given to the disciple in 50.10. Isa. 53 betrays an influence of the thanksgiving song, just as that found in 50.4-11, and 52.13-15 echoes 49.7.<sup>94</sup> He, like Muilenburg and Gitay, thinks the songs belong within larger poems: 42.1-4 is placed within 41.1-42.9; 49.1-6 introduces a poem which is formed by the entirety of ch. 49; 50.4-9 (11) is one part of the poem which runs from 50.1-51.8; and Isa. 53 is its own poem.<sup>95</sup> With regards to the identity of the servant, Clifford argues that there is a “mutuality of servant and people”<sup>96</sup> and the distinction between the individual servant of the songs and Israel in the remainder of the speeches is invalid. The servant “can stand for the people” and yet DI and his followers proved they were the servants *par excellence*.<sup>97</sup> The servant is the obedient group within the people and

is all that Israel is asked to become...The servant is therefore Israel obedient to the divine word. The servant can of course be an individual but all Israel is called to obey the word through him, and the concept can include those Israelites who are associated with the servant in obedience to the present task.<sup>98</sup>

Clifford essentially portrays the servant as one who is separate from and still identical to the people.

A number of recent scholars not mentioned by Willey have studied the songs using rhetorical critical methods, of which a few examples may be presented here. K.

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<sup>93</sup> Clifford, p. 5; the author’s words are originally italicised in the text.

<sup>94</sup> Clifford, pp. 84-92; 146-154; 156-163; 177-178.

<sup>95</sup> Clifford, pp. 84-89; 92-93; 146-153; 156-164; 173-181.

<sup>96</sup> Clifford, p. 56.

<sup>97</sup> Clifford, pp. 57-58.

<sup>98</sup> Clifford, p. 153.

Bailey has offered a rhetorical analysis of 42.1-4 (9); 49.5-6; 53.3-4, 5-6 and 7-8a as part of a study of numerous passages in the Old and New Testaments. He finds encased parables and supporting inverted parallelism in these songs, or parts thereof, except in 49.5-6. The latter contains step parallelism.<sup>99</sup> The first two songs are concerned with God's concern with the nations and his commitment to Israel, and Bailey's discussion of the sections from Isa. 53 imply a perception of the servant as individual. Ceresko argues that the servant of the fourth song is the prophet who had suffered imprisonment and death at the hands of the Babylonians.<sup>100</sup> He further suggests that Isa. 53 is centred on 53.5cd, thereby linking the suffering and persecution of the servant with Israel's experience in Egypt and in exile.<sup>101</sup> P. R. Raabe, on whom Ceresko built, analysed the numerous repetitions in Isa. 52.13-53.12 and noted that 18 of the 36 major repetitions occur in humiliation and exaltation strophes. They therefore emphasise the contrast between the servant's humiliation and exaltation.<sup>102</sup> Eight repetitions also underscore the contrast between the speakers' mistaken view and the reality of the servant's case.<sup>103</sup> The question of identity does not concern him.

Thus, rhetorical criticism as a means of interpreting DI and the songs delimited by Duhm has been widely used and has provided useful insights into the songs and their DI context. Those who have considered the relationship between the songs and DI have consistently suggested that the songs should be interpreted as a part of this context. As the discussion above shows, however, the perceived identity of the servant is not necessarily solved by this approach.

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<sup>99</sup> K. E. Bailey, "Inverted Parallelisms" and "Encased Parables" in Isaiah and their Significance for OT and NT Translation and Interpretation', in *Literary Structure and Rhetorical Strategies in the Hebrew Bible*, ed. by L. J. de Regt, J. de Waard and J. P. Fokkelman (Assen: Van Gorcum & Co., 1996), pp. 14-30. His study will be used in later chapters and will therefore be commented on at the appropriate junctures.

<sup>100</sup> A. R. Ceresko, 'The Rhetorical Strategy of the Fourth Servant Song (Isaiah 52.13-53.12): Poetry and the Exodus-New-Exodus', *CBQ* 56 (1994), pp. 42-55 [Henceforth: Ceresko].

<sup>101</sup> Ceresko, p. 43.

<sup>102</sup> The humiliation strophes are found in 53.1-9 and the exaltation in 52.13-15; 53.10-12 (P. R. Raabe, 'The Effect of Repetition in the Suffering Servant Song', *JBL* 103 (1984), pp. 77-84 (p. 78) [Henceforth: Raabe, Repetition].

## 1.5 D. J. A. Clines' *I, He, We, and They*

### 1.5.1 Introduction

The summaries of arguments concerning the identity of the servant, presented in Section 1.3.2, noted the variety of possible identifications that have been made in the preceding years. Space prevented an in-depth discussion of those scholars who have offered particularly important contributions. Willey, however, has suggested that several scholars, such as Muilenburg, Clines, Gitay and Clifford, and the literary or rhetorical approach associated with them have influenced recent studies. Muilenburg's impact has been substantial, as Willey noted, but it is interesting to note too that Clines' ideas have been mentioned frequently in recent work on the servant songs. This is not to say that the ideas of the other scholars have been ignored but that the conscious decision to mention Clines is perspicuous: this work has obviously struck a chord amongst many scholars presently studying the servant songs and/or DI. It has consistently been referred to in the main body of the discussion of Isa. 53 and the other songs and has not been limited merely to footnotes. Indeed, three books published in 1998 take particular care to mention his ideas concerning the servant songs. Brueggemann accepts Clines' ideas readily;<sup>104</sup> Oswalt agrees with some of his observations but raises some questions concerning the meaning of the text;<sup>105</sup> and Melugin is persuaded by Clines' view of the nature of the language but thinks he has not focussed sufficiently on the users of the text.<sup>106</sup> In her work on the use of previous texts in DI, Willey based her study of the personae addressed in DI on Clines' use of pronouns.<sup>107</sup> In 1993 Landy opened his discussion of the final three servant songs with a reference to Clines and Landy's discussion of Isa. 53 seems to be influenced by Clines' work.<sup>108</sup> In another recent study on the construction of the messianic ideal, Laato quite specifically disagrees with

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<sup>103</sup> Raabe, *Repetition*, pp. 80-81.

<sup>104</sup> W. Brueggemann, *Isaiah 40-66* (Westminster Bible Companion; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1998), pp. 13, 110, 141 [Henceforth, Brueggemann].

<sup>105</sup> J. N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 40-66* (NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), p. 377 (incl. f. n. 74) [Henceforth: Oswalt].

<sup>106</sup> R. F. Melugin, 'On Reading Isaiah 53 as Christian Scripture' in *Jesus and the Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 and Christian Origins*, ed. by W. H. Bellinger, Jr. and W. R. Farmer (Harrisburg: Trinity Press, 1998), pp. 55-69 (p. 58) [Henceforth: Melugin, Reading Isa. 53].

<sup>107</sup> Willey, *Remember the Former Things*, p. 179, n.8.

Clines.<sup>109</sup> Before noting the detailed comments made by these scholars, which will be most helpful in obtaining some insight into the work of Clines, a more adequate summary of his influential essay than that mentioned above might be in order.

### 1.5.2 Summary of Clines

After a translation of the notoriously difficult Isa. 53, Clines initiates his discussion in a provocative manner. In a reference mentioned briefly above, he states that

Isaiah 53 has become a casualty of historical-critical scholarship....Historical-critical scholarship is bound to mistreat a cryptic poetic text when it regards it as a puzzle to be solved, a code to be cracked. What if the force of the poem--to say nothing of the poetry of the poem--lies in its very unforthcomingness, its refusal to be precise and to give *information*, its stubborn concealment of the kind of data that critical scholarship yearns to get its hands on as the building-blocks for the construction of hypotheses?<sup>110</sup>

He then notes the six questions listed previously, those which present no unequivocal answer.<sup>111</sup> Because of the difficulties in answering these questions and the possible inappropriateness of the historical-critical method, he turns to rhetorical criticism. As noted above, it

moves towards the work's meaning and quiddity from the standpoint of form rather than of content, of the 'how said' rather than the 'what said'. The concentration is upon the text itself, that is, in the first place, irrespective of its context. In the end, of course, understanding of the work will develop fully only when text and context are brought into relationship...Historical-critical scholarship has tended to approach the individual unit of Biblical literature (the 'text') from the standpoint of its context...The present section

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<sup>108</sup> Landy, pp. 60-61; 69.

<sup>109</sup> A. Laato, *The Servant of YHWH and Cyrus: A Reinterpretation of the Exilic Messianic Programme in Isaiah 40-55* (CB 35; Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1992), pp. 156-163 [Henceforth: Laato, *Servant and Cyrus*].

<sup>110</sup> Clines, p. 25; author's italics.

<sup>111</sup> Who is 'he'?; what did 'he' suffer?; did 'he' die?; who are 'we'?; what led 'we' to change their minds about the servant?; and who are 'they'? (Clines, pp. 25-33).

[on the rhetoric of the poem] is an attempt to redress that imbalance by focussing on the text in itself.<sup>112</sup>

Clines then analyses the poem according to the six themes stated above. He firstly studies the relationship amongst the personae of the poem. As mentioned previously, he refers to them according to pronouns because their precise identities are not unequivocally given. They are crucial in any interpretation of the poem.

The movement of the poem is wholly occupied by them and by the various connections among them...the nexus of relationships among the four personae is perspicuous, and obviously at the heart of the poem's significance.<sup>113</sup>

The primary relationships are found between the servant and Yahweh,<sup>114</sup> the servant and *we*<sup>115</sup> and the servant and *they*, each of which is marked by a duality.<sup>116</sup> The other possible relationships<sup>117</sup> barely exist. "The poem", argues Clines, "is almost entirely taken up with the relationships in which 'he' figures".<sup>118</sup>

The other five themes may not be at the 'heart of the poem' but are no less important for understanding it. The rich visual language suggests that this "is a poem about modes of seeing the servant"<sup>119</sup> within which *we* and *they* see the servant and the servant himself sees. In an analysis of act and agent, Clines concludes that "there is *no concrete action* that the servant does--apart from letting everything happen to him...Yahweh's purpose was...that the servant should--not do something--but suffer, be

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<sup>112</sup> Clines, p. 37.

<sup>113</sup> Clines, p. 37.

<sup>114</sup> Clines typically refers to the servant and Yahweh as 'he' and 'I'. In an effort to make the following discussion as clear as possible, the 'he' will often be referred to as the servant and the 'I' as Yahweh. This procedure will thus avoid an overabundance of pronouns which may cause some confusion.

<sup>115</sup> Clines frequently places references to the pronouns depicting the personae in quotation marks. When his comments are presented these marks will be maintained. For the sake of clarity, references to 'we' and 'they' will henceforth be italicised.

<sup>116</sup> Yahweh supports the servant but allows *him* to suffer; *our* attitude to the servant changes from hostility and scorn to appreciation; and a contrast between involvement and non-involvement informs the servant/*they* relationship.

<sup>117</sup> Yahweh and *we*; Yahweh and *they*; *we* and *they*.

<sup>118</sup> Clines, p. 38.

<sup>119</sup> Clines, p. 41.

the one acted upon”.<sup>120</sup> With regards to speech, Clines notes the “*absence* of speech. No communication occurs. No verbal message is conveyed from one *persona* to another”. The “absence of speech as a formal element of the poem” is unsurprising: the “poem is about seeing, not hearing; so it is about vision rather than verbal communication”.<sup>121</sup> Isa. 53 is similarly characterised “by the almost total absence of affective terms”. Words conveying emotion are not absent, but the announcements of Yahweh are objective, the servant’s “inner state” is “undisclosed”, and the reaction of *we* and *they*, while expressed in affective terms, are feelings no longer held by the end of the poem. Nothing, Clines suggests, “must divert the attention from what is going on in the poem: the breaking in of a new vision of the servant and of the nexus of relationships that surround him”.<sup>122</sup> Lastly, Clines argues that a “certain temporal structure is important in the poem: it is the polarity of “then” and “now” which corresponds to the dualities within the relationships”. A clear before and after informs the Yahweh/servant, *we*/servant and *they*/servant relationships which are not expressed by means of the Hebrew tenses.<sup>123</sup>

Clines concludes his study with observations concerning contemporary hermeneutics and applies these to Isa. 53.<sup>124</sup> He suggests that the previous subject-object dichotomy is no longer tenable and “the text as language-event, world-creating and world-destroying, has the primacy over the interpreter”.<sup>125</sup> He therefore acknowledges “the primacy of the work of art, which interprets the critic rather than being interpreted by the critic”. The poem as language event may possess a legitimate multiplicity of meanings and “is free to do its work by its very lack of specificity, the

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<sup>120</sup> Clines, p. 42.

<sup>121</sup> Clines, pp. 43-44.

<sup>122</sup> Clines, pp. 44-46.

<sup>123</sup> Clines, pp. 46-49.

<sup>124</sup> He notes that the work of A. C. Thiselton has been of great use in his understanding of the ideas of E. Fuchs, G. Ebeling, J. L. Austin and H. G. Gadamer. He refers specifically to two of Thiselton’s papers: ‘The New Hermeneutic’ in *New Testament Interpretation*, ed. by I. H. Marshall (Exeter: Paternoster, 1976), pp. 308-333 and ‘The Parables as Language Event: Some Comments on Fuch’s Hermeneutics in the Light of Linguistic Philosophy’, *SJT* 23 (1970), pp. 437-468 (cf. Clines, p. 53, n. 1).

<sup>125</sup> Clines, p. 56.



openness to a multiplicity of readings”.<sup>126</sup> The poem depicts a “topsy-turvy world” and the merging of the poem’s horizon with any conventional horizon is both difficult and necessary in order to present its vision of the world. One enters the poem by identification with the personae of the poem, “by an assumption of one of the roles presented in the poem”.<sup>127</sup> An identification with *them* leaves the reader on the edge of the poem; identification with *us* puts one within the world of the poem; and identification with the servant leads to a far greater effect. If the servant is DI or an historical figure, one might empathise with the servant. Clines, however, argues that

the poem’s lack of specificity about the servant’s identity enables a relationship between the servant and the reader that is deeper than empathy to come into being. It is not simply that the reader may...empathetically share the servant’s experience. It is rather that the figure of the servant presented by the poem has the potency to reach out from the confines of a historical past and from the poem itself and to “seize” the reader and bend him to a new understanding of himself and of the direction of his life.<sup>128</sup>

The reader is no longer the subject interrogating the text but the one questioned and changed by the text. This influence of the text on reader is not altered if the servant is an ideal rather than an historical figure:

the force of the poem is not simply to invite the reader to approximate his behaviour and life-style to that of the servant as best he can; it is rather that the figure of the servant seizes, imposes itself upon, a reader--with or without the reader’s assent (so this is not the same thing as empathy)--and insists upon interpreting the reader rather than being interpreted by the reader.<sup>129</sup>

The language thus creates an event, destroying a world and replacing it by a new one “which it brings into being”.<sup>130</sup>

This summary is intended only to provide a flavour of and introduction to Clines’ work. A more detailed analysis of his observations will be made in Chapter 3,

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<sup>126</sup> Clines, pp. 60-61.

<sup>127</sup> Clines, p. 62.

<sup>128</sup> Clines, p. 63.

<sup>129</sup> Clines, p. 64.

<sup>130</sup> Clines, p. 64. He continues, asking whether anything more specific can be said about the nature of the figure of the servant but concludes that it is perhaps only in the language of testimony or confession.

but in the meantime two observations could be made. Clines has portrayed the servant as passive and yet this passive servant also seizes and bends the reader. The two images seem incongruous. Secondly, he has introduced the concepts of identification and empathy, the latter of which may be of some interest if the image of the seizing and bending servant is not accepted. Before these points are pursued, however, the opinions forwarded by some of the scholars who have found his work worthy of note might provide more insight into his ideas and the perceived ramifications of them.

### 1.5.3 Scholars' Comments on Clines

As mentioned above, Brueggemann clearly agrees with many of Clines' observations. He states that "one must admit uncertainty about many of the vexing, critical questions related to the poem [Isa. 53]" as urged by Clines.<sup>131</sup> He presumably refers to Clines' insistence that several of the major questions which arise during a reading of Isa. 53 cannot be answered unequivocally. In his discussion of 49.1-6 Brueggemann notes that Clines has "offered the best counsel...that we give up the quest for identity of the historical servant and pay attention only to the imagery and force of the poetry as such; that is, to move from historical to literary-rhetorical considerations".<sup>132</sup> The reasons behind Clines' preference for the rhetorical approach were mentioned above. Brueggemann's reference to the identity of the servant stems from another comment made by Clines. During his discussion of the questions to which no clear answers can be obtained, Clines notes the many identities proposed for the servant. He suggests that these underscore "the enigmatic nature of the literature that permits such a multiplicity of identities".<sup>133</sup> Brueggemann further notes that Isa. 53, a "text that is taken to be *abundantly rich and theologically suggestive* is at the same time undeniably *inaccessible and without clear meaning*".<sup>134</sup> He then quotes with approval Clines' comments concerning the force of the poem originating from its "unforthcomingness, its refusal to be precise and to give *information*", presented above.

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<sup>131</sup> Brueggemann, p. 13.

<sup>132</sup> Brueggemann, p. 110.

<sup>133</sup> Clines, pp. 26-27.

<sup>134</sup> Brueggemann, p. 141.

Oswalt also notes the host of unanswered questions sparked by Isa. 53. He therefore suggests that “this leads one to suspect that D. Clines is correct when he says that there is an intentional ‘opacity’ and ambiguity about the text”. The text does resist “overneat conclusions” but “as Clines himself has shown through his rhetorical analysis, the text does plainly say certain things”. The force of Clines’ study, he suggests, “is mitigated by his later suggestion...that the text ultimately means whatever it means to its latest reader”. Oswalt himself thinks that the text does say something although it is capable of several applications. Therefore “it is possible to describe in considerable detail the character and work of the Servant”. He interprets the servant of the songs as “an individual, almost certainly the Messiah, who will be the ideal Israel”.<sup>135</sup> One wonders if Oswalt is being entirely fair in his presentation of Clines. The latter does note that the servant is meant to change the reader, and he further states that perhaps only “the language of testimony or confession...can properly express what the servant is, for that means: what the servant is *for me*”.<sup>136</sup> As Oswalt apparently accepts, however, Clines provides some arguments concerning the possible meaning of the servant in a more formal study. As mentioned above, Clines states that the relationship amongst the personae is “at the heart of the poem’s significance”, at which the servant is the centre of the network of relationships. The poem is also about modes of seeing the servant, “the breaking in of a new vision of the servant and of the nexus of relationships that surround him”.<sup>137</sup> Thus, Clines might suggest that the servant is central to the poem and the poem presents a description of the servant which is new and unusual, expanding the conception of servanthood. Clines might therefore propose that the text is about something and does not simply mean whatever it means to the latest reader.

Melugin receives with favour Clines’ argument that the text actually *does* something rather than simply talk *about* something. He thinks Clines is correct in his suggestion that the text constructs a symbolic world in which believers can reside or take on their identity in relationship to God. Melugin further wonders whether Clines focusses exclusively on that which the text does and not on the role of the users of the

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<sup>135</sup> Oswalt, pp. 108; 377 (incl. f.n. 74).

<sup>136</sup> Clines, p. 64; author’s italics.

text in the construction of meaning.<sup>138</sup> To be fair to Clines, the focus on the text was spurred by a reaction against the proclivity of placing context before text, as mentioned above. The weakness perceived by Melugin may thus have been a necessary compensation. Moreover, Clines does note that the meaning of the text can be that which it has ‘for me’ and thus the role of the user is at least acknowledged.

Landy thinks that the virtue of Clines’ work is the movement from a perception of the poem as problem to poem as language event. He argues that the “silence, passivity and emotional vacuity that Clines finds in the text corresponds to critical paralysis”.<sup>139</sup> The text, in Landy’s opinion, resists interpretation and this difficulty in interpretation seems to correspond to the inability of the servant to construct his own identity in the midst of contradictions and paradoxes.<sup>140</sup> Thus, Clines’ argument that the reader should enter the world of the poem with its silent, passive servant has been taken seriously by Landy. A parallel exists between a reader who cannot construct meaning and a servant who cannot construct identity. In addition, Landy’s analysis of Isa. 53 and his ambiguous use of the term *we*, which may refer to the persona in the poem or to those who are reading the text, may echo Clines’ suggestion that the reader can and should identify with the *we* in the poem.<sup>141</sup>

Laato is not convinced that identification of the personae is not possible. The difficulty lay “in our inability to reconstruct the historical situation or the spiritual atmosphere in which the passage is composed”. A detailed discussion leads him to propose that the servant is the ideal Israel; the *we* are the Judaeans who accept the message of the servant and either return home or remain in Babylon; and *they* are the nations.<sup>142</sup> It is precisely the difficulties in the reconstruction of the historical situation which prompted Clines’ analysis and Clines does accept that the enigmatic quality of the

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<sup>137</sup> Clines, pp. 37; 41; 46.

<sup>138</sup> Melugin, *Reading Isaiah 53*, pp. 57-58.

<sup>139</sup> Landy, pp. 60-61. The relevant discussions in Clines can be found on pp. 41-46.

<sup>140</sup> Cf. Landy, pp. 60, 62.

<sup>141</sup> Landy, p. 69. Clines’ comments can be found on p. 63.

<sup>142</sup> Laato, *Servant and Cyrus*, pp. 156-163.

poem may be the result of historical accident, in which a key to understanding has been lost. He further wonders, however, whether the enigmas allow the poem to be itself.<sup>143</sup>

Thus, Clines' work on Isa. 53 has prompted a variety of responses from recent scholars, who agree with his observations and possibly build on them or in their disagreement with him find it necessary to discuss his views in their own work.

## 1.6 A Clinesian Model

Within Clines' discussion exist some comments on which further study might be built. In the first instance, he consciously analyses the poem *qua* poem with limited reference to the context in which it is found.<sup>144</sup> Brueggemann's presentation of his work broadened its scope with a reference to Isa. 49.1-6. These two points present the student with a possibility. If Clines' basic approach were applied to the other three songs, interpreted in the first instance as independent poems, then perhaps fresh insights into their meaning, function or purpose might be discovered. Furthermore, Clines suggests that his is a work of rhetorical criticism and he provides a diagrammatic illustration of a poetic structure based on the relationships between the personae.<sup>145</sup> Rhetorical studies frequently focus on poetic elements such as cola, strophes and stanzas, along with their constituent elements, which are not prominent in Clines' analysis.<sup>146</sup> This is not to criticise Clines for omitting something that some may think is necessary, but it suggests that such a rhetorical approach might contribute further to his study. Clines also mentions the importance of context. If his approach is applied to the other servant songs, which indeed are a part of the context, then any results might be placed in a conversation with a still wider context, both literary and historical. Lastly, it was noted that the image of the passive servant sat uneasily with the image of a seizing and bending servant. The concepts of identification and empathy may therefore be of some importance if this interpretation of the servant is not accepted. In sum, Clines might be used as a starting point for a study of the songs in their context.

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<sup>143</sup> Clines, p. 61.

<sup>144</sup> Clines comparing the affect found in Isa. 54 to the lack of affect found in Isa. 53 (Clines, p. 44).

<sup>145</sup> Cf. Clines, p. 39.

<sup>146</sup> Clines does mention strophes in passing (Clines, pp. 15, 19).

## Chapter 2

### A Translation of Isaiah 53

#### 2.1 Introduction

A closer examination of Clines' arguments might follow quite naturally from the preceding chapter. Isa. 53 is a notoriously difficult poem, however, and deserves some attention before it can be legitimately discussed in any detail. Indeed, Clines begins his analysis of Isa. 53 with a translation. He suggests that a "thorough treatment of the textual and translational difficulties of the poem would demand a monograph in itself". He therefore only provides a translation "embodying the understanding of the poem set forward in the present work, together with some justificatory and explanatory notes".<sup>1</sup> The following notes attempt to suggest that the translation offered is justifiable and they similarly attempt to convey some of the difficulties and different viewpoints swirling around the translation of this poem.

One corollary should be added before a translation and the justifications for it are undertaken. Every effort will be made in this poem, and those which will be discussed later, to follow the MT insofar as sense can be made from its text. The versions will be consulted though scholars have noted some of the unique characteristics of each which suggest that their witnesses cannot be accepted unquestioningly. Tov notes that most of the Qumran texts of Isaiah reflect the same consonantal frame as the medieval MT. The text of 1QIsa<sup>b</sup> is typically close to that of the Leningrad Codex and the close relationship between the medieval representatives of the MT, the Codex and 1QIsa<sup>b</sup> are matched by almost all the texts from cave four.<sup>2</sup> 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>, however, contains many variants when compared to the MT<sup>3</sup> and many have noted that the LXX deviates much from the MT, providing

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<sup>1</sup> D. J. A Clines, *I, He, We, and They: A Literary Approach to Isaiah 53* (JSOTSup. 1; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1976), p. 11[Henceforth: Clines].

<sup>2</sup> E. Tov, 'The Text of Isaiah at Qumran', in *Writing and Reading the Scroll of Isaiah: Studies of an Interpretive Tradition*, vol. 2, ed. by C. C. Broyles and C. A. Evans (FIOTL 1; Leiden: Brill, 1997), pp. 491-511 (pp. 505-507) [Henceforth: Tov, Text of Isaiah].

<sup>3</sup> Cf. P. W. Flint, 'The Isaiah Scrolls from the Judean Desert', in *Writing and Reading the Scroll of Isaiah: Studies of an Interpretive Tradition*, vol. 2, ed. by C. C. Broyles and C. A. Evans (FIOTL 1; Leiden: Brill, 1997), pp. 481-489 (p. 483). Tov notes that 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> contains many secondary readings when compared to the MT and argues that even although 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> dates from the first century BCE, it is "further removed from the *Urtext* of Isaiah than a Masoretic manuscript written in the tenth century CE" (E. Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), esp. pp. 293-311[Henceforth: Tov, *Textual Criticism*]).

exegesis of the parent text.<sup>4</sup> The interpretive tendencies of the Targum too have been remarked upon,<sup>5</sup> and Gelston has argued that the Peshitta translation was made from a consonantal Hebrew *vorlage* fairly close to the MT. It was not slavish, however, and may reflect interpretations.<sup>6</sup> Tov has provided a helpful discussion of the process through which good or justifiable readings of the MT may be reached. He allows that readings of the MT are,

on the whole, preferable to those found in other texts, but this statistical information should not influence decisions in individual instances, because the exceptions to this situation are not predictable.<sup>7</sup>

He thus suggests that the “quintessence of textual evaluation is the selection from the different transmitted readings of the one reading...which is the most appropriate to its context”.<sup>8</sup> This context is quite broadly defined.<sup>9</sup> Tov therefore proposes that “common sense should be the main guide of the textual critic when attempting to locate the most contextually appropriate reading” and he further argues that textual evaluation cannot “be bound by any fixed rules. It is an art in the full sense of the word, a faculty which can be developed, guided by intuition based on wide experience”.<sup>10</sup> In light of these comments, the following discussion will necessarily consider witnesses and criteria external to Isa. 53 itself but, in line with Clines’ focus on the text *qua* text and the attempt to remain close to the MT, the context which will

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<sup>4</sup> Cf. Tov, *Text of Isaiah*, pp. 504, 508. A van der Kooij has argued that the LXX is “a free translation” and that it is generally assumed that the *vorlage* of LXX Isa., though difficult to reconstruct, does not differ much from the MT (A. van der Kooij, ‘Isaiah in the Septuagint’, in *Writing and Reading the Scroll of Isaiah: Studies of an Interpretive Tradition*, vol. 2, ed. by C. C. Broyles and C. A. Evans (FIOTL 1; Leiden: Brill, 1997), pp. 513-529 (pp. 513, 517)). For similar comments concerning the interpretive element of LXX Isaiah, cf. S. E. Porter and B. W. R. Pearson, ‘Isaiah through Greek Eyes: The Septuagint of Isaiah’, in *Writing and Reading the Scroll of Isaiah: Studies of an Interpretive Tradition*, vol. 2, ed. by C. C. Broyles and C. A. Evans (FIOTL 1; Leiden: Brill, 1997), pp. 531-546.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. B. Chilton, ‘Two in One: Renderings of the Book of Isaiah in Targum Jonathan’, in *Writing and Reading the Scroll of Isaiah: Studies of an Interpretive Tradition*, vol. 2, ed. by C. C. Broyles and C. A. Evans (FIOTL 1; Leiden: Brill, 1997), pp. 547-562.

<sup>6</sup> A. Gelston, ‘Was the Peshitta of Isaiah Christian in Origin?’, in *Writing and Reading the Scroll of Isaiah: Studies of an Interpretive Tradition*, vol. 2, ed. by C. C. Broyles and C. A. Evans (FIOTL 1; Leiden: Brill, 1997), pp. 563-582.

<sup>7</sup> Tov, *Textual Criticism*, p. 299.

<sup>8</sup> Tov, *Textual Criticism*, p. 309.

<sup>9</sup> He includes the immediate context; the literary unit in which the reading is found; the language and vocabulary of individual literary units and of the Bible as a whole; the exegesis of individual verses, chapters and books; and the general content and ideas of a given unit or book, including biblical history and geography; and the manner of textual transmission.

<sup>10</sup> Tov, *Textual Criticism*, pp. 296, 309.

be given greatest value will be the poem *qua* poem. No interpretive choice in the following discussion will therefore be unequivocal but none will be unsubstantiated.

## 2.2 Text and Translation

MT <sup>11</sup>	Verse	Translation
הִנֵּה יִשְׁכַּל עַבְדִּי יָרוּם וְנִשָּׂא וְגִבָּה מְאֹד:	52.13	Behold, my servant will prosper! He will be high and lifted up and greatly exalted!
כַּאֲשֶׁר שָׁמְמוּ עָלָיו רַבִּים כִּן־מִשְׁתַּת מַאִישׁ מֵרְאֵהוּ וְתֵאָרוּ מִבְּנֵי אָדָם:	52.14	As many were appalled at him (Truly a disfigurement beyond man's his appearance, And his form beyond the sons of man)
כֵּן יִזְהוּ גוֹיִם רַבִּים עָלָיו יִקְפְּצוּ מְלָכִים פִּיהֶם כִּי אֲשֶׁר לֹא־סִפְּרוּ לָהֶם רְאוּ וְאֲשֶׁר לֹא־שָׁמְעוּ הִתְבוּנָנוּ:	52.15	So he shall cause many nations to start; Because of him kings will shut their mouth, For that which was not told to them they see, And that which they did not hear they discern.
מִי הָאֵמִין לְשִׁמְעָתָנוּ וְזֵרוּעַ יְהוָה עַל־מִי נִגְלָתָה:	53.1	Who believes in what we have heard? And the arm of Yahweh, upon whom is it revealed?
וַיַּעַל כִּי־זָנַק לְפָנָיו וַכְּשָׂרֵשׁ מֵאַרְזֵ צִיָּה לֹא־תֵאָר לּוֹ וְלֹא הִדְר וְנִרְאָהוּ וְלֹא־מֵרְאֵה וְנִחְמְדָהוּ:	53.2	He grew up like a young plant before him, And like the root from dry ground, Without form to him and without splendour that we might see him, And without appearance that we might take pleasure in him.
נִבְזָה וְחָדַל אִישִׁים אִישׁ מִכְּאֹבוֹת וַיִּדְוַע חֲלִי וַכְּמִסְתָּר פָּנִים מִמֶּנּוּ נִבְזָה וְלֹא חֲשַׁבְנָהוּ:	53.3	Despised and alone amongst men, A man of pains and one known by sickness, And like one who makes faces hide from him. Despised, and we did not consider him.
אָכֵן חֲלִיָּנוּ הוּא נִשָּׂא וּמִכְּאֹבֵינוּ סָבָלָם וְאִנְחָנוּ חֲשַׁבְנָהוּ נִגְוַע מִפֶּה אֱלֹהִים וּמַעֲנָה:	53.4	Surely our sicknesses he, he carried, And our pains, he bore them; And we, we considered him stricken, Smitten by God and afflicted.
וְהוּא מִחֻלָּל מִפְּשָׁעֵנוּ מִדְּכָא מַעֲוֹנֹתֵינוּ מוֹסֵר שְׁלוֹמֵנוּ עָלָיו וּבַחֲבֵרְתּוֹ נִרְפָּא־לָנוּ:	53.5	And he, pierced because of our transgressions, Crushed because of our iniquities, The chastisement for our well-being was upon him, And with his stripes there was healing for us.
כָּלֵנוּ כַּצֹּאֵן תָּעִינוּ אִישׁ לְדַרְכּוֹ פָּנֵינוּ וַיְהוֶה הַפְּגִיעַ בּוֹ	53.6	All of us, like sheep, we went astray, Each to his path we turned. But Yahweh laid on him

<sup>11</sup> The MT text is presented without any proposed emendations to individual words. In 53.2cd the division provided accepts the movement of the athnah and will be discussed below; 53.4cd is presented as found in BHS; and the grouping of words found in v.1 lab will be discussed below.



אֶת עֵוֹן כָּלֵנוּ:		The iniquity of all of us.
נִגְשׁ וְהוּא נִעְנָה וְלֹא יִפְתַּח-פִּי כַּשֶּׁה לְטֹבַח יוֹבֵל וּכְרַחֵל לְפָנַי גְּזוּיָה נֹאֲלָמָה וְלֹא יִפְתַּח פִּי:	53.7	He was hard pressed and he was afflicted, And he would not open his mouth. As the lamb to the slaughter is led, And as a ewe before her shearers is silent, And he would not open his mouth.
מֵעֶצֶר וּמִמְשַׁפֵּט לָקַח וְאֶת-דֹּרוֹ מִי יִשׁוּחַח כִּי נִגְזַר מֵאֶרֶץ חַיִּים מִפֶּשַׁע עַמִּי נִגַּע לָמוֹ:	53.8	From restraint and from judgment he was taken, And his generation, who would consider (it)? For he was cut off from the land of the living; Because of the transgression of his people, a blow to him.
וַיִּתְּן אֶת-רְשָׁעִים קְבֹרוֹ וְאֶת-עֲשִׂיר בְּמִתְיוֹ עַל לֹא-חֲמָס עָשָׂה וְלֹא מִרְמָה בְּפִיו:	53.9	They gave the wicked his grave And the wealthy his funeral mound, Though he did no violence And there was no dishonesty in his mouth.
וַיְהִיָּה חֲפָז דָּכָאוֹ הַחֲלִי אִם-תִּשְׁעִים אֲשֶׁם נִפְשׁוֹ יִרְאֶה זֶרַע יִאֲרִיף יָמָיו וְחֲפָז יְהוָה בְּיָדוֹ יִצְלַח:	53.10	But Yahweh willed to crush him; he made (him) sick. Though he constitutes a guilt-offering, He will see seed, he will prolong (his) days, And the will of Yahweh will succeed by his hand.
מֵעֲמַל נִפְשׁוֹ יִרְאֶה יִשְׂבַּע בְּדַעְתּוֹ יִצְדִּיק צְדִיק עַבְדִּי לְרַבִּים וְעוֹנֹתָם הוּא יִסְבֵּל:	53.11	From the toil of his soul he will see, He will be sated with his knowledge. The righteous one, my servant, will vindicate the many, And their iniquity he, he will bear.
לָכֵן אֶחְלַק-לוֹ בְּרַבִּים וְאֶת-עֲצוּמִים יֶחֱלַק שְׁלָל תַּחַת אֲשׁוֹר הָעֶרְהָה לְמֹות נִפְשׁוֹ וְאֶת-פֹּשְׁעִים נִמְנָה וְהוּא חָטָא רַבִּים נִשָּׂא וְלִפְשָׁעִים יִפְגִּיעַ ס:	53.12	Thus, I will allot (booty) to him with the many, And to the strong he will allot booty, Because he poured out to death his soul, And he was reckoned with the transgressors. And he, the sin of many he carried, And for the transgressors he will intercede.

## 2.3 Notes on the Translation

### 2.3.1 Isa. 52.13

Orlinsky argues that “there is insufficient reason for treating 52.13-15 and 53.1-12 as a single unit”.<sup>12</sup> Whybray concurs<sup>13</sup> but Clines asserts the integrity of

<sup>12</sup> H. M. Orlinsky, ‘The So-Called “Servant of the Lord” and “Suffering Servant” in Second Isaiah’, in *Studies in the Second Part of the Book of Isaiah* (VTSup.14; Leiden: Brill), pp. 1-133 (pp. 18-

52.13-53.12.<sup>14</sup> In 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>, 52.13 is preceded by a space<sup>15</sup> and Korpel and de Moor note the versional evidence for a separation between 52.12 and 52.13.<sup>16</sup> Targum inserts משיחא after עבדי. LXX includes only two verbs in 52.13b, reading καὶ ὑψωθήσεται καὶ δοξασθήσεται σφόδρα.<sup>17</sup>

### 2.3.2 Isa. 52.14

For עָלִי LXX reads ἐπὶ σέ;<sup>18</sup> Syriac ,ܡܘܠܗ;<sup>19</sup> and Targum לִיה.<sup>20</sup> Hermisson,<sup>21</sup> Duhm<sup>22</sup> and Clines<sup>23</sup> take עָלִי. North,<sup>24</sup> Lindblom<sup>25</sup> and Oswalt<sup>26</sup> prefer עָלִיךָ. Kimhi notes that the prophet is at one moment in the second person (at thee) and at another the third person (his countenance, his form).<sup>27</sup> Because of the numerous 3p references in the following lines, עָלִי is tentatively accepted. Dahood takes the כֵּן as the emphatic ‘truly’.<sup>28</sup> North translates the כֵּן אֲשֶׁר of v.14a ‘as’ and the

23) [Henceforth: Orlinsky].

<sup>13</sup> R. N. Whybray, *Thanksgiving for a Liberated Prophet: An Interpretation of Isaiah Chapter 53* (JSOTSup. 4; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1978), p. 143, n. 1; p. 163, n. 1 [Henceforth: Whybray, *Thanksgiving*].

<sup>14</sup> Clines, p. 11.

<sup>15</sup> Goshen-Gottstein notes that 52.13 is preceded by an empty space, probably indicating a new section (M. H. Goshen-Gottstein, *The Hebrew University Bible: The Book of Isaiah*, vol. 3 (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1981) [Henceforth: Goshen-Gottstein]. In any references to this work in the following, see the relevant verse.

<sup>16</sup> M. C. A. Korpel and J. C. de Moor, *The Structure of Classical Hebrew Poetry: Isaiah 40-55* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), p. 545 [Henceforth: Korpel and de Moor, *Isaiah 40-55*].

<sup>17</sup> ‘and he will be exalted and glorified greatly’.

<sup>18</sup> ‘at you’

<sup>19</sup> ‘because of him’.

<sup>20</sup> ‘for him’.

<sup>21</sup> H.-J. Hermisson, ‘Das vierte Gottesknechtlied im deuterocesajanischen Kontext’ in *Der leidende Gottesknechte: Jesaja 53 und seine Wirkungsgeschichte*, ed. by B. Janowski and P. Stuhlmacher (FAT 14; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr/Paul Siebeck, 1996), pp. 1-25 ( p. 6, n. 12) [Henceforth: Hermisson, *Das vierte Gottesknechtlied*].

<sup>22</sup> B. Duhm, *Das Buch Jesaja*, 5th edn. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1968), p. 394 [Henceforth: Duhm].

<sup>23</sup> Clines, p. 14.

<sup>24</sup> North notes that the MT is undoubtedly an earlier reading and as the harder should stand (C. R. North, *The Second Isaiah* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1964), p. 227 [Henceforth: North, *Second Isaiah*]).

<sup>25</sup> He argues that it is arbitrary to alter the text. The change from the second to the third person is typical of prophetic style in general (J. Lindblom, *The Servant Songs in Deutero-Isaiah* (Lunds Universitets Årsskrift, N.F., Avd. 1, Bd 47, Nr. 5; Lund: C. W. K. Gleerup, 1951), p. 38 [Henceforth: Lindblom]).

<sup>26</sup> J. N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 40-66* (NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), p. 373, n. 53 [Henceforth: Oswalt].

<sup>27</sup> S. R. Driver and A. D. Neubauer, *The Fifty-Third Chapter of Isaiah According to the Jewish Interpreters*, vol. 2 (Oxford: James Parker & Co., 1877), p. 49 [Henceforth: Driver and Neubauer].

<sup>28</sup> M. Dahood, ‘Phoenician Elements in Isaiah 52.13-53.12’ in *Near Eastern Studies in Honor of*

כן of v.15a 'so'.<sup>29</sup> For *משחת* 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> reads *משחתי*. Brownlee argues that the vocalisation of the MT is odd. As a nominal form it provides the literal translation 'a marring beyond men', but an interpretation of the text along with the Isaiah Scroll would resolve ambiguities: the addition of a single letter gives *משחתי* ('I anointed').<sup>30</sup> Payne argues that there is little likelihood that 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> is original.<sup>31</sup> LXX reads *ἀδοξήσει ἀπὸ ἀνθρώπων τὸ εἶδος σου*;<sup>32</sup> Vulgate *inglorius erit inter viros aspectus eius*;<sup>33</sup> Syriac translates *ܡܫܚܬܝ*.<sup>34</sup> Dahood reports to the hophal participle, with the *מאיש* expressing the agent, and translates 'his countenance disfigured by men'.<sup>35</sup> North argues that the MT pointing, which gives 'a disfiguring from man his appearance', may stand with no essential difference in meaning with the hophal participle.<sup>36</sup> Oswalt thinks that repointing MT adjective to hophal participle is unnecessary.<sup>37</sup>

### 2.3.3 Isa. 52.15

For *יזה* the versions offer many renderings: LXX reads *θαυμάσσονται*;<sup>38</sup> Targum *יבדר*;<sup>39</sup> Syriac *ܡܫܚܬܝ ܡܫܚܬܝ*,<sup>40</sup> possibly a double rendering of *יזה*; Vulgate *iste asperget gentes multas*.<sup>41</sup> Ibn Ezra,<sup>42</sup> Lindblom,<sup>43</sup> Muilenburg,<sup>44</sup> North<sup>45</sup> and

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*William Foxwell Albright*, ed. by H. Goedicke (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1971), pp. 63-73 (p. 65) [Henceforth: Dahood, Phoenician Elements].

<sup>29</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 235.

<sup>30</sup> W. H. Brownlee, *The Meaning of the Qumran Scrolls for the Bible, with Special Attention to the Book of Isaiah* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), pp. 210-211. Eaton too takes as *משחתי* (J. H. Eaton, *Festal Drama in Deutero-Isaiah* (London: SPCK, 1979), p. 76 [Henceforth: Eaton]).

<sup>31</sup> D. F. Payne, 'The Servant of the Lord: Language and Interpretation', *EvQ* 43 (1971), pp. 131-143 (p. 133) [Henceforth: Payne].

<sup>32</sup> 'your form will not be esteemed by men'.

<sup>33</sup> 'his appearance will be inglorious among men'.

<sup>34</sup> 'was marred'.

<sup>35</sup> Dahood, Phoenician Elements, p. 65.

<sup>36</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 228.

<sup>37</sup> Oswalt, p. 373, n. 54.

<sup>38</sup> 'will wonder'.

<sup>39</sup> 'he will scatter'.

<sup>40</sup> 'this (one) will purify'.

<sup>41</sup> 'that one will besprinkle many nations'.

<sup>42</sup> Driver and Neubauer, p. 44.

<sup>43</sup> Besprinkle possesses the idea of the servant purifying many peoples (Lindblom, p. 41).

<sup>44</sup> J. Muilenburg, 'Isaiah: Chapters 40-66' in *The Interpreter's Bible*, vol. 5, ed. by G.A. Buttrick (New York: Abingdon Press, 1956), pp. 381-773 (p. 618) [Henceforth: Muilenburg, Isaiah 40-66].

Eaton,<sup>46</sup> prefer ‘sprinkle’, but Driver<sup>47</sup> and Hermisson<sup>48</sup> provide arguments opposing it. Driver notes the Arabic cognate *nazâ* and suggests that it has the idea of leaping for joy, eager desire or anger. The context shows no reason why it may not mean ‘leapt for surprise, grief’.<sup>49</sup> Dahood translates ‘he startled’.<sup>50</sup> Hermisson also notes that the poem possesses the vocabulary of surprise and excitement.<sup>51</sup> LXX places a pause after עליו, not after רבים. Dahood translates the עליו as ‘before him’,<sup>52</sup> but ‘because of’ is not unjustifiable.<sup>53</sup> For וקפצו IQIsa<sup>a</sup> reads וקפצו. Dahood translates in the past.<sup>54</sup> North argues that this verb is usually taken as a reference to mouths closed in astonishment, but in light of the preceding יזה, he suggests that the ‘mouth’ is closed to avoid contagion.<sup>55</sup> For התבוננו Morgenstern translates ‘they were pondering over’, citing Job 37.14;<sup>56</sup> Eaton translates ‘contemplate’;<sup>57</sup> and North ‘have

<sup>45</sup> He provides a helpful discussion of the possible translation ‘sprinkle’ and concludes that the phrase should be translated ‘shall...guard against contagion by him’ (lit. reads ‘shall sprinkle upon him’) (*Second Isaiah*, pp. 228, 235).

<sup>46</sup> He translates ‘he will sprinkle many nations’ although the recipient of sprinkling is generally marked by a preposition. The idea, he argues, fits well with servant mission to nations (Eaton, p. 76).

<sup>47</sup> He rejects the argument that the verb is used elliptically to mean ‘he shall sprinkle (ritual water) over’. It is a misuse of the verb, does not have versional support and introduces a technical rite of cult alien to the spirit of the poem (G. R. Driver, ‘Isaiah 52.13-53.12: the Servant of the Lord’, in *In Memoriam Paul Kahle*, ed. by M. Black and G. Fohrer (BZAW 103; Berlin: Alfred Töpelmann, 1968), pp. 90-105 (p. 92) [Henceforth: Driver, Isaiah 53]).

<sup>48</sup> The hiphil of נזה means not ‘besprinkle’ but ‘sprinkle’, and the sprinkled material stands in the accusative or with מן. The besprinkled object always stands with one of the prepositions על, אל, נכח, אל, לפני, never as a direct accusative object (Hermisson, *Das vierte Gottesknechtslied*, p. 9, n. 42).

<sup>49</sup> Driver, *Isaiah 53*, p. 92.

<sup>50</sup> He also notes that the qatals שממו and ראו suggest that this yiqtol is a past event (Dahood, *Phoenician Elements*, p. 65).

<sup>51</sup> Hermisson, *Das vierte Gottesknechtslied*, p. 9, n. 42.

<sup>52</sup> Dahood, *Phoenician Elements*, p. 65.

<sup>53</sup> Koehler-Baumgartner note that ‘on account of’ is an acceptable translation of על; cf. Gibson’s description of על used in a logical sense (J. C. L. Gibson, *Davidson’s Introductory Hebrew Grammar: Syntax*, 4th edn. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994), §118, Rem. 1; p. 149 [Henceforth: Gibson]).

<sup>54</sup> Dahood, *Phoenician Elements*, p. 66.

<sup>55</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 235. Kimhi notes that the verb can mean ‘open’ (Song 2.8) or ‘shut’ (Dt.15.7). Either one is possible, the former describing the kings opening their mouth to tell of the greatness of the servant or the latter by placing their hand over their mouth in amazement (Driver and Neubauer, p. 50).

<sup>56</sup> J. Morgenstern, ‘The suffering servant—a New Solution’, *VT* 11 (1961), pp. 292-320; 406-431 (p. 314) [Henceforth: Morgenstern].

<sup>57</sup> Cf. too his translation of vv. 14-15 (Eaton, pp. 76-77).

discerned'.<sup>58</sup> Gibson takes the verbs ראו and התבוננו as prophetic perfects which inject a note of permanency into the prediction<sup>59</sup> and Clines translates in the present.<sup>60</sup>

#### 2.3.4 Isa. 53.1

For לשמענתנו LXX reads τῆ ἀκοῆ ἡμῶν;<sup>61</sup> Syriac ܠܫܡܥܢܬܢܘ.<sup>62</sup> Dahood translates as 'what we have heard'.<sup>63</sup> Winton Thomas notes that שמוע is in the passive form and could be literally translated 'what has been heard' 'by us'. The suffix is objective and not subjective, and therefore it is a report made to us, not by us.<sup>64</sup> North translates 'what we have heard'<sup>65</sup> or the 'report that reached us'.<sup>66</sup> Watts, however, translates 'our report'.<sup>67</sup> For על 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> and 1QIsa<sup>b</sup> read אל;<sup>68</sup> LXX reads τίς;<sup>69</sup> Syriac ܠܬܝܢ;<sup>70</sup> and Vulgate cui.<sup>71</sup> Dahood translates על-מי 'before whom',<sup>72</sup> and Oswalt 'unto'.<sup>73</sup> The more common translation 'upon' is maintained with due recognition of the possibilities.

#### 2.3.5 Isa. 53.2

1QIsa<sup>a</sup> reads ויעלו for ויעל.<sup>74</sup> For לפניו, LXX reads ἐναντίον αὐτοῦ;<sup>75</sup> Syriac ܠܦܢܝܘ.<sup>76</sup> Winton Thomas translates 'straight up', citing 1Sam.5.4.<sup>77</sup> Driver

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<sup>58</sup> (C. R. North, *The Suffering Servant in Deutero-Isaiah*, 2nd edn. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1956), p. 166 [Henceforth: North, *Suffering Servant*]).

<sup>59</sup> Gibson, §59b, p. 68.

<sup>60</sup> Clines, p. 11.

<sup>61</sup> 'our hearing, report'.

<sup>62</sup> 'our report'.

<sup>63</sup> Dahood, *Phoenician Elements*, p. 64.

<sup>64</sup> D. Winton Thomas, 'A Consideration of Isa. LIII in the Light of Recent Textual and Philological Study', *ETL* 44 (1968), pp. 79-86 (p. 81) [Henceforth, Winton Thomas].

<sup>65</sup> North, *Suffering Servant*<sup>2</sup>, p. 166.

<sup>66</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 236.

<sup>67</sup> J. D. W. Watts, *Isaiah 34-66* (WBC 25; Waco: Word, 1987), p. 224 [Henceforth: Watts].

<sup>68</sup> Goshen-Gottstein wonders whether that found in 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> is from a second hand.

<sup>69</sup> 'to whom'.

<sup>70</sup> 'to whom'.

<sup>71</sup> 'to whom'.

<sup>72</sup> Dahood, *Phoenician Elements*, p. 66.

<sup>73</sup> Oswalt, p. 374.

<sup>74</sup> Goshen-Gottstein suggests it is a first hand.

<sup>75</sup> 'before him'.

<sup>76</sup> 'before him'.

<sup>77</sup> Winton Thomas, p. 81.

has argued for ‘straight up’ or ‘right up’.<sup>78</sup> Clines rather reluctantly accepts לפנינו.<sup>79</sup> Oswalt thinks the MT suffix refers to Yahweh.<sup>80</sup> For לא as ‘without’ see Koehler-Baumgartner. Winton Thomas shifts the athnah to ונראהו and argues that it should be translated ‘regard’ in order to distinguish looking at and looking with pleasure and approval.<sup>81</sup> Hermisson too takes ונראהו with the first colon<sup>82</sup> but Oswalt punctuates according to MT.<sup>83</sup> For ונחמדהו Syriac reads ,~~ⲛⲏⲁⲙⲃⲏⲙⲏ~~.<sup>84</sup> For the last colon LXX reads καὶ οὐκ εἶχεν εἶδος οὐδὲ κάλλος.<sup>85</sup> The translation of ונראהו and ונחמדהו here assumes consequence or effect.<sup>86</sup>

### 2.3.6 Isa. 53.3

Winton Thomas argues that the basic meaning of the hiphil קהל is ‘abstain, hold back from, leave, forsake’. This hiphil is active in sense, not passive, and thus the servant forsakes the company of men.<sup>87</sup> Clines follows Winton Thomas.<sup>88</sup> North argues that the literal meaning of קהל is ‘ceasing’ and hence ‘ceasing from’ rather than the idea of ‘rejected of/by’. He translates ‘shunned the company of men’.<sup>89</sup> Muilenburg notes that the phrase literally means ‘ceased of men’.<sup>90</sup> Citing Arabic cognates, Driver suggests not ‘rejected of men’ but ‘shrinking from men’.<sup>91</sup> Ibn Ezra translates ‘ceased to be reckoned among men’.<sup>92</sup> The translation offered here, ‘alone’, attempts to convey the solitude, whether actively sought by the servant or forced upon him. For מַכְאֲבוֹת 1QIsa<sup>b</sup> reads מַכְאֲבִים. Dahood translates ‘sorrows’<sup>93</sup>

<sup>78</sup> G. R. Driver, ‘Linguistic and Textual Problems: Isaiah I-XXXIX’, *JTS* 38 (1937), pp. 36-50 (p. 48). Gordon provides Syriac parallels supporting Driver (R. P. Gordon, ‘Isaiah LIII 2’, *VT* 20 (1970), pp. 491-492) and Allen provides support from the Hebrew Bible (L. C. Allen, ‘Isaiah LIII 2 Again’, *VT* 21 (1971), p. 490).

<sup>79</sup> Clines, p. 16.

<sup>80</sup> Oswalt, p. 374, n. 60.

<sup>81</sup> Winton Thomas, p. 81.

<sup>82</sup> Hermisson, *Das vierte Gottesknechtslied*, p. 7, n. 17.

<sup>83</sup> Oswalt, p. 374, n. 62.

<sup>84</sup> ‘and we denied him’.

<sup>85</sup> ‘and he did not have form or beauty’.

<sup>86</sup> Cf. Gibson, §87c, p. 106.

<sup>87</sup> He cites Ju. 9.9, 11, 13; Isa. 2.22; Job 19.14 (Winton Thomas, p. 82).

<sup>88</sup> Clines, p. 16.

<sup>89</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 237.

<sup>90</sup> Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 620.

<sup>91</sup> Driver, *Isaiah 53*, p. 92.

<sup>92</sup> Driver and Neubauer, p. 45.

<sup>93</sup> Dahood, *Phoenician Elements*, p. 67.

and Winton Thomas ‘in the grip of pain’, a plural with intensive force which does not equal sorrows or mental agony, but physical pain.<sup>94</sup> North too argues that this is probably an intensive plural which may denote physical (Job 33.19) or mental (Ps. 32.10) pain.<sup>95</sup> For וידיע 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> reads ויודע; for 1QIsa<sup>b</sup> see Goshen-Gottstein, who is unsure how to read it; LXX reads καὶ εἰδὼς φέρειν μαλακίαν;<sup>96</sup> Syriac ܘܕܝܥܘܬܐ;<sup>97</sup> and Vulgate *et scientem infirmitatem*.<sup>98</sup> Oswalt takes an active participle, citing the Qumran Isaiah scrolls.<sup>99</sup> Winton Thomas translates ‘brought low by sickness’, arguing that the root ודע is best taken as ‘humiliated, disciplined, punished’.<sup>100</sup> Driver<sup>101</sup> essentially agrees, as does North,<sup>102</sup> but Johnstone registers some strong and convincing objections to Winton Thomas.<sup>103</sup> Gelston argues that וידיע can be interpreted within the ordinary semantic range of ודע, ‘to know’.<sup>104</sup> Dahood translates ‘known by disease’.<sup>105</sup> Dahood’s reading of the verb will be followed, with implicit support from Gibson.<sup>106</sup> For וכמסתר 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> reads וכמסתיר. For this line Syriac reads ܘܡܢ ܘܢܘܪܐܘܬܐ;<sup>107</sup> Vulgate *et quasi absconditus vultus eius et despectus*.<sup>108</sup> Dahood repoints to the hiphil participle, argues that the servant turned his face from fellow men and notes that the ממונו is ambiguous,

<sup>94</sup> Winton Thomas, p. 82.

<sup>95</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 237.

<sup>96</sup> ‘and one who knows (how) to carry weakness’.

<sup>97</sup> ‘and he knows diseases’.

<sup>98</sup> ‘and knowing infirmity’.

<sup>99</sup> Oswalt, p. 375, n. 65.

<sup>100</sup> He cites Ju.16.9 (Winton Thomas, p. 82).

<sup>101</sup> He cites an Arabic cognate which means ‘quiet, submissive’, and translates ‘submissive under sickness’ (Driver, *Isaiah* 53, p. 93).

<sup>102</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, pp. 237-238. He prefers ‘humbled by’, one of the few appearances of ודע with this meaning, and notes the Arabic cognate *wadu’a*, which means ‘be still, quiet, humiliated’. If one takes ודע as ‘known’, the meaning must be ‘known by sickness’: such personifications are rare in Hebrew.

<sup>103</sup> W. Johnstone, ‘yd’ II, “Be humbled, humiliated”?’ *VT* 41 (1991), pp. 49-62 [Henceforth: Johnstone].

<sup>104</sup> A. Gelston, ‘Knowledge, Humiliation or Suffering: A Lexical, Textual and Exegetical Problem of Isaiah 53’ in *Of Prophets’ Visions and the Wisdom of Sages: Essays in Honour of R. Norman Whybray*, ed. by H. A. McKay and D. J. A. Clines (JSOTSup. 162; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), pp. 126-141 (p. 134) [Henceforth: Gelston, Knowledge].

<sup>105</sup> Dahood, *Phoenician Elements*, p. 67.

<sup>106</sup> Cf. Gibson, §33b, p. 31.

<sup>107</sup> ‘we turned our faces from him’.

<sup>108</sup> ‘and as if his face were concealed and despised’.

possibly referring to ‘him’ or ‘us’. He favours the latter.<sup>109</sup> Winton Thomas translates ‘as a man who hid his face from us’, which in turn supports his proposition for the כדל of v.3. He accepts that ‘as a man from whom faces hide’ is adopted by many.<sup>110</sup> Hermisson argues that it is an expression of the disgust of the servant’s fellow men and offers ‘wie einer, vor dem man das Gesicht verhüllt’.<sup>111</sup> The translation here assumes the hiphil pointing and its causative nature. For נבזה of v.3d 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> reads ונבוזהו and Syriac ܘܢܒܘܙܗܘ.<sup>112</sup> Winton Thomas accepts the participial vocalisation of the נבזה in v.3a but argues that v.3d should be read נבוזהו: the waw has been dropped due to haplography and this rendering parallels the חשבנהו.<sup>113</sup>

### 2.3.7 Isa. 53.4

North offers ‘but, assuredly, on the contrary’ for אכן.<sup>114</sup> Hermisson notes that the stressed subject הוה in v.4a might argue for the addition of the pronoun in v.4b.<sup>115</sup> Indeed, Syriac precedes the verb with ܘܗܘ. It has been suggested that the verb נשא in this verse describes the vicarious suffering of the servant, one who carries the sicknesses of others and bears their pains,<sup>116</sup> though this interpretation has met with some disagreement.<sup>117</sup> The important concept of vicarious suffering will be

<sup>109</sup> Dahood, *Phoenician Elements*, p. 67.

<sup>110</sup> Winton Thomas, p. 83.

<sup>111</sup> Hermisson, *Das vierte Gottesknechtslied*, pp. 14-15.

<sup>112</sup> ‘we despised him’.

<sup>113</sup> Winton Thomas, pp. 81-83.

<sup>114</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 238.

<sup>115</sup> Hermisson, *Das vierte Gottesknechtslied*, p. 7, n. 21.

<sup>116</sup> Cf. the discussion of the verb נשא by Freedman and Willoughby (D. N. Freedman and B. E. Willoughby, ‘נשא’, *ThWAT*, vol. 5, ed. by G. J. Butterweck, H. Ringgren and H.-J. Fabry (Stuttgart: Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 1986), pp. 626-643 (p. 639)) and Hamilton (V. Hamilton, ‘נשא’, *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, vol. 3, ed. by W. A. VanGemeren (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1996), pp. 160-163). Oswalt too provides some relevant comments. He argues that the language of the cult is found here, especially Leviticus, where the sacrificial animal carries (נשא) the sins of the offerers away. The animal dies in the offerer’s place. Thus, the “language of carrying and bearing sets the stage for the substitutionary understanding of the Servant’s suffering” (Oswalt, p. 386).

<sup>117</sup> Cf. Whybray, *Thanksgiving*, pp. 58-60, who argues that the servant suffered more intensely, not instead of the others. It might also be noted that Mat. 8.17 refers to this verse. Here, נשא is translated ελαβεν and the immediate context suggests that Jesus did not actually take the sicknesses of those he healed upon himself but simply took them away (cf. W. D. Davies and D. C. Allison, Jr., *The Gospel According to St. Matthew* (ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991), pp. 37-38 and F. V. Filson, *A Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Matthew* (London: SPCK,



discussed in more detail below.<sup>118</sup> North translates נגוע 'stricken'.<sup>119</sup> LXX lacks אלהים. Winton Thomas argues that אלהים is the superlative and translates 'terribly smitten'.<sup>120</sup> 'Smitten by God' is taken from Gibson.<sup>121</sup>

### 2.3.8 Isa. 53.5

For מחלל LXX reads ἐτραυματίσθη<sup>122</sup> and Syriac ܩܘܠܘܢܐܢܐ.<sup>123</sup> North translates this po'el participle 'pierced through' and argues that the pual מחלל, which would be rendered 'profaned', does not fit with the MT parallelism.<sup>124</sup> Kimhi takes מחולל as a polel from the same root and meaning as חיל.<sup>125</sup> Whybray argues that the מן here means 'in consequence of, as the result of', not 'for, in exchange for, in payment for'. The latter would most naturally use כּ.<sup>126</sup> North,<sup>127</sup> Janowski<sup>128</sup> and Gibson<sup>129</sup> argue similarly, and the Syriac gives ܩܘܠܘܢܐܢܐ.<sup>130</sup> North argues that מוסר, 'discipline, correction' is always remedial rather than retributive punishment.<sup>131</sup> Dahood argues that שלומנו could be pointed piel infinitive construct and translates 'the penalty we should have paid'.<sup>132</sup> North translates the entire line 'his (lit. upon him) was the chastisement that brought us weal'.<sup>133</sup> Oswalt argues that מוסר שלומנו literally reads 'punishment of our peace' and translates 'punishment of our well-being'.<sup>134</sup> The translation 'for our well-being' depends on Gibson's

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1960), p. 112).

<sup>118</sup> Cf. Ch. 3, Sec. 3.5.3.

<sup>119</sup> *Suffering Servant*<sup>2</sup>, p. 166.

<sup>120</sup> Winton Thomas, p. 83. Clines expresses some doubts about this argument (p. 17).

<sup>121</sup> Gibson, §33b, p. 31.

<sup>122</sup> 'he was wounded'.

<sup>123</sup> 'is slain'.

<sup>124</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 229.

<sup>125</sup> He cites Ps. 48.7 (Driver and Neubauer, p. 52).

<sup>126</sup> Whybray, *Thanksgiving*, pp. 61-62.

<sup>127</sup> He argues that מן can often be rendered 'on account of, by reason of' or, in Dt. 28.34 and Ju. 2.18, 'by' (North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 239).

<sup>128</sup> He takes this one and the one in v.5b as 'because' (B. Janowski, 'Er trug unsere Sünden: Jes 53 und die Dramatik der Stellvertretung' in *Der Leidende Gottesknecht: Jes 53 und seine Wirkungsgeschichte*, ed. by B. Janowski and P. Stuhlmacher (FAT 14; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1996), pp. 27-48 (p. 39) [Henceforth: Janowski]).

<sup>129</sup> He translates 'because of our transgressions' (Gibson, § 118, Rem. 1; p. 148).

<sup>130</sup> 'because'.

<sup>131</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 240. For 'chastisement', cf. Koehler-Baumgartner.

<sup>132</sup> Dahood, *Phoenician Elements*, p. 68.

<sup>133</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 239.

<sup>134</sup> Oswalt, p. 384, incl. n. 3.

discussion of the construct in general and this line in particular.<sup>135</sup> 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> reads *ובחבורתיו* for *ובחברתו*; LXX the singular *μώλωπι*;<sup>136</sup> Syriac *ܡܠܚܘܬܝܗ*.<sup>137</sup> North argues that the translation ‘stripes’ is misleading if it refers to judicial scourging and implies that ‘wounds’ may be more appropriate.<sup>138</sup> *נרפא* is taken in the impersonal ‘there was healing for us’<sup>139</sup> rather than ‘we were healed’<sup>140</sup> in order to emphasise the presence of the *לנו*, which leads quite naturally into the *כלנו* of 53.6.

### 2.3.9 Isa. 53.6

Kimhi emphasises that the text reads ‘the sheep’<sup>141</sup> but LXX lacks definite article. For *הפגיע בו* Syriac reads *ܡܠܚܘܬܝܗ*.<sup>142</sup>

### 2.3.10 Isa. 53.7

For *נגש* Syriac reads *ܡܘܫܝܗ*.<sup>143</sup> North translates ‘he was harshly treated’,<sup>144</sup> the word implying physical violence.<sup>145</sup> Koehler-Baumgartner offer ‘oppressed’. Clines takes *נגש* as a participle, like *נענה*.<sup>146</sup> For *נענה* North suggests ‘though he submitted humbly’ or ‘the while he submitted’.<sup>147</sup> Oswalt translates ‘humbling himself’, suggesting that the niphal can be passive and reflexive.<sup>148</sup> Dahood argues that the yiqtol *יפתח* can refer to a past event, citing 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>, which reads *פתח* for the second *יפתח*.<sup>149</sup> Winton Thomas translates ‘he would not open his mouth’.<sup>150</sup> He

<sup>135</sup> Gibson, §34, p. 31. He translates ‘the chastisement that brought healing to us’. ‘Well-being’ is a possible translation for *שָׁלוֹם*, according to Koehler-Baumgartner, and it provides a good contrast with the physical suffering of the servant. ‘For’ conveys the basic idea of ‘brought’ and does not imply the presence of a verb.

<sup>136</sup> ‘weal, welt’.

<sup>137</sup> ‘and with his sores’.

<sup>138</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 240.

<sup>139</sup> Cf. North, who translates ‘there is healing for us’ (North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 64) and Watts’ ‘with his stripes comes healing for us’ (p. 224).

<sup>140</sup> Koehler-Baumgartner offer this rendering.

<sup>141</sup> It refers to those sheep without a shepherd and the article is used to point to a particular type of sheep who would go astray (Driver and Neubauer, p. 52).

<sup>142</sup> ‘laid on him’.

<sup>143</sup> ‘he drew near’.

<sup>144</sup> North, *Suffering Servant*<sup>2</sup>, p. 167.

<sup>145</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 240.

<sup>146</sup> Clines, p. 17.

<sup>147</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 240.

<sup>148</sup> Oswalt, pp. 389; 391, n. 20.

<sup>149</sup> Dahood, *Phoenician Elements*, p. 68.

<sup>150</sup> Winton Thomas, p. 84.

also argues that this repeated colon found in v.7e is “not alien to the style of Second Isaiah”, and retains it.<sup>151</sup> Driver argues that this last cola is “vertical dittography” and must be deleted.<sup>152</sup>

### 2.3.11 Isa. 53.8

For **מעצר** Goshen-Gottstein suggests that a first hand in 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> reads **מערוצ** and a second hand provides **מעוצר**. For this line, LXX reads **ἐν τῇ ταπεινώσει ἢ κρίσις αὐτοῦ ἤρθη;**<sup>153</sup> Syriac **ܬܘܢ ܡܒܘܨܐ ܕܗܘܢܐ ܕܘܢܐ ܕܘܢܐ**<sup>154</sup> Dahood translates ‘without restraint and without moderation’.<sup>155</sup> Winton Thomas notes that the verb **עצר** can mean ‘shutting up in prison’ and translates ‘from prison and law court’.<sup>156</sup> North opts for a judicial connotation, reading ‘from imprisonment (custody, arrest) and from judgment’. The **עצר** can literally mean ‘restraint, coercion’ with the possible concrete meaning of ‘prison, imprisonment’.<sup>157</sup> Driver notes Arabic cognates referring to family and kin, and thus offers ‘without protection (of kin) and without due legal procedure’.<sup>158</sup> Muilenburg favours ‘from imprisonment and from sentence [or judgment] he was taken away’.<sup>159</sup> North<sup>160</sup> and Muilenburg<sup>161</sup> see overtones of death in **לקח**.<sup>162</sup> Dahood translates **דורו** ‘his life’, citing Isa. 38.12, in which the noun parallels **חיי**.<sup>163</sup> Winton Thomas cites Akkadian and Arabic parallels and translates ‘his fate’.<sup>164</sup> Muilenburg favours the translation ‘generation’, arguing that this description would accentuate the solitariness of the servant, a “marked feature of the poem from the beginning”.<sup>165</sup>

<sup>151</sup> Winton Thomas, p. 84.

<sup>152</sup> Driver, Isa. 53, p. 94.

<sup>153</sup> ‘in humility, his judgment was carried out’. Muilenburg translates the LXX ‘in his humiliation his judgment was taken away’ (Muilenburg, Isaiah 40-66, p. 625).

<sup>154</sup> ‘from imprisonment and from judgment he was led’.

<sup>155</sup> Dahood, Phoenician Elements, p. 69.

<sup>156</sup> Winton Thomas, p. 84.

<sup>157</sup> He cites 2Kgs. 17.4; Jer. 33.1; 39.15 (*Second Isaiah*, p. 241).

<sup>158</sup> Driver, Isaiah 53, p. 94.

<sup>159</sup> Muilenburg, Isaiah 40-66, p. 626.

<sup>160</sup> It indicates a leading away to execution, as in Pr. 24.11 (*Second Isaiah*, p. 241).

<sup>161</sup> It conveys the idea of one taken away to death (Muilenburg, Isaiah 40-66, p. 626).

<sup>162</sup> Note that 1QIsa<sup>b</sup> reads **לקחו**.

<sup>163</sup> Dahood, Phoenician Elements, p. 69.

<sup>164</sup> Winton Thomas, p. 84.

<sup>165</sup> Muilenburg, Isaiah 40-66, p. 626.

Hermisson favours ‘sein Geschick’.<sup>166</sup> Driver notes cognates in Akkadian (*dûru*) and Arabic (*dauru(n)/aldârâni*) and argues that it should be translated ‘plight, fate’.<sup>167</sup> He is followed by Clines.<sup>168</sup> Payne argues that v.8c unequivocally indicates that the servant was wrenched from this life, citing Ez. 32.22-32 and Ps. 88.6.<sup>169</sup> Dahood agrees that the line refers to death<sup>170</sup> but Whybray offers an alternative opinion.<sup>171</sup> While Whybray’s discussion of the phrase אָרַץ חַיִּים appears rather forced, favouring a nuance in which it refers primarily to human society, his doubts concerning the presumed reference to death are well taken. The niphal of גָּוַר, for example, can occur in contexts alluding to literal death<sup>172</sup> but some contexts indicate the possible figurative use of the verb which does not necessarily describe actual physical death.<sup>173</sup> Indeed, the poetic language of the poem, discussed in more detail below,<sup>174</sup> further suggests that it may be unwise to assume the actual death of the servant.<sup>175</sup> In his discussion of 53.8, Oswalt strongly criticises Whybray’s discussion. He asks why Whybray offers such a discussion “since the death of the Servant has been obvious to Jewish and Christian interpreters alike for centuries”. Oswalt also accepts that “death is not stated in baldly literal terms; it is the logical conclusion of the implications of what is said. But surely the author would be a poor poet if he had been baldly literal”.<sup>176</sup> The argument that death ‘is obvious’ is obviously contradicted by the need to discuss the matter; and it might be suggested that the power of the poet is not merely to state a clear, unequivocal concept in poetic

<sup>166</sup> Hermisson, *Das vierte Gottesknechtslied*, p. 7.

<sup>167</sup> Driver, *Isaiah 53*, p. 95.

<sup>168</sup> Clines, p. 18.

<sup>169</sup> Payne, p. 138.

<sup>170</sup> Dahood, *Phoenician Elements*, p. 69.

<sup>171</sup> Whybray, *Thanksgiving*, pp. 100-103.

<sup>172</sup> Cf. Ps. 88.6.

<sup>173</sup> Cf. Lam.3.54; 2Chron.26.21.

<sup>174</sup> Cf. Chapter 3, Sec. 3.5.3, esp. pp. 92-94.

<sup>175</sup> To give one example, Reventlow has commented within a discussion of the death of the servant that “the intentionally imprecise...poetic language shows that we cannot analyze the text as if it were a scientific report” (H. G. Reventlow, ‘Basic Issues in the Interpretation of Isaiah 53’ in *Jesus and the Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 and Christian Origins*, ed. by W. H. Bellinger, Jr. and W. R. Farmer (Harrisburg: Trinity Press, 1998). To take another recent example, Landy is less interested in the question concerning the actual death of the servant than the more important “symbolic enactment of this death (F. Landy, ‘The Construction of the Subject and the Symbolic Order: A Reading of the Last Three Suffering Servant Songs’, in *Among the Prophets: Language, Image and Structure in the Prophetic Writings*, ed. by P. R. Davies and D. J. A. Clines (JSOTSup. 144; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), pp. 60-71 (p. 69, n. 1)).

<sup>176</sup> Oswalt, p. 393, n. 25.

language but that the language itself is used in order to suggest a myriad of possibilities requiring interpretation and involvement in the poem. Isa. 53.8d is a difficult colon. Some of the individual words will be considered before the difficult **למו נגע** and the colon itself. For **מפשע** LXX reads ἀπὸ τῶν ἀνομιῶν<sup>177</sup> while Syriac reads ܠܚܘܿܬܐ.<sup>178</sup> For **עמי**, 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> and 4QIsa<sup>d</sup> read **עמו**; Syriac reads ܥܡܝܐ;<sup>179</sup> LXX τοῦ λαοῦ μου.<sup>180</sup> Dahood argues that the suffix is a Phoenician 3ms and translates ‘his people’.<sup>181</sup> Hermisson alters to **עמו**<sup>182</sup> and Clines translates ‘his people’,<sup>183</sup> but Oswalt maintains ‘my people’.<sup>184</sup> For **נגע** 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> reads **נוגע**; LXX reads ἤχθη;<sup>185</sup> Syriac ܠ ܢܘܿܥܐ.<sup>186</sup> For **למו** LXX reads εἰς θάνατον.<sup>187</sup> Morgenstern agrees with the Greek, taking **למות**.<sup>188</sup> Payne thinks **למו** may be an abbreviation for **למות**.<sup>189</sup> Muilenburg suggests that the MT **נגע למו** reads literally ‘stricken to him’.<sup>190</sup> Dahood translates **נגע למו** ‘he was struck from them’, re-pointing to a niph'al preterite **נִגַע** or qal passive **נִגַע**. The **ל** in Northwest Semitic, he claims, may be translated ‘from’.<sup>191</sup> He later offers a rather convoluted explanation of the line.<sup>192</sup> Winton Thomas translates ‘grievously stricken’, arguing that death (cf. LXX) in Hebrew can often be used as a superlative.<sup>193</sup> Hermisson translates ‘wurde er geschlagen zum Tode’, reading **לְמוֹת נִגַע**.<sup>194</sup> Driver argues that

<sup>177</sup> ‘from the lawlessnesses’.

<sup>178</sup> ‘the wicked’.

<sup>179</sup> ‘of my people’.

<sup>180</sup> ‘of my people’.

<sup>181</sup> Dahood, *Phoenician Elements*, p. 69.

<sup>182</sup> Hermisson, *Das vierte Gottesknechtlied*, p. 8, n.29.

<sup>183</sup> Clines, p. 13.

<sup>184</sup> Oswalt, p. 390.

<sup>185</sup> ‘he was led away’.

<sup>186</sup> ‘(some of the wicked of my people) offered him’.

<sup>187</sup> ‘into death’.

<sup>188</sup> Morgenstern, p. 317.

<sup>189</sup> Payne, p. 137.

<sup>190</sup> Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 626.

<sup>191</sup> Dahood, *Phoenician Elements*, p. 69.

<sup>192</sup> He translates the final colon ‘for the rebellion of his people he touched the waters’. He takes the nominal **נִגַע** as the verbal **נִגַע** and identifies the **למו** in **למו** as the by form for water (cf. Job 6.15; 9.30). ‘Touching the waters’ is associated with death (cf. Job 36.12; 33.22) and thus the land of the living determines the importance of the unspecified ‘waters’ (M. Dahood, ‘Isaiah 53.8-12 and Massoretic Mispronunciations’, *Biblica* 63 (1982), pp. 566-570 (p. 567)).

<sup>193</sup> Winton Thomas, p. 84.

<sup>194</sup> Hermisson, *Das vierte Gottesknechtlied*, p. 8, n.30.

‘a blow for him’, the meaning of the MT, is not possible. If נָגַע/נָגַע לְמָוֹת (he was stricken to death) is read, it is ambiguous: it might mean only ‘he was grievously stricken’. ‘To death’ is a semitic idiom for ‘grievously, severely’ (cf. 53.12).<sup>195</sup> Syriac reads *ܠܡ ܘܢܘܚܘܢ ܘܢܘܚܘܢ ܘܢܘܚܘܢ*.<sup>196</sup> North notes that the line literally means ‘on account of the rebellion of my people a stroke to them’. He re-points עָמִי to עָמִי and translates ‘for the transgression of peoples who deserved to be stricken’.<sup>197</sup> The translation offered here is an attempt to account for the literal nature of the MT, with the only emendation the change from עָמִי to עָמוּ.

### 2.3.12 Isa. 53.9

1QIsa<sup>a</sup> reads וִיתֵנוּ and LXX καὶ δώσω<sup>198</sup> for וִיתֵן. Morgenstern thinks it should be pointed וִיתֵן or should be taken with 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>,<sup>199</sup> Dahood takes it as the qal passive and translates ‘was put’;<sup>200</sup> Winton Thomas translates ‘and they assigned’, suggesting that the emendation to the passive is unnecessary because the subject is the plural indefinite;<sup>201</sup> North reads an impersonal subject, rendering ‘and one gave’;<sup>202</sup> and Driver notes that the indefinite rendering or the passive (וִיתֵן: ‘and it (his grave) was appointed’) are not substantially different.<sup>203</sup> Syriac reads *ܘܢܘܚܘܢ ܘܢܘܚܘܢ*.<sup>204</sup> ‘They gave’ will be taken with reference to Winton Thomas. אֵת, which precedes רָשָׁעִים and עָשִׂיר, is taken as a marker for an indirect object.<sup>205</sup> For עָשִׂיר 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> reads עָשִׂירִים;<sup>206</sup> LXX reads τοὺς πλουσίους;<sup>207</sup> Targum reads עֲתִירֵי נַכְסֵי.<sup>208</sup> Dahood translates ‘and with the rich’, noting that many examples of

<sup>195</sup> Driver, *Isaiah* 53, p. 95.

<sup>196</sup> ‘and some of the wicked of my people offered him’.

<sup>197</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, pp. 230-231. Clines considers this implausible (p. 19).

<sup>198</sup> ‘and I will give’.

<sup>199</sup> Morgenstern, p. 317.

<sup>200</sup> Dahood, *Phoenician Elements*, p. 70.

<sup>201</sup> Winton Thomas, p. 84.

<sup>202</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 231.

<sup>203</sup> Driver, *Isaiah* 53, p. 95.

<sup>204</sup> ‘he gave the wicked (sing.) his grave’.

<sup>205</sup> Cf. Gibson, §94, Rem. 4, p. 116.

<sup>206</sup> Goshen-Gottstein sees this as a first hand.

<sup>207</sup> ‘the wealthy (pl.)’.

<sup>208</sup> lit., ‘the rich of possessions’.

singular and plurals existing in parallel can be found in Hebrew.<sup>209</sup> Westermann emends to ‘doers of evil’.<sup>210</sup> For 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> reads בּוֹמְתוֹ; LXX reads ἀντὶ τοῦ θανάτου αὐτοῦ;<sup>211</sup> Syriac ܒܘܡܬܘ.<sup>212</sup> North notes that the MT literally means ‘in his deaths’. He suggests that 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> is unintelligible<sup>213</sup> and the rendering ‘his mound’ (בְּמָתוֹ) would be very attractive if it could be substantiated. The parallel in Ez. 43.7 is too uncertain to be relied upon. He translates ‘when he died’.<sup>214</sup> Hermisson translates ‘seine Grabstätte’, reading בְּמָתוֹ.<sup>215</sup> Driver, like North, argues that ‘in his deaths’ is improbable and offers בֵּית-מוֹתוֹ as an alternative which could mean ‘his tomb’.<sup>216</sup> Albright translates ‘funerary installation’.<sup>217</sup> The rendering בְּמָתוֹ, favoured by Hermisson and noted by North, will be taken here for the sake of parallelism. Once again, these references may suggest death<sup>218</sup> but the nature of the poem prevents any unequivocal assumption.<sup>219</sup> Muilenburg notes the concessive nature of על and renders ‘although’<sup>220</sup> and Gibson renders ‘in spite of the fact that’.<sup>221</sup> Clines wonders if an ironic ‘because’ is possible, and translates ‘for’.<sup>222</sup> North argues that חָמַס usually refers to physical violence, which is inconceivable given the information provided about the servant. He similarly notes the unusual position of the לָא, prior to an accusative of object which in itself stands before the verb. It is as

<sup>209</sup> He cites Isa. 52.14; Job 20.5; Pr. 14.13, 34 (Dahood, *Phoenician Elements*, p. 70). Clines takes Dahood’s point concerning the parallel of singulars and plurals but wonders if the wicked/criminals would be buried in the same place as the wealthy (p. 20).

<sup>210</sup> C. Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66: A Commentary*, trans. by D.M.G. Stalker (London: SCM Press, 1969), p. 254 [Henceforth: Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66*].

<sup>211</sup> ‘in return for his death’.

<sup>212</sup> ‘in/with his death’.

<sup>213</sup> Oswalt wonders whether 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> represents a misplacement and reads בְּמוֹתוֹ (Oswalt, p. 390, n. 19).

<sup>214</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, pp. 65, 231.

<sup>215</sup> The MT reads ‘bei seinen Toden’ (Hermisson, *Das vierte Gottesknechtslied*, p. 8, n. 32).

<sup>216</sup> Driver, *Isaiah 53*, pp. 95-96.

<sup>217</sup> W. F. Albright, ‘The High Place in Ancient Palestine’, in *Volume du Congrès: Strasbourg, 1956* (VTSup. 4; Leiden: Brill, 1957), pp. 244-258 (pp. 244-246).

<sup>218</sup> Cf. Oswalt, pp. 396-398.

<sup>219</sup> Cf. Whybray, *Thanksgiving*, pp. 103-104.

<sup>220</sup> Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 627.

<sup>221</sup> Gibson, §118, Rem. 1; p. 149.

<sup>222</sup> Clines, pp. 13, 20.

if the poet meant to say ‘he did not violence’, the very reverse of violence.<sup>223</sup> Note Clines’ translation, ‘he had practised non-violence’.<sup>224</sup>

### 2.3.13 Isa. 53.10

Hermisson notes that all attempts to make sense of v.10a are at best hypothetical.<sup>225</sup> The verb  $\text{זָכַח}$  has the meaning of ‘intend’ in Ju.13.23, ‘business’ in Isa. 58.3, 13 and is almost synonymous with ‘purpose’ in Isa. 44.28; 58.14; 53.10, according to North.<sup>226</sup> Muilenburg suggests ‘purpose’, one of the major elements in the theology of DI,<sup>227</sup> and Janowski favours the idea of willingness compared with the idea of ‘like, be fond of’.<sup>228</sup> North argues that  $\text{דָּכָאוּ}$  should mean ‘to crush him’ and could mean ‘to cleanse him’ (cf. LXX) if it is an Aramaism. The latter is improbable after the  $\text{מָדָכָא}$  of v. 5.<sup>229</sup> For  $\text{הִחֲלִי}$  1QIsa<sup>a</sup> reads  $\text{וַיִּחַלְלֵהוּ}$ ; LXX reads  $\text{τῆς πλῆγῆς}$ ;<sup>230</sup> and Vulgate reads *in infirmitate*.<sup>231</sup> Clines takes it as an infinitive absolute.<sup>232</sup> Winton Thomas translates ‘through sickness’.<sup>233</sup> North argues that it is probably intended as the hiphil perfect of  $\text{חָלָה}$ , a secondary form of  $\text{חָלָה}$  with the quiescent aleph dropped. He emends to  $\text{הִחֲלִי}$ , ‘with sickness’, in which the article is used with words denoting diseases. The verb therefore has two accusatives, the second being instrumental. North thus translates the phrase  $\text{דָּכָאוּ הִחֲלִי}$  ‘to crush him (with) sickness’ and argues that it is a violent figure if taken literally.<sup>234</sup> Muilenburg, Ibn Ezra<sup>235</sup> and Kimhi<sup>236</sup> too note the possible connection with  $\text{אָלַף}$  verbs. Muilenburg argues that the consonants mean ‘the sickness’ and he translates ‘with sickness’ or ‘grief’.<sup>237</sup> Dahood translates the colon ‘But Yahweh willed to crush him

<sup>223</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 241.

<sup>224</sup> Clines, pp. 13, 20.

<sup>225</sup> Hermisson, *Das vierte Gottesknechtlied*, p. 10.

<sup>226</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 242.

<sup>227</sup> Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 628.

<sup>228</sup> Janowski, p. 40, n. 35.

<sup>229</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 231.

<sup>230</sup> ‘blow, stroke’.

<sup>231</sup> ‘in weakness’.

<sup>232</sup> Clines, p. 20.

<sup>233</sup> Winton Thomas, p. 85.

<sup>234</sup> Indeed, the  $\text{חָלִי}$  can refer to that sickness which is caused by violence. He cites 1Kgs.22.34; 2Kgs.8.29 as evidence (North, *Second Isaiah*, pp. 232, 242).

<sup>235</sup> Driver and Neubauer, p. 47.

<sup>236</sup> Driver and Neubauer, p. 54.

<sup>237</sup> Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 628.



and to pierce him'. The vav at the end of **דכאו** is taken with the **החלי**; the consonants **החלי** may be from **חלל** and may be a hiphil infinitive construct with a 3p suffix '-y', vocalised **החלי**; both infinitives depend on **חפץ**; and 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> supports his meaning despite the different consonants.<sup>238</sup> For v.10b, Syriac reads **ܪܡܢܐ ܕܢܦܫܐ ܕܚܝܢܐ ܕܚܝܢܐ**.<sup>239</sup> North thinks that the AV and RV provide the correct sense with the translation 'when his soul (i.e., he) shall make an offering'. The **שׁים** provides the sense of 'make' or 'constitute' (cf. 54.12). Whether one takes an 'if' or 'when' at the beginning of the line, the sufferings seem to be in the future, despite the apparently past description of vv.1-9.<sup>240</sup> Whybray argues that no known case of **אם** with the imperfect refers to a past event and therefore only the present or future translations are plausible here.<sup>241</sup> He also suggests that **נפשו** should not be taken as the subject of the verb **תשים**. If **נפש** is the object, then the verb would possess the frequently attested meaning of 'transform into' or 'treat as'; if it is taken as the subject, then only 'make, establish, appoint' is appropriate. It is not clear what would be meant if the servant 'makes' or 'establishes' an **אשם**.<sup>242</sup> Clines thinks it might be preferable to take the **נפשו** as the subject.<sup>243</sup> Winton Thomas translates 'though his own life be made an offering for sin', with **נפשו** the subject of a passive **תשם**.<sup>244</sup> Dahood reads **אמת שימה** and translates 'certainly his life made a guilt offering'.<sup>245</sup> Oswalt translates v.10b 'if you make his soul a guilt offering'.<sup>246</sup> The translation offered here is done so only tentatively. **אם** can introduce conditional clauses capable of being fulfilled and can be rendered 'when', 'if' or 'though'. Such clauses can be constructed with yiqtol<sup>247</sup> and might fit well with this context. Thus, the 'he' is a

<sup>238</sup> Dahood, *Phoenician Elements*, p. 71.

<sup>239</sup> 'sin/sin-offering was placed on his soul'.

<sup>240</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, pp. 232, 243.

<sup>241</sup> Whybray, *Thanksgiving*, p. 65.

<sup>242</sup> Whybray, *Thanksgiving*, p. 64. He doubts the reliability of emendations.

<sup>243</sup> Clines, p. 21.

<sup>244</sup> Winton Thomas, p. 85.

<sup>245</sup> Dahood, *Phoenician Elements*, pp. 64-71. J. R. Battenfield has argued that 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> supports Dahood's contention (J. R. Battenfield, 'Isaiah LIII 10: Taking an 'If' out of the Sacrifice of the Servant', *VT* 32 (1982), p. 484).

<sup>246</sup> Oswalt, p. 398.

<sup>247</sup> Gibson, §120-121, pp. 152-154.

translation of נִפְשׁ and ‘constitutes’ a translation of תְּשִׁים based on North’s comments above.

### 2.3.14 Isa. 53.11

Whybray,<sup>248</sup> North<sup>249</sup> and Muilenburg<sup>250</sup> take the מִן in the temporal sense. In light of the frequent translation ‘because’ for מִן in 53.5, the ambiguous ‘from’ will be maintained. 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> and 1QIsa<sup>b</sup> read אֹרר after יִרְאֶה; 4QIsa<sup>d</sup> reads lac [א]; LXX reads δεῖξαι αὐτῷ φῶς;<sup>251</sup> Syriac reads ܘܠܗܘܢ ܘܠܗܘܢ ܘܠܗܘܢ<sup>252</sup> and places a pause after ܘܠܗܘܢ. Hermisson inserts אֹרר<sup>253</sup> as does Oswalt.<sup>254</sup> de Boer argues that רֵאֵה is used absolutely here, meaning ‘he shall live prosperously, in peace’.<sup>255</sup> Dahood translates יִרְאֶה ‘he was sated’.<sup>256</sup> Winton Thomas suggests that יִרְאֶה is an orthographic variant of יִרוּה, whose root רוּה means ‘drink one’s fill’,<sup>257</sup> and is followed by Clines.<sup>258</sup> Whybray wonders why רוּה should be preferred and thinks that the parallel with יִשְׁבַּע is not a justified argument. He therefore accepts ‘he shall see light’, referring to one enjoying the fulness of life.<sup>259</sup> Sawyer too accepts יִרְאֶה אֹרר and argues that the phrase refers to the resurrection of the servant.<sup>260</sup> This suggestion depends upon the presumption that the servant did in fact die. Hermisson, for example, thinks that the servant genuinely died a disgraceful death.<sup>261</sup> As mentioned above,<sup>262</sup> some scholars do not accept that the servant necessarily died and the nature of the poetic language precludes any definite conclusion. Oswalt accepts the death of the servant and similarly argues that the idea

<sup>248</sup> Whybray, *Thanksgiving*, p. 81.

<sup>249</sup> He translates it ‘after’ (North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 244).

<sup>250</sup> Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 630.

<sup>251</sup> ‘to point out light to him’.

<sup>252</sup> ‘and from the toil of his soul he will see’.

<sup>253</sup> Hermisson, *Das vierte Gottesknechtslied*, p. 8, n. 37.

<sup>254</sup> Oswalt, p. 399.

<sup>255</sup> P. A. H. de Boer, *Second Isaiah’s Message* (OTS 11; Leiden: Brill, 1956), p. 55.

<sup>256</sup> Dahood, *Phoenician Elements*, p. 72.

<sup>257</sup> He cites Jos. 10.15; Pss. 60.5; 91.16 (Winton Thomas, p. 85).

<sup>258</sup> Clines, p. 21.

<sup>259</sup> Whybray, *Thanksgiving*, pp. 82-83.

<sup>260</sup> J. F. A. Sawyer, ‘Hebrew Words for the Resurrection of the Dead’, *VT* 23 (1973), pp. 218-234 (cf. esp. pp. 233-234).

<sup>261</sup> Hermisson, *Das vierte Gottesknechtslied*, p. 16).

<sup>262</sup> Cf. Sec. 2.3.11.

of resurrection cannot simply be reject because it may be a later concept. He nevertheless argues that a reference to resurrection cannot be assumed: the passage intentionally portrays in the most vivid language that the life of the servant was not futile.<sup>263</sup> It might be best to note that **יִרְאֶה אֹר** may describe resurrection if **אֹר** is accepted but neither the **אֹר** nor the interpretation can be unequivocally assumed. North notes the possibility that **יִרְאֶה** is an alternative spelling or corruption of **יִרוּה** (he shall be sated) and **בְּדַעְתּוֹ** could be translated ‘with his humiliation’. Seeing and knowing are more common parallels than **יִרוּה**/**שִׁבַע**<sup>264</sup> and it would be an anti-climax to say that the servant will have (had) a surfeit of troubles after v.10b.<sup>265</sup> In 53.11b Winton Thomas reads **בְּדַעְתּוֹ** with **יִשְׁבַע** and translates the former with ‘humiliation’,<sup>266</sup> but Johnstone has questioned his arguments.<sup>267</sup> Williamson accepts the argument of Winton Thomas but prefers ‘rest’ rather than humiliated.<sup>268</sup> Hermisson too reads the **בְּדַעְתּוֹ** with **יִשְׁבַע**,<sup>269</sup> as does Oswalt,<sup>270</sup> but Whybray separates **בְּדַעְתּוֹ** from **יִשְׁבַע**, offering a good summary of the possible translations of the text.<sup>271</sup> Gelston too separates the two words.<sup>272</sup> North argues that the literal translation of **יִשְׁבַע בְּדַעְתּוֹ** is ‘and be sated with his knowledge’.<sup>273</sup> For **בְּדַעְתּוֹ** 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> reads **וּבְדַעְתּוֹ**; LXX reads **ἡν̄ σ̄ε̄ε̄ε̄**;<sup>274</sup> Syriac reads **ܒܝܘܨܘܬܐ**.<sup>275</sup> Muilenburg notes that ‘knowledge’ provides a better parallelism with the proposed addition of light.<sup>276</sup> Clines favours the derivation from **יָדַע** II, ‘to be submissive, humiliated’.<sup>277</sup> Gelston argues that the **בְּדַעְתּוֹ** translated within the normal

<sup>263</sup> Oswalt, pp. 402-403.

<sup>264</sup> Cf. Je.31.14; La.3.15;cf. Ps. 91.16; Job 10.15 (where the **יִרוּה** root is better).

<sup>265</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 233.

<sup>266</sup> Winton Thomas, p. 86.

<sup>267</sup> Johnstone, p. 58.

<sup>268</sup> H. G. M. Williamson, ‘Da’at in Isaiah LIII 11’, *VT* 28 (1978), pp. 118-122. But, for a dissenting argument, cf. J. Day, ‘Da’at “Humiliation” in Isaiah LIII 11 in the Light of Isaiah LIII 3 and Daniel XII 4, and the Oldest Known Interpretation of the Suffering Servant’, *VT* 30 (1980), pp. 97-101.

<sup>269</sup> Hermisson, *Das vierte Gottesknechtslied*, p. 8, n. 38.

<sup>270</sup> Oswalt, p. 399.

<sup>271</sup> Whybray, *Thanksgiving*, pp. 83-84.

<sup>272</sup> A. Gelston, ‘Some Notes on Second Isaiah’, *VT* 21 (1971), pp. 517-527 (pp. 525-527).

<sup>273</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 244.

<sup>274</sup> ‘the understanding’.

<sup>275</sup> ‘with knowledge’.

<sup>276</sup> Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 630.

<sup>277</sup> Clines, p. 21.

parameters of *ידע* is elusive and therefore emends the *ד* to *ר*, following Kennicott 89. ‘By his suffering’ would be within the range of the noun *רעה* and fits the context.<sup>278</sup> For *יצדיק צדיק* LXX reads *δικαιῶσαι δίκαιον*<sup>279</sup> and Syriac reads *ܟܬܒܐ ܠܗܬܘܐ*<sup>280</sup> with a pause before the next phrase. Whybray notes that *יצדיק* is probably an internal causative hiphil, citing Mowinckel and Westermann,<sup>281</sup> and Clines too renders this way.<sup>282</sup> North argues that *יצדיק לרבים* can be translated ‘shall bring righteousness to many’ though the verb strictly means ‘declare righteous, acquit’.<sup>283</sup> He further notes that *צדיק* could be taken in the construct state, functioning something like a superlative.<sup>284</sup> Winton Thomas places *צדיק* after the *בדעתו* of v.11b.<sup>285</sup> Whybray argues that the *צדיק* can be retained as an adverbial accusative if *יצדיק* is taken as an internal causative hiphil. It therefore qualifies the preceding verb. A translation such as ‘my servant being guiltless acted righteously’ is therefore possible.<sup>286</sup> Hermisson deletes the *צדיק* as dittography and translates ‘Gerecht macht mein Knecht die Vielen’.<sup>287</sup> Morgenstern too omits it.<sup>288</sup> Oswalt takes it as a description of the servant, existing in apposition.<sup>289</sup> Following Oswalt and comments made by Gibson<sup>290</sup> and Blythin,<sup>291</sup> *צדיק* is tentatively taken in apposition to *עבדי* describing the servant. He is in turn the subject of *יצדיק*. Because *ל* can function as a direct object marker,<sup>292</sup> a translation along the lines of North’s ‘acquit’ or ‘vindicate’ is chosen. Dahood translates *יסבל* ‘he carried’, citing the *פגיע*

<sup>278</sup> Gelston, *Knowledge*, pp. 134-141.

<sup>279</sup> ‘to justify the righteous’.

<sup>280</sup> ‘and he will justify the righteous ones’.

<sup>281</sup> Whybray, *Thanksgiving*, p. 71.

<sup>282</sup> Clines, p. 21.

<sup>283</sup> He cites Ex.15.16; Ps. 79.11; 1Sam.16.7; Ps. 46.4 as examples in which a noun in the absolute singular, with suffix, are preceded by an adjective in the construct (North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 244).

<sup>284</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 233.

<sup>285</sup> Winton Thomas, p. 86.

<sup>286</sup> Whybray, *Thanksgiving*, p. 71.

<sup>287</sup> Hermisson, *Das vierte Gottesknechtlied*, p. 8, n. 39.

<sup>288</sup> Morgenstern, p. 319.

<sup>289</sup> He thus translates ‘The Righteous One, my Servant’ (Oswalt, p. 399).

<sup>290</sup> In his discussion of adjectives, he suggests that adjectives can precede the noun and may be ‘an element in an appositional construction’. He makes reference to Isa. 53.11(Gibson, §42, Rem. 1, p. 44).

<sup>291</sup> He takes *צדיק* as a construct or in apposition with *עבדי*, translating the line ‘the righteous one, my servant, will bring righteousness to the many’ (I. Blythin, ‘A Consideration of Difficulties in the Hebrew Text of Isaiah 53:11’, *Bible Translator* 17 (1966), pp. 27-31).

<sup>292</sup> Cf. Gibson, §94, p. 116.

of v.12 and the הפגיע of v. 6 as similar pasts.<sup>293</sup> However, the יסבל parallels a yiqtol depicting the servant's justification and is placed prior to two yiqtol describing the division of the booty. It might fit into this series of future events.

### 2.3.15 Isa. 53.12

Muilenburg argues that the לכן anticipates the 'because' (תחת אשר) of v.12c.<sup>294</sup> For אחלק-לו ברבים LXX reads αὐτὸς κληρονομήσει πολλοὺς.<sup>295</sup> Muilenburg takes the ל with the verb and the רבים as the direct object, translating v.12ab 'therefore I will divide to him the many as a portion, the countless he will share as booty'.<sup>296</sup> Driver argues that יחלק 'must' be read in the qal, translated as 'he shall receive a share',<sup>297</sup> in order to contrast Yahweh's statement that 'I will allot as a share'.<sup>298</sup> For v.12b, Syriac reads ܐܘܬܝܪ ܕܐܘܪܝܢܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ.<sup>299</sup> North states that the literal translation for v.12ab is 'therefore I will divide for him among (?) the many and he will distribute the numerous as spoil'. He translates 'therefore I will give him the many as his victory award and he shall distribute countless spoil'. In v.12b, the את is taken as a *nota accusativi* and the שׁלל as an accusative of specification.<sup>300</sup> Eaton reads for v. 12ab 'therefore I will give him the multitudes as his portion and the masses he shall acquire as his spoil'.<sup>301</sup> A look at the use of the piel of חלק may further this discussion. Whenever שׁלל appears with the piel, it is the direct object<sup>302</sup> and the ל typically indicates the indirect object.<sup>303</sup> In general terms, את can serve as an indirect object marker<sup>304</sup> or, in Pr. 16.19, a passage with the piel infinitive construct of חלק and שׁלל, it might be translated 'with'.<sup>305</sup> With regards to v.12a,

<sup>293</sup> Dahood, *Phoenician Elements*, p. 72.

<sup>294</sup> Muilenburg, *Isa. 40-66*, p. 630.

<sup>295</sup> 'he will inherit many'.

<sup>296</sup> Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 631.

<sup>297</sup> He is followed by Clines (p. 22).

<sup>298</sup> Driver, *Isaiah 53*, p. 102.

<sup>299</sup> 'and the powerful ones he will divide up as spoil'.

<sup>300</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, pp. 245-246.

<sup>301</sup> Eaton, p. 83.

<sup>302</sup> Cf. Gen. 49.27; Ex. 15.9; Ju. 5.30; Isa. 9.2; Ps. 68.13; Pr. 16.19.

<sup>303</sup> Cf. Jos. 13.7; 18.10; 2Sam. 6.19; 1Kgs. 18.6; Isa. 34.17; Ez. 47.21; Mi. 2.4; Ps. 22.19; 1Chr. 16.3.

<sup>304</sup> Cf. Gibson, § 94, p. 116.

<sup>305</sup> R. B. Y. Scott translates 'with' (R. B. Y. Scott, *Proverbs and Ecclesiastes*, 2nd edn. (AB; New York: Doubleday, 1965), p. 105) as does O. Plöger (O. Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos (Proverbia)*

each of the scholars above assumed some kind of ellipsis in their translation: ‘portion’, ‘share’ or ‘victory award’ is presumed to exist in the colon. The translation here assumes an ellipsis of **שָׁלַל** in v.12a, thus describing the servant as receiving booty with the many, and he then distributes it to the strong in v.12b. As mentioned above, Muilenburg translates **תַּחַת אֲשֶׁר** ‘because’ and he is supported by Gibson.<sup>306</sup> North argues that the literal translation of **נִפְשׁוּ לַמּוֹת** is ‘he laid bare (or poured out) his soul’.<sup>307</sup> For **הַעֲרָה** LXX reads **παρεδόθη**.<sup>308</sup> Ibn Ezra takes as ‘pour’<sup>309</sup> and Kimhi takes ‘pour out’.<sup>310</sup> Driver argues here that the term **לַמּוֹת** expresses a superlative such as ‘utterly’. The phrase does not necessarily suggest that the servant was put to death.<sup>311</sup> Hanson agrees with Westermann that **נִמְנָה** should be taken reflexively rather than passively, and suggests that the servant let himself be numbered.<sup>312</sup> For **חַטָּא** 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> and 4QIsa<sup>d</sup> read **חַטָּאִי**; 1QIsa<sup>b</sup> reads lac [י ]; LXX **ἀμαρτίας**;<sup>313</sup> and Syriac **ܟܘܢܘܢܐܝܢܐ**.<sup>314</sup> Dahood takes as ‘sins’, citing 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> and 1QIsa<sup>b</sup>.<sup>315</sup> For **וּלְפִשְׁעֵיהֶם** 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> reads **וּלְפִשְׁעֵיהֶמָה**; 1QIsa<sup>b</sup> reads **וּלְפִשְׁעֵיהֶם**; 4QIsa<sup>d</sup> reads lac [ **וּלְפִשְׁעֵיהֶם** ]. LXX **διὰ τὰς ἀμαρτίας αὐτῶν**;<sup>316</sup> and Syriac **ܟܘܢܘܢܐܝܢܐ**.<sup>317</sup> For **יִפְגִּיעַ** 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> reads **יִפְגַּע**; LXX **παρεδόθη**;<sup>318</sup> and Syriac reads **ܩܘܪܒܐܝܢܐ**.<sup>319</sup> Whybray examines the hiphil of **פָּגַע** and concludes that it connotes an intercessory activity like that of Moses and Samuel, whose prayers were accepted because of a special

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(BKAT 17; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchen Verlag, 1984), p. 187).

<sup>306</sup> Gibson, § 118, Rem. 1, p. 149.

<sup>307</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 246.

<sup>308</sup> ‘was given over’.

<sup>309</sup> He cites Gen. 24.20 and Ps.141.8 (Driver and Neubauer, p. 48).

<sup>310</sup> He cites Gen. 24.20 (Driver and Neubauer, p. 55).

<sup>311</sup> Driver, *Isaiah* 53, p. 102.

<sup>312</sup> P. D. Hanson, *Isaiah 40-66* (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1995), p. 160. Westermann translates ‘and let himself be numbered with the transgressors’ (*Isaiah 40-66*, p. 268). Winton Thomas suggests that it is possibly a *niphal tolerativum* which he translates ‘let himself be numbered’ (p. 86).

<sup>313</sup> ‘sins’.

<sup>314</sup> ‘sins’.

<sup>315</sup> Dahood, *Phoenician Elements*, p. 72.

<sup>316</sup> ‘because of their sins’.

<sup>317</sup> ‘and with iniquities’.

<sup>318</sup> ‘was given over’.

<sup>319</sup> ‘he met’.

relationship with God.<sup>320</sup> Payne thinks the verb should be taken in a stronger, more positive sense than making verbal entreaty. The participle of Isa. 59.16 denotes physical intervention and it thus connotes one who suffered at men's hands, offering himself as a willing victim.<sup>321</sup> Following Westermann,<sup>322</sup> Clines argues that פָּגַע refers to suffering as intervention and not to prayer or intercession.<sup>323</sup> He translates in the past. If it refers to speaking, the verb might more naturally refer to the future due to the servant's silence so emphasised in the song; if it refers to suffering, the past might be a better translation. Other appearances of the hiphil in the finite state<sup>324</sup> provide no clear consensus concerning its interpretation. Isa. 53.6 does not suggest a vocal activity; Jer. 36.25 denotes a spoken intervention;<sup>325</sup> and Jer. 15.11 may describe a spoken intercession,<sup>326</sup> though there is some disagreement.<sup>327</sup> The English future is tentatively offered for two reasons. Clines notes that a contrast between the before and after recognition is not unimportant in the poem.<sup>328</sup> It might be proposed that a spoken intervention undertaken in the future would clearly highlight the difference between the silence before and speaking after. Secondly, the Massoretic athnah at the end of 53.12d and the emphatic וַיְהִי at the beginning of 53.12e suggest a distinction between 53.12a-d and 53.12ef. Indeed, the personal pronouns which initiate 53.4c and 5a contrast their respective cola with that which precedes and an analogy can therefore be drawn with that of 53.12e. If so, then the final cola do not necessarily continue the previous line of thought without a break and could theoretically form a coda summarising the servant's past and future.

<sup>320</sup> Whybray, *Thanksgiving*, pp. 71-74.

<sup>321</sup> Payne, p. 142. Maiberger too argues that the participle in Isa. 59.16 emphasises actions over words (P. Maiberger, 'פָּגַע', *ThWAT*, vol. 6, pp. 501-508 (p. 506) [Henceforth: Maiberger]).

<sup>322</sup> Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 269.

<sup>323</sup> Clines, p. 42. The idea of prayer or intercession with which he disagrees is also forwarded by Muilenburg (*Isaiah 40-66*, p. 631).

<sup>324</sup> The participle of Isa. 59.16 has been mentioned and that found in Job 36.32 certainly suggests a physicality (cf. Maiberger's discussion (pp. 506-507)).

<sup>325</sup> Holladay translates 'urge' (W. L. Holladay, *Jeremiah*, vol. 2 (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989), p. 252).

<sup>326</sup> Maiberger takes it as spoken intervention (p. 506). Carroll notes that within this tricky verse it may be Yahweh which states that 'I have intervened on your behalf' (R. P. Carroll, *Jeremiah* (OTL; London: SCM Press, 1986), pp. 324, 327).

<sup>327</sup> McKane suggests that it is Yahweh who states that 'I will expose you'. Neither grammar nor the parallels in 36.25 nor 53.12 allow the translation 'intercede' (W. McKane, *Jeremiah*, vol. 1 (ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1986), pp. 343, 349).

<sup>328</sup> Clines, pp. 46-49.

## 2.4 Conclusions

This chapter has simply offered a justifiable translation of a difficult poem. It therefore provides a firm starting point from which Isa. 53 and Clines' analysis of it can be assessed.



## Chapter 3

### Empathy and Isaiah 53

#### 3.1 Introduction

In the introductory chapter, it was suggested that Clines' analysis might provide a useful and insightful model in an effort to understand the servant songs, their relationship to the wider context and perhaps the identity of the servant. The preceding chapter presented a tentative translation of this difficult poem. In this chapter, a brief overview of the method used by Clines, rhetorical criticism, is given and its precepts are applied to Isa. 53. Clines' arguments will thus be assessed in light of the rhetorical study and it is this examination which suggests that the concept of empathy is relevant to a study of Isa. 53.

#### 3.2 Rhetorical Criticism

##### 3.2.1 Introduction

Clines explicitly refers to his work as rhetorical criticism and provides a brief description of his conception of rhetorical criticism. Before a study of his discussion is undertaken, a short overview of this critical method is provided in order to establish a groundwork for later discussions.

##### 3.2.2 Rhetorical Criticism: A Brief Overview

###### 3.2.2.1 Form and Content

As mentioned in the introductory chapter, rhetorical criticism within studies of the Hebrew Bible owes much to the work and thinking of J. Muilenburg. In his seminal paper 'Form Criticism and Beyond' he forwards a number of reservations about form criticism, particularly its tendency to generalisation and the lack of focus on the unique and particular.<sup>1</sup> He then suggests that "form and content are inextricably related"<sup>2</sup> before providing a formal definition.

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<sup>1</sup> J. Muilenburg, 'Form Criticism and Beyond', *JBL* 88 (1969), pp. 1-18 (p. 5) [Henceforth: Muilenburg, Form].

What I am interested in, above all, is in understanding the nature of Hebrew literary composition, in exhibiting the structural patterns that are employed for the fashioning of a literary unit, whether in poetry or in prose, and in discerning the many and various devices by which the predications are formulated and ordered into a unified whole. Such an enterprise I should describe as rhetoric and the methodology as rhetorical criticism.<sup>3</sup>

More recent scholars have taken up his arguments. Tribble<sup>4</sup> and Patrick and Scult<sup>5</sup> emphasise the relationship between form and content. Hauser has recently provided a functional definition of rhetorical criticism echoing this concern.

Rhetorical criticism is a form of literary criticism which uses our knowledge of the conventions of literary composition practiced in ancient Israel and its environment to discover and analyze the particular literary artistry found in a specific unit of Old Testament text. This analysis then provides a basis for discussing the message of the text and the impact it had on its audience.<sup>6</sup>

A study of the literary artistry may include an analysis of form, which in turn leads to proposed message and possible impact.

### 3.2.2.2 Establishing the Form

Numerous scholars have elaborated methods by which the form of a poem might be established and the content provisionally ascertained. Because Muilenburg initiated the recent study of the Hebrew Bible with the methods of rhetorical criticism, his basic ideas will initiate the following discussion, after which procedures offered by other scholars will be summarised.

Muilenburg argued that the first concern of the rhetorical critic is the definition of the limit and scope of the unit. It is a task of some importance because the major

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<sup>2</sup> Muilenburg, *Form*, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Muilenburg, *Form*, p. 8.

<sup>4</sup> P. Tribble, *Rhetorical Criticism: Context, Method and the Book of Jonah* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994), pp. 91-92 [Henceforth: Tribble, *Rhetorical Criticism*].

<sup>5</sup> D. Patrick and A. Scult, *Rhetoric and Biblical Interpretation* (JSOT Sup. 82; Sheffield: Almond Press, 1990), p. 13 [Henceforth: Patrick and Scult].

<sup>6</sup> A. J. Hauser, 'Notes on History and Method', in *Rhetorical Criticism of the Bible: A Comprehensive Bibliography with Notes on History and Method*, ed. by D. F. Watson and A. J. Hauser (BIS 4; Leiden: Brill, 1994), pp. 3-20 (p. 4) [Henceforth: Hauser].

motif, usually stated at the beginning, is typically resolved at the end of the unit.<sup>7</sup> Climactic or ballast lines may occur throughout the unit or they can establish the limits, with those at the end bearing the “burden of the entire work”. A relationship between beginning and end, often signalled by repetitions or paraphrases of the opening words, may similarly signal the boundaries of a unit.<sup>8</sup> He then suggests that the critic must recognise the structure of the composition and discern the configuration of the component parts. A number of rhetorical devices are employed in order to mark sequence and movement or the shifts and breaks in the development of thought: parallelism, anaphora, chiasmus and clusters or groups of bicola and tricola. The bicola or tricola are of some importance because they form one of the building blocks of poems, the strophe. The latter he defines as a “series of bicola or tricola with a beginning and ending, possessing unity of thought and structure”.<sup>9</sup> Strophic delineation can be established through particles,<sup>10</sup> vocatives, rhetorical questions, repetitions, turning points or shifts of many other varieties.<sup>11</sup> His commentary on Isa. 40-66 adds to this list: emphatic personal pronouns, oracular formulae and phrases indicating introduction and conclusion.<sup>12</sup> Lastly, he notes that a number of criteria may draw more than one strophe together. Successive strophes may begin with the same emphatic construction; they may

<sup>7</sup> Muilenburg, Form, p. 9.

<sup>8</sup> Muilenburg, Form, p. 9.

<sup>9</sup> Muilenburg acknowledges the difficulties inherent in using this term for Hebrew poetry. It carries overtones from Greek poetry and the strophe, usually understood as a metrical unit, may not be entirely appropriate in Hebrew, which frequently avoids metrical consistency (Form, p. 12). Clifford accepts that the word describes Greek, not Hebrew, poetry, but it is considered wisest to retain the term because it designates ‘patterned recurrence’ (R. J. Clifford, *Fair Spoken and Persuading: An Interpretation of Second Isaiah* (New York: Paulist Press, 1984), p. 39, n. 2 [Henceforth: Clifford]). Raabe defines strophe as one or more verses (usually 2 to 4) which exhibit a unity of structure and content. He too notes that it is used in an extended sense in Hebrew (P. R. Raabe, *Psalms Structures: A Study of Psalms with Refrains* (JSOTSup. 104; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990), p. 159; cf. too p. 12 for another similar definition [Henceforth: Raabe, *Psalms Structures*]).

<sup>10</sup> עתה; למה; לכך; הן/הנה; כי.

<sup>11</sup> Muilenburg, Form, pp. 13-16. The shifts include those of speaker, person addressed, motif or theme.

<sup>12</sup> J. Muilenburg, ‘Isaiah: Chapters 40-66’ in *The Interpreter’s Bible*, vol. 5, ed. by G.A. Buttrick (New York: Abingdon Press, 1956), pp. 381-773 (pp. 391-392) [Henceforth: Muilenburg, Isaiah 40-66]. These pages include a list of the types of introductions or conclusions which may specify the beginning and ending of a strophe.

end in a similar fashion, indicating correspondence; and new strophes often take up major key words of previous strophes.<sup>13</sup>

Trible has provided a similar discussion of the means of studying a text rhetorically. After a student is equipped with a basic understanding of the text, she urges the student to attend closely to these features of the text: beginning and ending, making sure the form and content cohere; repetition of words, phrases and sentences; types of discourse;<sup>14</sup> design and structure, taking note of the overall design and the interaction of the numerous sections within; plot development; character portrayals, their interaction (or the lack thereof), names, speech and the manner in which the narrator refers to them; syntax, particularly divergences; and particles, which may signal connections, movement, emphasis and structure. She suggests that repetitions are one of the prominent features of a text useful in the search for form and content.<sup>15</sup>

Though he does not specifically describe his work as rhetorical criticism, Watson provides a prescription similar to that offered by Tribble which is not incompatible with rhetorical methods. He argues that an appropriate text should first be selected; commentaries consulted; a translation attempted; a decision made concerning the level of the text to be used, i.e. whether the 'original' should be studied or that which appears in the MT;<sup>16</sup> and the poem should be read carefully in order to obtain a feel for it and to select a suitable approach. For the analysis proper, he provides a number of stages: delimitation, paying attention to particular features such as tricola or refrains if more conspicuous boundaries are not evident;<sup>17</sup> segmentation, in which the strophes<sup>18</sup> and cola<sup>19</sup> are determined primarily through the use of parallelism; inner-strophic analysis, focussing on types of parallelism, sound patterns or chiasmic structures; the

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<sup>13</sup> J. Muilenburg, 'A Study in Hebrew Rhetoric: Repetition and Style', *Congress Volume: Copenhagen, 1953* (VTSup. 1; Leiden: Brill, 1953), pp. 97-111 (pp. 107-108).

<sup>14</sup> Narrated or direct.

<sup>15</sup> Tribble, *Rhetorical Criticism*, pp. 101-106.

<sup>16</sup> Watson thinks it is best in general terms to leave the text alone and not begin emending (W. G. E. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry: A Guide to its Techniques*, 2nd edn. (JSOTSup. 26; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), p. 17 [Henceforth: Watson]).

<sup>17</sup> Individual psalms or poetry in a prose context are examples of clearly delimited poetry.

<sup>18</sup> He defines strophe as 'a verse-unit of one or more cola, considered as part of the higher unit termed the stanza' (Watson, p. 13).

<sup>19</sup> He defines a colon as a 'single line of poetry, either as a semi-independent unit...or as part of a larger

isolation of poetic devices, such as word-pairs, enjambment, metaphor or the break up of stereotypical phrases; tabulation of repetitions, such as words or structural patterns; functional analysis, in which the interaction of poetic devices interact within the poem; and, if possible, comparison with similar poems.<sup>20</sup>

M. C. A. Korpel and J. C. de Moor have recently provided an analysis of the structure of the poetry found in Isa. 40-55 and thus their comments are quite relevant to the discussion at hand. They argue that the Massoretic textual divisions should be taken seriously and that the evidence provided by early textual witnesses are similarly valuable in attempting to establish textual divisions.<sup>21</sup> A number of criteria are offered through which cola, verse-lines, strophes, canticles and larger units might be distinguished. They argue that one should start at the smallest unit, the feet and cola<sup>22</sup> because any approach that begins at a higher level risks preoccupation with “an intuitively accepted interpretation”. The important Massoretic delimiters<sup>23</sup> are frequently reliable in the delimitation of cola and colon parallelism, the parallelism which appears within a colon, may serve as an important binding force within a colon. The next level of poetry they call the verse-line, which can frequently be established through Massoretic markers: a shift from a stronger marker to a weaker one suggests a new verse-line has begun.<sup>24</sup> The number of stresses, ellipsis or verse-line parallelism can serve to bind the constituent elements of a verse-line together. They then discuss the strophe, which can be delimited according to markers of major divisions found in the tradition,<sup>25</sup> the *soph pasuq* and

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strophe’. Other designations include ‘stichos’, ‘stich’ or ‘hemistich’ (Watson, p. 12).

<sup>20</sup> Watson, pp. 16-20.

<sup>21</sup> M. C. A. Korpel and J. C. de Moor, *The Structure of Classical Hebrew Poetry: Isaiah 40-55* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), pp. 1-9 [Henceforth: Korpel and de Moor, *Isaiah 40-55*].

<sup>22</sup> They do not specifically define foot or cola. In a previous work, they define a foot as ‘a word containing at least one stressed syllable’ and the colon as the next structural unit composed of one to five feet (M. C. A. Korpel and J. C. de Moor, ‘Fundamentals of Ugaritic and Hebrew Poetry’, in *The Structural Analysis of Biblical and Canaanite Poetry*, ed. by W. van der Meer and J. C. de Moor (JSOT Sup. 74; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1988), pp. 1-61 (pp. 1-4) [Henceforth: Korpel and de Moor, *Fundamentals*]).

<sup>23</sup> Particularly *silluq* (no. 1 in the table provided by BHS), *athnah* (no. 2) and *zaqeph qaton* (no. 5), though those up to *revia* (no. 7) may be used as colon dividers.

<sup>24</sup> Korpel and de Moor, *Isaiah 40-55*, p. 12.

<sup>25</sup> They cite the *setuma* and *petuha* of the MT, *paragraphoi* and capital letters in the Greek tradition or the *diamonds* found in the Syriac.

emphasis.<sup>26</sup> Its constituent elements can be joined through strophe parallelism. Strophes combine to form canticles, which can be delimited according to the markers found in the tradition or thematic discontinuity, while canticle parallelism, enjambment of strophes<sup>27</sup> and thematic unity can bind a canticle together.<sup>28</sup> Lastly, the larger units of sub-cantos and cantos cannot be delimited with help of the ancient witnesses because such larger units were not marked by special signs. Distant parallelism and thematic unity assist in this process but they acknowledge that the results are less reliable at this level than those up to and including the canticles.<sup>29</sup>

These procedures are by no means final and definitive but do provide guidelines which will be helpful in the following discussion. Other scholars have provided similar observations,<sup>30</sup> preferences for alternative poetic terms<sup>31</sup> or suggestions for different procedures.<sup>32</sup> Of particular note is the initial delimitation, the use of repetition, the use of a variety of markers to indicate shifts in structure, the importance of parallelism and the overall processes described, in which one typically builds from the more basic units to the larger structure after delimitation. In addition, Tribble's comments concerning the interaction of characters is quite relevant in a discussion of Clines' work because it is central to his discussion.

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<sup>26</sup> They provide a thorough discussion here. Particles and syntactic constructions, especially a change of word order, are of great importance and they similarly give a list of markers of separation (cf. Korpel and de Moor, *Isaiah 40-55*, pp 14-15).

<sup>27</sup> They cite Isa. 55.10-11 as an example of an enjambed strophe due to the on-running sentence.

<sup>28</sup> Korpel and de Moor, *Isaiah 40-55*, pp. 15-16.

<sup>29</sup> Korpel and de Moor, *Isaiah 40-55*, p. 16.

<sup>30</sup> Hauser echoes the arguments of Muilenburg with an emphasis on words, phrases or longer clusters of words which appear near the beginning, end and possibly in the middle of the text, marking boundaries (Hauser, p. 9). Clifford suggests that strophic patterns, word play, repetition of sounds, rhymes and especially a coherent and compelling argument can help discern the original boundaries of compositions and he emphasises the coherence of thought which binds strophes together in a poetic unit (Clifford, pp. 39-41). P. van der Lugt provides a similarly exhaustive compendium of markers which either initiate a strophe or conclude one (P. van der Lugt, *Rhetorical Criticism and the Poetry of the Book of Job* (Leiden: Brill, 1995), pp. 41-42 [Henceforth: van der Lugt, *Job*]).

<sup>31</sup> For example, Korpel and de Moor suggest that the most basic unit of poetry is the foot (Korpel and de Moor, *Fundamentals*, p. 1) but Watson suggests that it is the hemistich (Watson, p. 12). The difficulties with the term 'strophe' were mentioned above. Alter in particular objects to the use of the term 'colon' and, following Hrushovski, prefers 'verset' (R. Alter, *The Art of Biblical Poetry* (New York: Basic Books, 1985), p. 9 [Henceforth: Alter]; cf. B. Hrushovski, 'Hebrew Prosody', *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, vol. 13 (Jerusalem: Keter, 1971), cols. 1195-1240 (esp. cols. 1200-1203)).

<sup>32</sup> van der Lugt starts with the overall structure rather than the more common basic building blocks favoured by other scholars (van der Lugt, *Job*, p. 35). Korpel and de Moor specifically disagree with

In light of the above discussion, it would not be inappropriate to note some of the correspondences between Clines' study and these procedures before continuing with the discussion. Clines presents Isa. 53 in six sections but little use is made of the terminology of colon, strophe and stanza. He is undoubtedly interested in structures, however, as suggested by the diagram of the relationships in which the servant is central.<sup>33</sup> His interest in dualities similarly indicates an interest in structures. There are dualities within the relationships; there is an implied duality between seeing and speech, in which the former is far more important; and the 'before' and 'after' of the temporal analysis suggests a duality. His translation of Isa. 53.4-9 vividly indicates the importance of pronouns and their repetition.<sup>34</sup> Repetitions are similarly fundamental to his discussion of the relationships, particularly between *we* and *they*,<sup>35</sup> and his discussion of seeing is based in part on the repetition of the root  $\text{הִרְאָה}$ .

### 3.2.2.3 Rhetorical Criticism, Audience and Reader

Aristotle defined rhetoric as "the faculty of discovering the possible means of persuasion in reference to any subject whatever"<sup>36</sup> and Tribble has noted that the audience is one of the three elements of communication according to classical rhetorical theory.<sup>37</sup> This concern for the effect of a passage on an audience frequently characterises rhetorical criticism in biblical studies. Muilenburg accepted the difficulties in defining the historical audience,<sup>38</sup> but he nevertheless suggests that there were situations which elicited particular utterances. We are therefore "sufficiently informed about the history of the times to make conjecture perfectly legitimate".<sup>39</sup> An interest in the effect of

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van der Lugt (Korpel and de Moor, *Isaiah 40-55*, p. 10, n. 41).

<sup>33</sup> Cf. D. J. A. Clines, *I, He, We, and They: A Literary Approach to Isaiah 53* (JSOTSup. 1; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1976), p. 39 [Henceforth: Clines].

<sup>34</sup> The use of pronouns is particularly prominent in vv.4-6 and he continues this emphasis in vv.7-9 through the presentation of his translation, in which 'he' begins nearly every colon (Clines, pp. 12-13).

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Clines, p. 40.

<sup>36</sup> Aristotle, *The Art of Rhetoric*, trans. by J. H. Freese (LCL; London: William Heinemann, 1926), 1355b29-31 (Bk. I.2.1; p. 15) [Henceforth: Aristotle, *Rhetoric*].

<sup>37</sup> Tribble, *Rhetorical Criticism*, p. 9. The other elements are the speaker or author and the speech or text.

<sup>38</sup> Muilenburg, *Form*, p. 6.

<sup>39</sup> Muilenburg, *Form*, p. 6.

rhetoric on the audience continues to the present day. Gitay<sup>40</sup> and Clifford<sup>41</sup> emphasise the persuasive character of DI, and Hauser<sup>42</sup> and Patrick and Scult<sup>43</sup> similarly note the interest in the effect on the audience.

Muilenburg was criticised by Clifford for removing DI from its historical context<sup>44</sup> and Gitay suggested that he was not oriented towards rhetoric as the “pragmatic art of persuasion”.<sup>45</sup> Tribble notes these distinctions, suggesting that the approach favoured by Muilenburg is better considered the ‘Art of Composition’ and that favoured by Clifford and Gitay ‘The Art of Persuasion’.<sup>46</sup> Clines and Exum have recently observed that rhetorical criticism in principle is concerned with the rhetorical situation of the composition, the promulgation of the original texts and their effect on the audience. Like new criticism, its primary focus now is on the text and its internal articulation rather than an historical setting.<sup>47</sup> Their observation echoes the distinctions noted by Tribble and they imply a tendency to move away from the art of persuasion.

Clines is certainly not disinterested in an audience. Drawing on the work of contemporary hermeneutics, he suggests that literature creates an alternative world and invites the reader to enter into the world, to be a participant in it. He then notes Gadamer’s concept of the merging of horizons and Thiselton’s suggestion that the reader’s horizon can eventually merge with that of the text. The subject-object dichotomy in which an objective reader scrutinises the text can therefore no longer be maintained. There is thus a legitimacy of multiple meanings and the original author’s meaning is not necessarily the only meaning a text may have. Isa. 53 can, as a result, do

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<sup>40</sup> Y. Gitay, *Prophecy and Persuasion: A Study of Isaiah 40-48* (FThL 14; Bonn: Linguistica Biblica, 1981), pp. 23-27; 36 [Henceforth: Gitay].

<sup>41</sup> Clifford, p. 4.

<sup>42</sup> Hauser, pp. 4, 9.

<sup>43</sup> Patrick and Scult, p. 13.

<sup>44</sup> Clifford, p. 35.

<sup>45</sup> Gitay, p. 27.

<sup>46</sup> Tribble, *Rhetorical Criticism*, pp. 32; 41-44. Kennedy offers similar observations in his distinction between primary and secondary rhetoric (cf. G. A. Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric and Its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times* (Croom Helm: London, 1980), pp. 4-5 [Henceforth: Kennedy]).

<sup>47</sup> D. J. A. Clines and J. C. Exum, ‘The New Literary Criticism’, in *The New Literary Criticism and The Hebrew Bible*, ed. by J. C. Exum and D. J. A. Clines (JSOTSup. 143; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), pp. 11-25 (p. 16). They similarly note that rhetorical criticism is not a new method of biblical criticism, unlike deconstructive or feminist criticism, to take two prominent examples .



its work by its openness to a multiplicity of readings. It creates a 'topsy-turvy' world and the reader enters the poetic world through an identification with the personae. Through an identification with the servant, enabled in part by the lack of specificity regarding his identity, the servant is able to reach out from the poem and alter the reader. The reader is questioned by the text and assumes the role of the servant. In essence, the reader's world is destroyed and replaced by a new one created by the text.

There seem to be some connections between the hermeneutics as described by Clines and the rhetorical interest in the audience. The writers mentioned by Clines are interested in the reader who is to enter the text and whose horizon should merge with the text. Tribble noted the importance of both text and audience in rhetorical criticism, and Kennedy has argued that particular techniques, such as figures of speech or tropes, are important in conveying imaginative goals.<sup>48</sup> A poem might therefore use techniques such as figures of speech or tropes in order to draw the audience or the reader into the text in order to convey these goals. Thus, a text which is studied according to the rhetorical method is not thereby excluded from an interpretation cognisant of theories propounded by those whom Clines mentions. Both are interested in the text and both are interested in effect on the reader. It might therefore be proposed that Clines' summary of the work of Fuchs, Ebeling, Austin and Gadamer is not necessarily incompatible with a rhetorical study.

Indeed, a rhetorical study might supplement some of Clines' comments quite nicely. He states that a reader needs to identify with the personae of the poem in order to enter its world but he leaves the manner in which identification is achieved rather vague. The reader must simply share the attitudes of *they* and *we* towards the servant, and he seems to suggest that the lack of specificity about the identity of the servant informs a relationship in which the servant alters the reader. It could conversely be suggested that the lack of identity regarding *they* and *we* could create a relationship in which these personae too might alter the reader. A study of the rhetoric of the poem might provide clues indicating the means by which the poem and its personae draw the reader into it and alter the reader.

Before any study of the rhetorical structure is undertaken, however, the relationship between reader and audience requires clarification. Rhetorical critics frequently mention the audience of a text, particularly critics who favour rhetoric as the art of persuasion. This audience is frequently the audience of the historical writer or speaker. Clines refers to a reader in his discussion but does not specifically describe his conception of the reader. He does note that the servant can reach out “from the confines of a historical past” to alter the reader<sup>49</sup> and thus in the first instance it must be assumed that the reader is not necessarily a contemporary of the poet or the servant. To make this assumption does not necessarily mean that the servant did not or could not alter contemporaries of the servant or the poet, but Clines obviously conceives of a reader who lives and exists within an historical context removed from the servant. This reader is, on one level, Clines’ audience.

Because numerous ‘readers’ have been proposed by critics in recent years,<sup>50</sup> the reader assumed by Clines might require yet further discussion. Clines argues that the reader identifies with the personae in the poem and through this process enters the world of the poem. His conception of the reader implies that he or she is sensitive to the events in the poem and is able to identify with the personae who interact within its confines. This ready identification with the personae suggests an openness to the world of the text and a willingness to be changed and altered by it. This reader need not be restricted to one historical era or geographical location. An awareness of such a reader does not necessarily mean that the rhetorical approach equals the reader-response approach. Gitay notes that reader response criticism focusses on the act of reading and the audience’s imagination and self-interpretation. Rhetorical criticism focusses on the text itself, “regarding the audience as an element in the deliberate communicative endeavour

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<sup>48</sup> Kennedy, pp. 4-5.

<sup>49</sup> Clines, p. 63.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. esp. E. W. Conrad, *Reading Isaiah* (OBT; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), p. 31, including n. 76. He refers to the work of S. Rimmon-Kenan, who provides a discussion of various readers (S. Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction in Contemporary Poetics* (London: Methuen, 1983), pp. 86-87, 117-119). S. Fish provides a description of the reader, one which is essentially competent in the particular language and literature and is well informed. He prefers this controlled subjectivity to illusory objectivity (S. Fish, *Is There a Text in This Class? The Authority of Interpretive Communities* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980), pp. 48-49).

and not as a subjective commentator”.<sup>51</sup> In the following chapters, then, primacy will be granted to the text itself and only after the text has been studied will any suggestion be made concerning its possible effect on reader or audience.

### 3.3 The Rhetorical Structure of Isa. 53

#### 3.3.1 Introduction

Because form and content are so closely related in rhetorical criticism, it might be most appropriate to study the rhetorical structure of the poem. It has been noted that Clines does not spend much time discussing cola, strophes or stanzas and thus such a study might serve to complement his ideas.

#### 3.3.2 *Our* Centrality

Those who have studied Isa. 53 according to rhetorical critical principles have proposed structures which are not entirely dissimilar. Muilenburg divides it into five strophes<sup>52</sup> whereas Clifford argues that it is composed of four strophes.<sup>53</sup> He similarly notes that first person divine speech in 52.13-15 and 53.11c-12 frames the third person narrative in 53.1-11b.<sup>54</sup> Ceresko, who will be discussed in greater detail below, divides the poem as Muilenburg.<sup>55</sup> Raabe accepts a five strophe rhetorical structure<sup>56</sup> like those posited by Muilenburg and Ceresko. Korpel and de Moor argue that the poem is composed of 15 strophes, each of which is equal to the verses except two. They argue that 53.9-10a forms a strophe and v.10b-d form the next. Their conception of a canticle seems to be similar to other scholars' conception of a strophe and the poem is thus

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<sup>51</sup> Y. Gitay, 'Rhetorical Criticism' in *To Each Its Own Meaning: An Introduction to Biblical Criticisms and Their Application*, ed. by S. R. Haynes and S. L. McKenzie (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), pp. 135-149 (pp. 136-137). For further comments on reader-response criticism cf. Tribble, *Rhetorical Criticism*, pp. 66-70.

<sup>52</sup> Isa. 52.13-15; 53.1-3; 53.4-6; 53.7-9; 53.10-12 (Muilenburg, *Isaiah* 40-66, pp. 614-631).

<sup>53</sup> 52.13-15; 53.1-6; 53.7-9; 53.10-12.

<sup>54</sup> Clifford, p. 175.

<sup>55</sup> 52.13-15; 53.1-3; 53.4-6; 53.7-9; 53.10-12. He bases his division on subject matter (A. R. Ceresko, 'The Rhetorical Strategy of the Fourth Servant Song (Isaiah 52.13-53.12): Poetry and the Exodus-New Exodus', *CBQ* 56 (1994), pp. 42-55 (p. 50) [Henceforth: Ceresko]).

<sup>56</sup> 52.13-15; 53.1-3; 53.4-6; 53.7-9; 53.10-12 (P. R. Raabe, 'The Effect of Repetition in the Suffering Servant Song', *JBL* 103 (1984), pp. 77-81 (p. 78) [Henceforth: Raabe, Repetition]).

composed of five canticles: 52.13-15; 53.1-3; 4-6; 7-10a; 10b-12.<sup>57</sup> The division offered by Muilenburg, Raabe and Ceresko will be accepted here for a number of reasons. The first strophe begins with the introduction of the servant by Yahweh and describes the reaction of the nations and kings; a change of voice initiates the second strophe, which portrays the servant as a scraggly plant ignored by *us*; the third strophe begins with אַכְּנִי, which introduces three verses describing *our* realisation that the servant suffered for *our* sake and the confession of wrongdoing; the focus changes from *our* sins to his suffering in v.7, made clear by the simile of v.7, the punishment meted out to the servant and the intimation of his death; and v. 10 initiates a series of poetic lines focussed primarily upon the exaltation of the servant. This division is in essence supported by Korpel and de Moor, though the latter place v.10a with the former, a move which is not without some weaknesses.<sup>58</sup> Like any strophic division, this can only be suggested tentatively, and yet in each case a change in focus is accompanied by a rhetorical marker which signifies it formally.

Ceresko argues for a concentric structure of the poem, one centred on 53.5cd.<sup>59</sup> He notes the divine speech of 52.13-15 and 53.10-12 which frames 53.1-9; three key terms<sup>60</sup> are repeated in the two framing strophes; and the language of exaltation in the frame contrasts that of humiliation in 53.1-9. Within 53.1-9, he draws attention to Westermann's proposal that the confession of 53.4-6 is surrounded by a two-part report, vv. 1-3 and 7-11a.<sup>61</sup> Thus, within the central confessional verses (53.4-6), 53.5cd "seems to lie at the heart of the whole poem".<sup>62</sup> He provides a number of observations supporting his claim: it holds a central place in the narrative section;<sup>63</sup> it comes at the

<sup>57</sup> Korpel and de Moor, *Isaiah 40-55*, pp. 567-574.

<sup>58</sup> They note the distinctions suggested by two traditions (1QIsa<sup>a</sup> and the Greek manuscript *Alexandrinus* (5th c.)), verse line parallelism and the difficulty of reconciling v.10a and c in the same strophe (Korpel and de Moor, *Isaiah 40-55*, p. 564). One might note, however, the satisfying inclusio which is formed by the combination of יהוה and the root אָפַץ in the first and last cola if v.10a were joined with the following three cola.

<sup>59</sup> He translates, following Dahood, 'The penalty we should have paid was upon him, and by his stripes we were healed' (Ceresko, pp. 50-51).

<sup>60</sup> נִשָּׂא (52.13b; 53.12e); רָב (52.14a, 15a; 53.11c, 12a, 12e); עֲבָדִי (52.13a; 53.11c).

<sup>61</sup> C. Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66: A Commentary*, trans. by D. M. G. Stalker (London: SCM Press, 1969), p. 264 [Henceforth: Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66*].

<sup>62</sup> Ceresko, p. 52.

<sup>63</sup> It is the ninth line of the 17 in the MT. It should be noted that he combines v.7e with v.7cd.

very centre of the narrative in terms of syllable count,<sup>64</sup> a number of words which occur before this verse are repeated after it;<sup>65</sup> and four motifs<sup>66</sup> introduced in the earlier part of the poem<sup>67</sup> are echoed or contrasted in the second part.<sup>68</sup>

He places Isa. 53.5cd in an historical context and claims that the servant is “the link between the experience of pre-exodus Israel in Egypt and the present experience of the Servant’s fellow Jews in Babylon”.<sup>69</sup> The servant himself bears the sickness and disease of the exiles’ ‘return’ to Egypt and thus effects the healing of the people. Such historical theories are not sought at the moment, and thus the validity of his proposed historical context will not draw comment. Questions can be raised about the proposed centrality of 53.5cd which could cast some doubt on the historical reconstruction. An exact count of the cola in 53.4-6 shows that 53.5bc are in the precise middle. His proposals focus upon 53.5cd as central to the narrative section of vv.1-9 and not the entire poem. The 17 lines of the text which constitute the narrative section by his reckoning is an accurate count only if v.7e is combined with v.7cd. This move creates an extremely long and unwieldy line. One must wonder, then, whether the centrality of 53.5cd is prompted by an interest in establishing a correlation between the “conflictual content” of the poem<sup>70</sup> and its structure rather than an interest in finding the centrality of the poem without preconceptions.

His ideas may nevertheless point the way to further insights because of his interest in the importance of centrality in the poem. Isa. 53.4-6 occupy a central position in the poem, as he suggested, existing between vv.1-3 and vv.7-9, both of which describe the mistreatment of the servant prior to *our* insight. These strophes are surrounded by the exaltation strophes of 52.13-15 and 53.10-12. In a broad sense, vv.1-

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<sup>64</sup> There are 145 in 53.1a-5b and the same number in 53.5c-9d.

<sup>65</sup> Cf. his discussion on p. 52.

<sup>66</sup> Mouth, truth/deceit, plant similes, the birth and death of the servant.

<sup>67</sup> Isa. 52.13-53.5ab.

<sup>68</sup> Isa. 53.6ab-12ef.

<sup>69</sup> Ceresko, p. 53.

<sup>70</sup> Ceresko relies on the work of N. K. Gottwald (*The Hebrew Bible: A Socio-Literary Introduction* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985)) and J. W. Miller ('Prophetic Conflict in Second Isaiah: The Servant Songs in the Light of their Context' in *Wort, Gebot, Glaube: Beiträge zur Theologie des Alten Testaments. Walther Eichrodt zum 80. Geburtstag*, ed. J. J. Stamm et al. (ATANT 59; Zurich: Zwingli, 1970), pp. 77-85).

3 parallel vv.7-9 and 52.13-15 parallel 53.10-12, leaving 53.4-6 in the middle. *Our* recognition and confession are therefore central to the poem.

In the summary of analytical procedures discussed above, Watson<sup>71</sup> and Korpel and de Moor<sup>72</sup> mentioned that parallelism is of some importance in the delineation of the cola of a poem. Using parallelism as a rough guide, the delineation of cola is relatively straightforward in Isa. 53 because the majority of cola contain parallel cola, though there are some exceptions. Isa. 52.14a lacks a parallel colon and could be considered a monocolon. As mentioned in the translation,<sup>73</sup> the ונראהו of 53.2d can be taken with the previous cola and it thus provides a grammatical and semantic parallelism. Isa.53.7e, the second appearance of the phrase ולא יפתח־פיו will be taken as a monocolon lacking an immediate parallel but obviously repeating v.7b. Isa. 53.11b is taken as ישבע בדעתו.<sup>74</sup> If these divisions are accepted, the poem is formed by 58 cola, most of which exist with a parallel colon in a bicola.<sup>75</sup> If so, the central cola in the poem are 53.6bc. These two cola do not stand in one bicolon but are single cola which constitute half of two separate bicola. Thus, the central bicola with their related cola read as follows:

כָּלֵנוּ כְּצֹאן תָּעִינוּ	All of us like sheep we went astray,
אִישׁ לְדַרְכּוֹ פָּנִינוּ	Each to his path we turned,
וַיִּהְיֶה הַפְּגִיעַ בּוֹ	But Yahweh laid on him
אֶת עֲוֹן כָּלֵנוּ:	The iniquity of all of us.

The textual witness of 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> might warrant against any presumption that the two central cola can necessarily be linked with their respective bicola within one poetic unit. The scroll contains a significant space after פָּנִינוּ<sup>76</sup> and thus the two central cola

<sup>71</sup> Watson, p. 19.

<sup>72</sup> Korpel and de Moor, *Isaiah 40-55*, p. 12.

<sup>73</sup> Cf. Chapter 2, Sec. 2.3.5.

<sup>74</sup> Cf. Chapter 2, Sec. 2.3.14.

<sup>75</sup> Korpel and de Moor similarly present the poem with 58 constitutive cola (Korpel and de Moor, *Isaiah 40-55*, pp. 545-550).

<sup>76</sup> Cf. F. M. Cross et al., eds., *Scrolls from Qumran Cave I: The Great Isaiah Scroll, The Order of the Community and The Peshier to Habakkuk from Photographs by J. C. Trever* (Jerusalem: The Albright Institute of Archaeological Research and The Shrine of the Book, 1972), plate XLIV (pp. 102-103)).

could theoretically be separated within any discussion. However, a number of factors highlighted through a rhetorical study might nevertheless support a linkage between the two cola and their respective bicola. Korpel and de Moor take v.6 as a distinct strophe. They cite changes in subject between it and the surrounding strophes, and parallelism within the strophe, most notably the repetition of the word כָּל and the נוֹ- endings, too suggest a distinct strophe.<sup>77</sup> Other observations might be added. The כָּלנוּ which begin and end the verse create a satisfying inclusio suggesting a conscious literary unit meant to be noticed. No other verse in the poem is so neatly enclosed and thus these central cola are distinct from others within the poem. Furthermore, these lines do not simply repeat the observations stated previously, that the servant carried *our* sicknesses, bore *our* pains, was pierced by *our* transgression and crushed by *our* iniquities. Here *we* not only confess that *we* had strayed and turned but *we* carry the previous insights one step further: not only did the servant carry many of *our* faults but it was Yahweh who actually laid them on the servant. Though the idea is repeated in 53.10, it is stated here first and thus provides further explanation of his suffering. This verse, then, can be taken as a distinct and noticeable poetic unit within which the central cola of the poem are found.

In sum, therefore, one might suggest that the rhetorical structure of the poem focusses attention on *our* recognition and confession, found in 53.4-6, particularly on the confession in v.6. If it is a strophe of some importance containing within it two bicola providing a deeper understanding of the suffering, then it may deserve further consideration from a rhetorical point of view.

### 3.3.3 Two Centres?

Although Clines may be justified in his assertion that the servant is the central figure in the poem, the discussion in the previous section may require adjustment to any privileged or exclusive servant centrality. The servant may be central to the poem because he appears from start to finish, brings healing and effects Yahweh's plan,

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<sup>77</sup> Korpel and de Moor, *Isaiah 40-55*, p. 570.

creating a thread which ties the poem together. One could similarly suggest that *our* confession provides a fulcrum or focal point for the poem, an alternative centre.

If this be the case, then it has ramifications for the relationship between the reader and personae. Clines argued that the reader enters the world of the poem through a movement of identification: first with *them*, then *us* and finally with the servant.<sup>78</sup> The identification with the servant goes beyond empathy to one in which the servant grasps and moulds the reader without the reader's assent.<sup>79</sup> If *our* confession is placed in the precise middle of the poem, then perhaps an identification with *us* should not necessarily be considered a mere stepping stone before the more important relationship is established with the servant. It may have some importance in its own right.

This possibility is strengthened if Clines' description of the effect of the servant on the reader is examined more closely. The very language Clines wields does not readily conform with his own arguments nor with the tone of the poem. In his discussion of the action which takes place in the poem he insists that there is no concrete action performed by the servant. It is Yahweh's purpose that the servant should not do something but "suffer, be the one acted upon".<sup>80</sup> On one level, this observation is astute: the servant does appear to be passive. Though Clines may be using metaphorical language to convey his idea, his description nevertheless implies a dramatic character change. Clines' passive servant shows uncharacteristic activity and even aggressiveness towards the reader. One might further note that the servant may be seen as active within the confines of the poem, as a number of verbs might suggest.<sup>81</sup> While an active servant

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<sup>78</sup> Cf. Sec. 1.5.2.

<sup>79</sup> Clines, p. 64.

<sup>80</sup> Clines, p. 42.

<sup>81</sup> Clines' comments notwithstanding, the following verbs might suggest an activity on the part of the servant: יִצְדִּיק in 53.11 (according to the translation offered in the previous chapter rather than Clines' internal hiphil); יִחַלֵּק (taken in the piel rather than Clines' emendation which reads 'he shall receive a share'); הִעֲרָה (particularly if translated 'pour out'); and possibly יִפְגִּיעַ (if taken as a verbal intercession rather than one simply interceding through past suffering which was laid on him by Yahweh). Note too North's discussion, in which one of the classic distinctions between the servant of the songs and that outside the songs is the passivity of the latter. "There seems no escape from the conclusion that outside the Songs the Servant Israel is always passive, while in the Songs the title has an 'active' signification" (C. R. North, *The Suffering Servant in Deutero-Isaiah*, 2nd edn. (London: Oxford University Press, 1956), p. 183).



may be more likely to grasp and seize the reader, this type of activity does not correspond neatly to the the action depicted within the poem.

Thus, one could argue that the rhetorical structure of the poem elicits an identification with the servant and with *us*. But, whereas Clines places the emphasis on an identification with the servant who can alter the world-view of the reader, granting the servant primacy, the centrality of *our* confession indicates that the reader is intended to identify with *us* not merely as a preliminary step to an identification with the servant but as a balance or complement to the servant. The bending and seizing of the reader also seems to be out of character for the servant. Perhaps, then, those steps leading up to the moulding of the reader merit greater attention.

### **3.4 Reader Empathy for the Personae in Isa. 53**

#### **3.4.1 Introduction**

The identification of the reader with the personae in the poem is described by Clines as “an assumption of one of the roles presented in the poem”.<sup>82</sup> The reader, according to Clines, is ultimately invited to assume the role of the servant himself and an empathy with the servant would be possible if the servant were DI or some other historical figure. A relationship with the servant “deeper than empathy comes into being”<sup>83</sup> because the poem lacks specificity about the servant’s identity. It is this ‘deeper’ relationship which seems to allow the servant to bend the reader. The latter action has been questioned and, as mentioned above, one may similarly wonder whether the lack of specificity necessarily provides a firm foundation for this proposed deep relationship. The poem does not make *our* identity clear and theoretically a relationship deeper than empathy could be established with *us*. In addition, the use of the term ‘persona’ to describe the characters in the poem indicates that the reader may identify with these literary entities without assuming some real historical personality or group in the background. The personae are ‘real’ as far as the world of the poem is concerned.

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<sup>82</sup> Clines, p. 62.

<sup>83</sup> Clines, p. 63.

If one cannot presume that the proposition of a stage beyond empathy is necessarily well founded, then perhaps it might be best to consider the penultimate stage, that of empathy. The servant as persona would allow a reader to empathise with him and Clines' description of the identification with the personae, mentioned above, is infused with the concept of empathy. It might therefore be best to consider empathy and its role in the poem more closely.

### 3.4.2 Empathy: Definitions and Discussion

The *OED* defines empathy as the “power of projecting one’s personality (and so fully comprehending) the object of contemplation”.<sup>84</sup> Eisenberg and Strayer note that “the notion of empathy is, and always has been, a broad, somewhat slippery concept”. After they present a host of definitions for empathy they provide their own.

In our view, empathy involves sharing the perceived emotion of another-- ‘feeling with’ another. This vicarious affective reaction may occur as a response to overt perceptible cues indicative of another’s affective state (e.g., a person’s facial expressions), or as a consequence of inferring another’s state on the basis of indirect cues (e.g., the nature of the other’s situation). Thus, we define empathy as an emotional response that stems from another’s emotional state or condition and that is congruent with the other’s emotional state or situation.<sup>85</sup>

Empathy thus depends on cues, direct or indirect, whereby the one who might empathise with the other can share the perceived emotion.

Katz provides further helpful insights through his distinction between sympathy and empathy. In empathy, “we focus our attention on the feelings and the situation of the other person”. In sympathy, “we are preoccupied with the assumed duality or parallel between one’s own feelings and the feelings of others”, and thus the interest is not so much “with the objective reality and character of the other person’s situation as an

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<sup>84</sup> *The Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd edn., prepared by J. A. Simpson and E. S. C. Weiner, vol. 5 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1989).

<sup>85</sup> N. Eisenberg and J. Strayer, ‘Critical Issues in the Study of Empathy’ in *Empathy and Its Development*, ed. by N. Eisenberg and J. Strayer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 3-13 (pp. 3-5) [Henceforth: Eisenberg and Strayer].

analogy between” the two.<sup>86</sup> When we sympathise, we are “aware of our own state of mind and much of our attention is still devoted to our own needs” but when we empathise, we “cannot fully escape our own needs but we discipline ourselves to use our own feelings as instruments of cognition”.<sup>87</sup> Sympathy is reactive because “it turns our attention back on ourselves” but the one who empathises abandons self-consciousness in which the fusion of the identity of one with the other results in the two becoming one. Artists, Katz suggests, frequently experience this annihilation of the subject and object,<sup>88</sup> and with this assertion he echoes Clines’ suggestion that the textual creation of a world dissolves the subject/object dichotomy.<sup>89</sup> In this discussion, it seems that Katz emphasises the ‘fusion’ of the one empathising with the other but this fusion does not prevent the use of feelings for cognition.

Not all are convinced by the distinction between sympathy and empathy proposed by Katz. Eisenberg and Strayer suggest that sympathy is often a consequence of empathising, but empathy is not always necessary for sympathy.<sup>90</sup> C. Clark has suggested that there are three steps in the process of providing sympathy: empathy or role taking; sympathy sentiment; and display. She argues that “empathy alone is necessary but *not* sufficient for sympathy”. She similarly states that “sympathy giving begins with cognitive, emotional, or physical empathy, that is, in one way or another taking the role of the other”.<sup>91</sup> Thus, it might be proposed that empathy and sympathy are closely related and sympathy may be based in empathy.

Writing from a literary perspective, Fogle provides a discussion of poetic empathy which introduces a number of important themes supplementing the discussion provided above. He quotes C. D. Thorpe with approval and a lengthy section is repeated here in order to provide a flavour of his conception of this difficult concept. Thorpe writes that

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<sup>86</sup> R. L. Katz, *Empathy: Its Nature and Uses* (London: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1963), p. 8 [Henceforth: Katz].

<sup>87</sup> Katz, p. 9.

<sup>88</sup> Katz, p. 9.

<sup>89</sup> Clines, pp. 55-56.

<sup>90</sup> Eisenberg and Strayer, p. 6.

<sup>91</sup> C. Clark, *Misery and Company: Sympathy in Everyday Life* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), pp. 33-38; 44; 78 [Henceforth: Clark].

empathy is response to imagery that is produced by shapes, bodies, and movements, and in which, though more purely intellectual elements are present, dynamic or motor content is prominent; it owes its quality and force to accumulated and integrated experience brought into focus by an appropriate stimulus, with an instant and unconscious attribution of this experience to the thing perceived. Thus one's sense of firmness and weight, of solidity and strength and durability in observing a Norman arch is the result not only of the mind's comprehension of facts about materials and structure, but even more of the tactile and muscular impressions, of tensions and other organic sensations, gained through experience with strongly poised, substantial objects in our lives.<sup>92</sup>

Fogle favours this definition because it allows contact of self with object without loss of identity, and it balances the role of the intellect and the senses in empathy. This contact of self with object and the role of the intellect echoes the comment made by Katz that the feelings can be used as instruments of cognition. Eisenberg and Strayer similarly imply an importance of the intellect in their discussion of empathy: the one who empathises must infer through direct or indirect cues.

This quote also introduces two other themes, the visual and the physical, which seem to be of some importance in the study of empathy. Empathy can be a response to imagery enriched by shape and movement, drawing on sensations, including the 'tactile and muscular', from everyday life. Eisenberg and Strayer had hinted at the importance of the visual and the physical in their definition, referring to the facial expressions by which one might empathise with another. Fogle, however, seems to be interested in an empathy through which one feels the qualities and nature of an object whereas Eisenburg and Strayer, as well as Katz, seem to be more interested in the congruity of emotions between two individuals. It might nevertheless be suggested that Fogle's observations, particularly his emphasis on the role of imagery and the physical, is not unrelated to an empathy whereby an individual must either perceive the cues provided by another or infer emotions from another's situation.

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<sup>92</sup> R. H. Fogle, *The Imagery of Keats and Shelley: A Comparative Study* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1949), pp. 147-148 [Henceforth: Fogle]. The quote can be found in C. D. Thorpe, 'Empathy' in *Dictionary of World Literature*, ed. by J. T. Shipley (London: George Routledge & Sons, 1943), pp. 186-188 (p. 186).

Drawing on Thorpe, Fogle argues that “the hall mark by which poetic empathy is to be identified is the presence of motor, kinesthetic, or organic imagery, so powerful in effect as to evoke kindred impulses in the reader”.<sup>93</sup> The expression of the visual and the physical can be considered as a manifestation of the empathy of the poet for an object and is the means to convey it to the reader.

Poetic empathy is an imaginative process which begins with the physiological and culminates in the psychological. In empathy at its best strong motor, kinesthetic, or organic impulses are fused with poetic emotion. It is concerned, in poetry as in the representational arts, with lines, shapes, forms, and bodies, which it endows with human life and feeling. The physical sensations upon which it is founded aid in the imaginative perception of forms, through which the percipient gains the fullest insight possible to him of the world of things in its completeness. A sense of *body* must be present in empathy; but since poetry is not at bottom a pictorial or plastic medium this “body” will probably be suggested rather than described. Empathy is aesthetically significant in that it provides the best and most complete means of contemplation...Seen in this light, poetic empathy is a kind of sensuous imagination, which bases perception firmly upon our muscular, nervous, and organic processes.<sup>94</sup>

Thus, the physical, emotional and intellectual are bound up in empathy and closely related to an expression through imagery. Feeling and thinking are balanced in the empathy of the poet.

Through empathy the poet projects himself into the object of his contemplation by *feeling* as well as *thinking* himself inside it, so that through sensation and intuition as well as thought he comprehends it as fully as is possible within the limitations of his nature.<sup>95</sup>

The poet who comprehends an object as fully as possible through empathy and is able to represent this object in striking visual language, one in which the imagery is evocative of the physical, can therefore convey his or her own empathetic understanding to the reader. The latter can in turn feel and understand as the poet.

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<sup>93</sup> Fogle, p. 149.

<sup>94</sup> Fogle, p. 151; author’s italics.

<sup>95</sup> Fogle, 152; author’s italics.

An article by I. Lada provides a basis for further discussion. Drawing on the work of Eisenberg and Strayer in an examination of Greek drama, he approaches empathy in its role “as a mode of reaction to aesthetic phenomena”. He therefore takes empathy “to mean the imaginative ‘identification’ of the viewer’s/listener’s ‘self’ with the variety of represented/incarnated ‘others’”. The “cornerstone of the conception of ‘empathy’ is the notion of *congruity* between the passions--whatever these may be--which qualify the inner life of the object and the emotional response of the experiencing subject”.<sup>96</sup> Citing Eisenberg and Strayer again, he notes that sympathy is a “heightened awareness of the suffering of another person as something to be alleviated”.<sup>97</sup> He provides two aspects to a definition of identification. It can refer to the ability of role or perspective taking, resulting in the subjects’ feeling as if he were in the other’s place; and it can refer to the emotional process by which the experiencing subject appropriates the other person’s values and feelings as his or her own in such a way that “a submersion of the self in the other occurs”. Despite these distinctions, he treats sympathy, empathy and identity as virtually synonymous for practical reasons whilst allowing the subtle differences.

Lada emphasises the interrelation of cognition and empathy. He argues that cognitive evaluations lie at the basis of empathy and “empathy itself is the sole avenue which leads to a deeper understanding of people’s minds, motives and actions”. In this empathic<sup>98</sup> understanding, “affect and cognitive processes are inherently intertwined”. The affective transposition of oneself into another’s situation is inadequate if one is unwilling to relinquish, together with feelings, a grip on the categories which form one’s intellectual universe. For transference to become complete, one must attempt to assume the other’s own cognitive experience.<sup>99</sup> This statement is not unrelated to Clines’ emphasis on the identification of the reader with the personae and the attempt to

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<sup>96</sup> I. Lada, “‘Empathic Understanding’: Emotion and Cognition in Classical Dramatic Audience-Response”, *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society* 39 (1994), pp. 94-140 (pp. 100-101; author’s italics) [Henceforth: Lada].

<sup>97</sup> The quote is found in Eisenburg and Strayer, p. 6.

<sup>98</sup> Lada favours the term ‘empathic’ rather than ‘empathetic’. The two can be considered synonymous (cf. *Collins English Dictionary and Thesaurus* (Glasgow: HarperCollins, 1993)).

<sup>99</sup> Lada, p. 124.

perceive the poem's world from the vantage point of the personae.<sup>100</sup> While Clines carries the argument one step further, Lada leaves the discussion with this assumed cognitive experience and one must therefore assume that the reader gains new understanding through this empathetic understanding of the other.

It seems, then, that identity, sympathy and empathy are closely related but theoretically distinct. The comments offered by Lada originate from literary studies and indeed remarks made by Clines himself suggests that he might agree less with the strict division between the three concepts than an acknowledgment of their interpenetration. He had argued that the reader could identify with the personae but only with respect to the servant does he mention empathy. Clines seems to suggest that identity leads to empathy, and empathy is that stage before which the servant can mould the reader. Eisenberg and Strayer, as well as Clark, intimated that empathy is often necessary for sympathy and may be a base for the latter. Thus, the following will focus on empathy as defined above with due recognition that elements of identity and sympathy may be present.

Empathy will therefore be understood as the sharing of the perceived emotions of another, to draw on the comments made by Eisenberg and Strayer, or the congruity between emotions, to adapt the Lada's phraseology. According to Fogle, it can be a response to an imagery rich in physical suggestion, one in which the object is 'felt' and understood by poet and reader. Eisenberg and Strayer suggested that empathy can arise through overt perceptible cues or inference based on another's state. Overt perceptible cues such as a facial expression are not possible within the present discussion of an empathy for personae within Isa. 53, but their comments indicate the importance of the visual. In addition, it should be noted that Fogle favoured an empathy in which the senses were intertwined with the intellect, and this interest in the intellectual is echoed by Lada's emphasis on the cognitive importance of empathy. Empathy not only leads to understanding but the intellect may be necessary in order to empathise.

Lastly, some distinctions should be made. The discussion above noted the possibility of empathy for an object by the poet and an empathy elicited from the reader

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<sup>100</sup> Clines, pp. 62-64.

or audience through the poetry. Lada too discusses empathy within works of art.<sup>101</sup> Thus, any empathy which is discussed may possess three prongs: empathy by the poet for the object; an empathy amongst personae in a work of art; and empathy from the reader. In the following discussion, empathy within the text and the possibility of empathy from the reader will receive primary focus. An empathy of the poet with the objects or personae described may be present but, following comments made by Fogle, it will be assumed that the effective description or elicitation of empathy is based upon the poet's empathy for that described.

### 3.4.3 Empathy for the Servant

It has been argued that a lack of specificity does not necessarily distinguish the servant from other human personae in the poem and thus it cannot be the sole basis of the servant's ability to affect the reader. It may nevertheless contribute to an understanding of empathy for the servant. For the sake of further discussion, this lack of specificity may be considered analagous to anonymity, since neither the servant nor *we* are given a 'proper' name and *they* do not have 'one' identity. Indeed, Kruse implicitly links Clines' discussion of the servant with others who have argued for the anonymity of the servant,<sup>102</sup> Haag places Clines amongst those who consider the servant an indeterminable person<sup>103</sup> and Sekine places him with those who consider the identity unspecified.<sup>104</sup> D. R. Beck draws extensively on the work of T. Docherty in the examination of the anonymity of several significant Johannine characters, concluding that the anonymous characters who precede the beloved disciple<sup>105</sup> draw the reader into a subjective participation in the narrative and into an identification with the beloved

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<sup>101</sup> Cf. Lada, pp. 124-125.

<sup>102</sup> C. G. Kruse, 'The Servant Songs: Interpretive Trends Since C. R. North', *Studia Biblica et Theologica* 8 (1978), pp. 3-27 (pp. 20-21 (incl. n.89); 24).

<sup>103</sup> H. Haag, *Der Gottesknecht bei Deuterocesaja* (Erträge der Forschung 233; Darmstadt: Wissenschaftlichen Buchgesellschaft, 1985), pp. 149-151.

<sup>104</sup> S. Sekine, 'Identity and Authorship in the Fourth Song of the Servant: A Redactional Attempt at the Second Isaianic Theology of Redemption: Part 1', *AJBI* 21 (1995), pp. 29-56 (p. 34).

<sup>105</sup> The mother of Jesus, the Samaritan woman, the anonymous official, the lame man, the blind man, the adulterous woman.



disciple.<sup>106</sup> As Beck observed, Docherty argues that naming can distinguish the character from the narrative environment, other characters and the reader.<sup>107</sup> Docherty notes the typical function of naming;<sup>108</sup> the reticence in recent literature to use names;<sup>109</sup> and the tendency in this literature to ask that we “have ‘empathy’ with another--we are quite literally involved and positioned with another’s subjectivity”.<sup>110</sup> For Docherty, then, the anonymity facilitates empathy.

Beck further notes that the potential for reader identification with an anonymous character may be assisted if there is a correlation with the reader’s experience.<sup>111</sup> In her discussion of empathy, Clark has suggested that individuals are often better able to empathise “with others with whom we share liking or affection”. She continues, noting that empathy may be more easily elicited for those who are similar to the empathiser and those who are experiencing problems which have been experienced by the empathiser.<sup>112</sup> Lada had argued that the classical perspective of pity or sympathy might merge with the concept of empathy.<sup>113</sup> He later notes Aristotle’s observations that one’s involvement may vary considerably, “in accordance with parameters such as the evaluation of the sufferer’s deservingness or undeservingness of the misfortune or even with respect to one’s own liking or dislike of the victim”. A strong self-referential element “based either on similarity of conditions...or on contiguity of considerations is an indispensable requirement for pity”.<sup>114</sup> One must therefore wonder whether anonymity or a lack of specificity alone facilitates empathy. If the

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<sup>106</sup> D. R. Beck, ‘The Narrative Function of Anonymity in Fourth Gospel Characterization’, *Semeia* 63 (1993), pp. 143-158 (p. 143) [Henceforth: Beck].

<sup>107</sup> Beck, p. 146.

<sup>108</sup> Names typically indicate an authority of some kind; provide a locus ‘around which characterizaion actually takes place’; and ‘gives the reader a point of view on the fiction as a whole’ (T. Docherty, *Reading (Absent) Character: Towards a Theory of Characterization in Fiction* (Oxford: Clarendon Press), pp. 73-74 [Henceforth: Docherty]).

<sup>109</sup> Docherty, p. 73.

<sup>110</sup> Docherty, p. 83; cf. too Beck p. 147.

<sup>111</sup> Beck, p. 149.

<sup>112</sup> Clark, p. 40.

<sup>113</sup> Lada, p. 101.

<sup>114</sup> Lada, p. 122-123. He refers to Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* (1378a1-3; 1385b27-9; 1386a25-29; cf. Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, Bk. II.1.4 (pp. 170-171) and Bk. II.8 (pp. 224-231)) and *Poetics* (1453a5-6; cf. Aristotle, *Poetics*, ed. and trans. by S. Halliwell (LCL; London: Cambridge University Press, 1995), ch. 13, pp. 70-71).

reader finds few, if any, points of contact between the character of a text, named or anonymous, then the establishment of a relationship and the possibility of empathy are quite remote indeed. Thus, one might accept that the servant's lack of specificity, his anonymity, might facilitate or contribute to an empathetic response by the reader but it does not necessarily create empathy in and of itself.

Some factors which may contribute to empathy therefore require discussion. The servant suffers physically and *our* description of the servant is rich in imagery which graphically depicts the suffering of the servant: he is 'pierced' by *our* transgressions;<sup>115</sup> 'crushed' by iniquities;<sup>116</sup> and 'bears' *our* pains.<sup>117</sup> His appearance is grotesque and causes isolation; punishment and death are faced by him. The poem provides a graphic, concrete description of his suffering and these are accessible to the reader. Even if the reader has not experienced these precise pains, the sense of physical pain is presumably not foreign. As Fogle might argue, this very physicality may facilitate empathy. Moreover, Clines highlights the passivity of the servant, an idea which has been partially accepted, and thus the combination of passivity and pain might provide yet further experiences with which a reader might identify.

All of this suffering occurs despite his innocence. On one level his sufferings are unjustified but they are laid on him by Yahweh. No explicit reason is provided for Yahweh's action but the results may elucidate the rationale: through these sufferings *we* gain healing and *we* and *they* gain insight into the true status of the servant and the interaction between the servant and Yahweh. A sense of injustice might therefore strengthen any empathy for a persona who suffers grievously as a result of others' actions. In addition, the servant remains silent throughout these sufferings. Alonso Schökel has noted that the "person described remains silent throughout the poem, up to the point where the silence becomes painful, even intolerable".<sup>118</sup> It seems fair to suggest that the silence plays an important role in the depiction of the experience of the

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<sup>115</sup> 53.5a.

<sup>116</sup> 53.5b.

<sup>117</sup> 53.4b.

<sup>118</sup> L. Alonso Schökel, 'Isaiah', in *The Literary Guide to the Bible*, ed. by R. Alter and F. Kermode (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987), pp. 165-183 (p. 180) [Henceforth: Alonso Schökel].

servant. It may obstruct any type of empathy with the servant by the very fact that the reader is not told what the servant feels or thinks, but this very silence may actually heighten the pain which the reader imaginatively undergoes alongside the servant.<sup>119</sup>

In sum, then, it could be suggested that the presentation of the servant elicits an empathetic response from the reader for a number of reasons. Firstly, the lack of specificity and name for the servant diminishes the sense of otherness which could erect a barrier between the reader and the servant. Secondly, the servant experiences a series of sufferings whose physicality and passivity elicits a corresponding empathy on the part of the reader who winces as the descriptions of physical maltreatment are piled one on the other. This pain is exacerbated by the injustice of the suffering and the awful silence. The relationship established between the reader and the servant may therefore function on two levels. Bouson has argued as follows:

what ultimately draws us into the fictional world of the text and underlies our relationship to the characters we encounter there is empathy, the resonant human echo to a shared experience.<sup>120</sup>

Empathy for the servant draws the reader into the poem, which is a suggestion with which Clines might not disagree. Also, such empathy facilitates a deeper understanding of the servant's suffering: not only is the reader told of the servant's suffering but in experiencing it recognises first hand the cause, the effect and the ultimate vindication. This knowledge through experience is more effective than a knowledge through verbal explanation or description. Thus, cognition is necessary to arrive at empathy and empathy in turn provides a better understanding of the situation of the persona and the world in which the persona moves.

#### **3.4.4 Empathy for *Us***

Clines essentially argues that the identification of the reader with *us* revolves around the perception of the servant and this identification puts the reader in the world of the poem. No one

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<sup>119</sup> Note also Clines' discussion (Clines, pp. 42-44).

<sup>120</sup> J. B. Bouson, *The Empathic Reader: A Study of the Narcissistic Character and the Drama of the Self*

truly understands who the “we” are and what they mean to say unless one has shared their experience of revulsion towards and their rejection of the servant and their experience of “conversion”, i.e., their recognition of being mistaken, their assurance that the servant is for them *the* significant other and not an insignificant being, despised and rejected.<sup>121</sup>

This description is rich in the language of empathy. The reader should have shared the ‘experience of revulsion’, a clear reference to an emotion with a possible physical manifestation, and the identification with the *we* leads to both ‘understanding’ and ‘recognition’.

To these observations made by Clines others might be added which suggest that a relationship marked by empathy arises between the reader and *we*. One of the criteria mentioned previously, anonymity, may be of particular importance. *We* no less than the servant are not named, as mentioned above, and Clines has suggested that *our* identity is not clear. If the preceding ideas drawn from Docherty and Beck can be transposed to this persona, then one might suggest that the anonymity of the *we* facilitates empathy. Moreover, the experiences of the *we* may extend beyond mere revulsion, rejection and conversion. It is a classic case of misplaced judgment and misinterpretation based upon appearance. The language of the poem emphasises this state: *our* perceptions are negated by the אָנֹכִי or by the context. *Our* seeing of the servant and taking delight in him, described in 53.2, are essentially negated by a context that indicates that *we* did not see or take delight in him; in 53.3d *we* admit that *we* did not consider him; in 53.4c *we* state that *we* considered him ‘touched, smitten by God, humiliated’, a consideration which is in fact only partially correct; and in 53.6ab *we* admit that *we* strayed and turned. *Our* perceptions and actions are therefore either negated or erroneous. Such misinterpretation or selfish actions may therefore be experiences readily understood by the reader.

Two other features may contribute to the creation of an empathetic relationship between the reader and *us*. Two speakers speak in the first person, Yahweh and *us*.

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(Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1989), p. 172.

<sup>121</sup> Clines, p. 63; author’s italics. Note also the comments made by Alonso-Schökel: “In order to understand it [the poem] and accept it, it is necessary to cast one’s lot with the anonymous chorus of

First person language is important in establishing a relationship between persona and reader or audience. In an analysis of Pr. 23.29-35, Watson notes the poetic function of the change to the first person in v.35a: it makes the listener identify with the unfortunate drinker.<sup>122</sup> Rorty has argued that “the protagonists of tragic drama invite our reflection and identification” when they speak in the first person.<sup>123</sup> First person language is therefore vital in establishing a pathway through which the reader or audience might identify with the speaker.

To suggest that *our* first person language invites identification requires a distinction to be drawn between this possibility and the identification which could be made with the other persona who speaks, Yahweh. A discussion focussed on the relationship between the personae will delineate more precisely the role Yahweh plays in the poem, but for the moment one observation is apt. In general, Yahweh drives the events of the poem and the divine utterances describe much that occurs between the servant and *them*. Unlike *our* utterances, however, those of Yahweh lack the characteristics through which empathy arises. Clines suggests that the divine announcements are ‘objective’<sup>124</sup> and thus lack emotion with which the reader could empathise;<sup>125</sup> Yahweh does not seem to suffer nor woefully misjudge; and the divine identity is clearer than *ours*. The possibilities implicit in an empathy through anonymity are therefore less likely. These features do not preclude the establishment of a relationship between the reader and Yahweh which includes empathy. One could suggest, for example, that the reader could empathise with Yahweh as he watches his servant suffer. The poem nevertheless lacks the formal rhetorical elements, apart from first person language, which asks the reader to identify or empathise with Yahweh.

Another characteristic in the poem encourages empathy with *us*. As mentioned previously, *our* confession is placed in the centre of the poem and as such it gains a

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spectators and participate with them” (Alonso Schökel, p. 180).

<sup>122</sup> Watson, p. 26.

<sup>123</sup> A. O. Rorty, ‘The Psychology of Aristotelian Tragedy’ in *Essays on Aristotle’s Poetics*, ed. by A. O. Rorty (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), pp. 1-22 (p. 13).

<sup>124</sup> Clines, p. 44.

<sup>125</sup> The possibility of implicit emotion does exist, as discussed below in Sec. 3.5.2, but Clines’ observation is not necessarily invalid: the emotion is implied rather than explicit.

prominence through which the reader takes notice of it. Clines quite rightly notes that 53.1-11a, even if spoken by the nations and kings of 52.15, “is not a speech addressed to anyone”.<sup>126</sup> The confession could theoretically be directed to another persona in the poem, such as Yahweh, the servant or *them*, but it is of course not specified. If this be the case, then the absence of any specific reference to the one who hears the confession provides the space and opportunity for the reader to be the confessee. To state this possibility does not suggest that the poem consciously intends the reader to be the confessee but it certainly does not preclude the possibility. Immediately a relationship is established in which the reader ‘hears’ the confession of a persona and therefore gains further insight into *our* innermost thoughts as *we* assess *our* wrongdoings. If the reader has established an empathetic relationship with *us* through anonymity, first person language and shared experiences of misjudgment or misinterpretation, then this confession strengthens the empathetic nature of the relationship. D. A. Foster provides some ideas implying an empathy between confessor and confessee. Two quotes convey his ideas well.

But then what has he [the suffering confessor] told his listener? The listener is also only human, also a sinner. Putting a priest’s formal powers of absolution aside, *he is no different from the speaker*. How could he not be infected with the doubt and loss evoked by the narrative of confession? He traffics in the sins of others, which must at some level recall him to his own sins...<sup>127</sup>

Confession, through the reenactment of sin, sins again, even to the point of drawing the listener into interpretations that inevitably have their own strayings. *To become involved with a confession is to experience oneself the alienation motivating the speaker...*<sup>128</sup>

The confessee who has already identified with *us* hears not just *our* confession but experiences it to the point that it becomes the reader’s own confession. *Our* confession becomes the confession of the reader.

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<sup>126</sup> Clines, p. 43; author’s italics.

<sup>127</sup> D. A. Foster, *Confession and Complicity in Narrative* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 3 [Henceforth: Foster]; italics added.

<sup>128</sup> Foster, p. 17; italics added.

In sum, then, a number of features assist in the establishment of an empathetic relationship between the reader and *us*. *Our* identity is not specified and *we* are thus ‘anonymous’; *our* misjudgment of the servant is an experience readily available to the reader; the first person language invites identification; the lack of a specified audience for a description of that which *we* have heard and for *our* confession allows the reader to be that audience; and the very act of confessing wrongdoing elicits an empathetic response from the reader.

### 3.4.5 Empathy for *Them*?

By the reckoning of Clines, identification between the reader and *them* stems from *their* attitude towards the servant. *They* “find the history of the servant unbelievable and his aspect revolting”; *they* are aware of the servant because *they* see and ponder his fate; *they* are fascinated by the servant; and *they* find that the servant proves to be innocent and has borne punishment on behalf of *them*.<sup>129</sup> Identification with *them* not only leaves the reader on the edge of the world of the poem, as argued by Clines, but the poem itself does not provide formal criteria which might draw the reader into a closer identification with *them*. *They* are not anonymous in the same manner as the servant or *us* because *they* include kings and nations. *They* are not described as suffering; the relationship between the servant and *them* is described entirely by another persona, Yahweh, and thus the immediacy of *our* description is lacking; and although the reader may identify with *their* misperception of the servant and the astonished reaction, the third person language does not encourage the reader to engage in this misperception through *their* eyes but through the eyes of Yahweh. One might therefore suggest that the poem is less interested in forging a relationship between the reader and *them* than it is in forming one between the reader and the servant and/or *us*.

### 3.4.6 Conclusion

The preceding discussion has suggested that certain formal criteria encourage the reader to respond empathetically to the servant and *us*. The reader is placed in a

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<sup>129</sup> Clines, pp. 62-63.

situation provided with great insight: he or she sees and feels not only as the one who suffers and is vindicated but also as one who has perceived and acted wrongly, recognised this fact and confessed the wrongdoing. A balance between the two viewpoints, offering two perspectives on the events depicted in the poem, provides a deeper understanding of the poem. Empathy assists in an understanding of the viewpoint of the *we* and the servant whilst nevertheless allowing a critical distance necessary to assess the events, as Fogle might argue. Thus, an assessment of the poem itself now deserves some attention.

### 3.5 Empathy within Isa. 53

#### 3.5.1 Introduction

Clines' arguments concerning the relationship between the reader and the personae are preceded by a rhetorical analysis of six themes found within the poem, mentioned previously. One could theoretically study all of these themes as Clines presents them and assess the validity of his arguments. Clines, however, had argued that the nexus of relationships is at the heart of the poem's significance and none of the themes is unrelated to the interaction of the personae. It may therefore be more enlightening and useful to place the preceding discussion concerning empathy alongside thematic observations made by Clines in order to study the possible presence of empathy amongst the personae within the world of the poem.

This shift in focus might similarly be justified for two further reasons. The form of the poem suggests the centrality of both the servant and *our* confession. Both the servant and *we*, particularly through the confession, are centres of the poem and elicit empathy from the reader. If the form of the poem points towards its content, and this form elicits empathy from the reader, then it is no small step to suggest that empathy might inform the content of the poem as well.

A few comments by other scholars further support this search. In the first instance, Lada, mentioned above, suggests that empathy can exist between characters in a play or book.<sup>130</sup> Those who have studied Isa. 53 have made comments describing a

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<sup>130</sup> Lada, pp. 124-125 esp.



close relationship amongst personae and imply a concomitant empathy. In his discussion of 52.13, Muilenburg argues that **יִשְׁכִּיל** may be translated ‘prosper’ or ‘have success’, the latter including the idea of insight. The servant thus

lives in such close fellowship with his God that he discerns his ways and purposes, knows something of the mysteries of his revelation, and sees the deeper meaning involved in his suffering...<sup>131</sup>

In his discussion of 52.10 and the **אֲשֶׁם**,<sup>132</sup> Muilenburg writes that the

servant lives in intimate fellowship and communion with God, his silence and patience and humility are the expression of his nearness to his covenant Lord.<sup>133</sup>

Such a close connection might provide the basis for empathy. Wilcox and Paton-Williams note that the phraseology of Isa. 52.13, with the adjectives ‘exalted’, ‘lifted up’ and ‘very high,’ is applied almost exclusively to Yahweh in the Book of Isaiah. “The implication is not necessarily that the servant is Yahweh, or even divine; but there *is* an implication here that the servant’s work is Yahweh’s work, and the language used to make the point is daring, to say the least”.<sup>134</sup> One could suggest that the poet has intentionally used language evoking Yahweh and has thus implicitly signalled the close connection between them. Such a close relationship is compatible with empathy. In his discussion of the songs, Fretheim has argued that the suffering of the servant is reflective of the suffering of God: “as the servant is the vehicle for divine immanence, we should also say that God, too, experiences what the servant suffers”.<sup>135</sup> The comments from Wilcox and Paton-Williams suggest a relationship marked by proximity and Fretheim’s suggestion carries the statement one step further, essentially arguing for empathy. God feels that which the servant suffers. Hanson has recently noted the “unity of purpose

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<sup>131</sup> Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 616.

<sup>132</sup> This word will be discussed within the section focussed on the servant/*we* relationship (Sec. 3.5.3).

<sup>133</sup> Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 629.

<sup>134</sup> P. Wilcox and D. Paton-Williams, ‘The Servant Songs in Deutero-Isaiah’, *JSOT* 42 (1988), pp. 79-102 (p. 95); authors’ italics.

<sup>135</sup> T. E. Fretheim, *The Suffering of God* (OBT; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), pp. 164-165.

that characterizes the relationship between the servant and the Lord”,<sup>136</sup> thereby echoing the earlier remarks made by Muilenburg.

A point made by Hanson suggests the possibility of empathy between the servant and *us*. He argues that the servant of this poem is not a scapegoat.

Rather, we encounter one who, having identified his human will with divine redemptive purpose, enters into solidarity with a people at their nadir point, in their guilt-ridden disease, and acts in partnership with God to break the bondage that is destroying them.<sup>137</sup>

This solidarity may not necessarily equal empathy but this solidarity in disease certainly could form the basis of empathy.

Thus, an examination of the poem in an effort to uncover suggestions of empathy amongst the personae is a justified extension of the preceding discussion. Comments offered by other scholars have implied that the relationships within the poem may be of such a nature that empathy is present.

### 3.5.2 The Yahweh/Servant Relationship

Clines sets forth six instances describing the Yahweh/servant relationship:<sup>138</sup>

1. Yahweh presents the servant (52.15) for admission as his servant.
2. Yahweh announces the servant's supremacy (52.13).
3. Yahweh reports on *their* attitude to the servant (52.15).
4. The servant was only wrongly thought to be struck down by Yahweh (53.4).
5. Yahweh laid suffering on the servant (53.6, 10).
6. Yahweh allots the servant a portion with the great (53.12).

A dual aspect to the relationship exists in which Yahweh usually supports the servant but allows him to grow up stunted in 53.2 and lays suffering on him in 53.6, 10. “This is

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<sup>136</sup> P. D. Hanson, ‘The World of the Servant of the Lord in Isaiah 40-55’ in *Jesus and the Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 and Christian Origins*, ed. by W. H. Bellinger, Jr. and W. R. Farmer (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1998), pp. 9-22 (p. 18) [Henceforth: Hanson, World of the Servant].

<sup>137</sup> Hanson, World of the Servant, p. 18.

<sup>138</sup> The following table has altered the pronouns used by Clines in order to clarify the references.

not ambiguity as far as the poem is concerned or a tension that needs to be resolved”, writes Clines, “these are the facts of the matter”.<sup>139</sup>

These observations highlight aspects of a relationship in which support and the imposition of suffering mix curiously. Clines argues that the tension need not be resolved but it seems that the poem itself does resolve this tension. That Yahweh laid suffering on the servant cannot be denied but the poem is at great pains to provide a function for and a resolution of this suffering. It helps to catalyse *our* and *their* insight into the nature of Yahweh and the relationship between Yahweh and the servant; it brings healing to *us*; and it is essentially resolved through the exaltation of the servant. Thus, one can accept that a duality and a tension exists within the poem but the tension is resolved by the purpose which is given to the suffering and a conclusion of events in which exaltation dissipates the preceding humiliation. On one level, then, it could be argued that empathy between Yahweh and the servant might not exist if Yahweh allowed such suffering to be experienced by the servant. On another level, the poem specifically describes the purpose of the suffering and the exaltation of the servant, who is granted life. Yahweh, in a sympathy which may be based in empathy, alleviates the suffering of the servant through purpose and through exaltation.

Further study of the poem itself provides more insight into the relationship. In the first instance, the strophic division which has been proposed indicates that two exaltation strophes enclose the three strophes describing the suffering of the servant. If this be the case, then the poem quite consciously places the suffering of the servant within the framework of the exaltation. The suffering, though intense and painful, is given limits and boundaries by the exaltation, and the description of the suffering is therefore read through the lens of the exaltation. Though Yahweh may lay suffering on the servant, the poem’s structure means that this imposition is interpreted with the knowledge that it is not the final destiny for the servant. Thus, it is fair to suggest that the ultimate vindication of the servant and the purpose of his suffering dissolves the tension suggested by Clines and is in fact is the controlling image of the relationship.

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<sup>139</sup> Clines, p. 38.

Muilenburg provides by way of 41.8 and 42.1 an observation which similarly contributes to this discussion. He has argued that the presentation of the servant in these two verses is marked by an intimacy between Yahweh and the servant, clearly indicated by the עבדי.<sup>140</sup> The servant is presented from the start of Isa. 53 as one closely associated with Yahweh and the tone of 52.13 is one of conviction, reassurance and perhaps even delight. If hints of intimacy are combined with assurances of success, then it would be justified to suggest that Yahweh, at the very least, participates in the fate of the servant. This participation is of course one that mixes an announcement of exaltation with the laying on of suffering, as Clines would argue. The structure of the poem, however, encloses the suffering with the positive participation of Yahweh with the servant. The objectivity of the presentation to which Clines refers may not necessarily convey the relationship adequately because of this participation. This observation is supported by the quotes from other scholars presented in the preceding section, in which the close connection between Yahweh and the servant was emphasised.

It has been noted that repetitions are of utmost importance in the rhetorical study of Hebrew poetry and Clines himself depends on repetitions, as mentioned above. Repetitions in Isa. 53 suggest a continuity between Yahweh and the servant which relate to the preceding scholarly observations intimating empathy. Yahweh is the subject of only five verbs in the poem,<sup>141</sup> and, of these, two are shared with the servant. In the first colon of 53.12 Yahweh allots the servant booty with the many and in the following colon the servant allots a share of the booty to the strong.<sup>142</sup> The root חלק in the piel therefore appears in quick succession describing the action of Yahweh and of the servant. In this instance, the action of the servant repeats the action of Yahweh. In Isa. 53.6 and 53.12 the root פגע appears, and it too suggests a close tie between the action of Yahweh and the servant. The first is a hiphil qatal with Yahweh as subject, typically translated as 'burdened' or 'laid on'. The second is a hiphil yiqtol whose translation and

<sup>140</sup> Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 464.

<sup>141</sup> הפגיע (v. 6); החלי, דכאו, החלי (v. 10); אחלק (v.12).

<sup>142</sup> For a discussion of the translation of this verse, cf. Chapter 2, Sec. 2.3.15.

connotations were discussed in Chapter 2.<sup>143</sup> The servant therefore echoes the action of Yahweh, albeit in a different conjugation and in a context which may suggest a different meaning. If the translation refers to spoken intercession, then the meaning of 53.12 would be quite different; if the meaning of the verb refers to the suffering of the servant, as Clines maintains, then a much closer connection between 53.6 and 53.12 might be posited. The mere fact of repetition in either case suggests a comparison between the act of Yahweh and the act of the servant. This observation is strengthened by the observation that two of the five hiphils of the root in the Hebrew Bible appear in the same poem.<sup>144</sup>

In addition to these repetitions, it is of some interest that all of the actions which Yahweh performs are directed at the servant. In 53.6 the preposition **בו** indicates that Yahweh laid on him the sin of all of *us* and in 53.12 the **לו** in the phrase **אחלק-לו** indicates the provision of spoil to the servant from Yahweh. In 53.10 the phrase **והפץ דכאו** is found. As noted previously, the expression might be literally translated ‘and Yahweh willed to crush him’: the one action depicted by two verbs is directed at the servant. Directly following this phrase is the final verb with Yahweh as subject, **החלי**. It has been interpreted ‘he made (him) sick’ and the presumed presence of ‘him’ is not unjustified in light of the noun in 53.3, 4. Thus, the servant is once again the object of Yahweh’s actions.

Mention could also be made of two verbs which do not strictly have Yahweh as a subject but are nevertheless closely identified with divine action. In 53.1b *we* ask ‘upon whom is the arm of Yahweh revealed?’ Clines argues that Yahweh’s arm or power “is of course effectively revealed in the case of the servant”.<sup>145</sup> Yahweh’s arm or power is inextricably associated with the servant. In 53.10d the phrase ‘the will of Yahweh will succeed by his (the servant’s) hand’.<sup>146</sup> The servant thus acts as the means

<sup>143</sup> Cf. Sec. 2.3.15.

<sup>144</sup> The others appear in Isa. 59.16; Jer. 15.11; 36.25.

<sup>145</sup> Clines, p. 15. He translates the line ‘Where has God’s power ever been seen--but here?’

<sup>146</sup> **והפץ יהוה בידו יצלח**.

by which Yahweh effects the divine will and this instrumental quality<sup>147</sup> suggests Yahweh's action through the servant.

A few points might place these observations in perspective. Yahweh is the subject of only five verbs in the poem. The servant clearly imitates the divine action in one instance and echoes the divine action in another. In all of the actions of Yahweh the servant is either explicitly or implicitly the object. The servant, in turn, is the subject of 36 verbs in the poem<sup>148</sup> but shares only four of these with other personae: פגע and חלק are shared with Yahweh and ראה is shared once with *us* and once with *them*. Thus, two of Yahweh's five actions are repeated by the servant and half of the verbs which the servant shares with other personae he shares with Yahweh. The poem suggests through repetition that Yahweh acts exclusively through the servant.

The relationship between Yahweh and the servant is very close indeed. While it cannot necessarily be asserted that this close relationship indicates or describes empathy explicitly, empathy may nevertheless be present. While the preceding observations taken individually do not convincingly demonstrate the presence of empathy, in sum they do *suggest* empathy. The suffering of the servant is given a purpose, that of healing; it is given boundaries, placed within the confines of exaltation; the presentation of the servant is one of assurance and possibly intimacy, indicating a participation by Yahweh in the events which follow; the final exaltation of the servant is, in a sense, an alleviation of suffering or at least a reward for it; and all of Yahweh's actions relate to the servant. While Yahweh does not express any thoughts which clearly indicate an empathy for the servant, this collection of observations suggests that an empathy for the servant informs this relationship. To paraphrase the observations of Eisenberg and Strayer, Yahweh empathises through perception or inference.

<sup>147</sup> Cf. Muilenburg, Isaiah 40-66, p. 627.

<sup>148</sup> ישכיל (52.13); יזה (52.15); ויעל (53.2); נבזה (2x), וידוע (53.3); נשא, סבלם, נשא (53.9); עשה (53.9); נגור, לקח (53.7); (2x) יפתח, נענה, נגש (53.5); מדכא, מחלל (53.4); ומענה, מכה, נגוע (53.12). To these could be added two others from 53.7 relating to the lamb and ewe (נאלמה, יובל). Clines counts 39 verbs relating to the servant but accepts that textual uncertainties make this count imprecise (Clines, p. 41, n. 9).

### 3.5.3 The Servant/*We* Relationship

Clines argues that a contrastive duality informs the relationship between the servant and *us*, the resolution of which

comes about through the elimination of the first pole of the duality: the attitude of the 'we' to 'him' *changes* from hostility or scorn to appreciation.<sup>149</sup>

This observation is once again quite apt and the poem indeed highlights the change, but the relationship is far deeper and more complex. The two personae are quite closely bound together and it is therefore appropriate to examine the relationship in greater detail to see if there are any suggestions of empathy between them.

The preceding discussion used shared vocabulary to examine the relationship between Yahweh and the servant and the same procedure may be of some assistance here. Before this detailed task is undertaken, two general observations will be made. The poetic imagery indicates that the relationship between the two personae is grounded on a basic similarity and it intimates a significant span of time in which the two were in each other's company. The two similes of vv.6 and 7 suggest that the servant and *we* are both sheep. Oswalt has noted that both personae are compared to sheep but "in *us* the negative characteristics are seen, whereas in him it is the positive ones. He shares the same nature with *us* but in him it is transformed".<sup>150</sup> Secondly, Westermann has argued that this poem depicts the life span of the servant.<sup>151</sup> The poem suggests that *we* saw him growing up as a sapling and as a root from dry ground. Even if Westermann's presumption that the servant died is not accepted, the poem does imply that *we* have viewed him for a significant length of time. *We* not only share in his nature but he has virtually grown up amongst *us* and is therefore one of *us*. The two similes therefore indicate that the two personae are closely connected not only through actions but through nature and life-span.

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<sup>149</sup> Clines, p. 38.

<sup>150</sup> J. N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 40-66* (NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), pp. 390-391 [Henceforth: Oswalt]; italics added.

<sup>151</sup> Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 257.

With regards to the shared verbs, it was mentioned previously that the servant and *we* share only one verb between them, the root ראה. In 53.2c *we* state that his appearance was such that *we* did not in fact see the servant; in 53.10c the servant sees seed and in 53.11a it is stated that the servant will see after or because of his toil.<sup>152</sup> *Our* seeing is therefore a non-seeing, one which thus suggests a lack of recognition or understanding, and the seeing of the servant is paralleled with knowledge. The contrast between the two is striking and is not incommensurate with the dualities mentioned by Clines. By the end of the poem, of course, both see. It would be hasty, however, to suggest that this state indicates empathy.

It was also stated above that Yahweh's action was directed towards the servant and it is interesting to note that four of the six verbs of which *we* are the subject contain a 3ms pronominal suffix referring to the servant.<sup>153</sup> These actions, as well as those without specific reference to the servant, were mentioned previously in the discussion of *our* grievous misperception and misjudgment.<sup>154</sup> It could therefore be suggested that the actions of one of the persona is once again focussed primarily, though not exclusively, on the servant.

Indeed, *our* words suggest that *we* despised the servant and thought of him primarily as a sick man; that he was seen as one touched and smitten by God, and humiliated; that he was hard pressed, humiliated and led away; and that he was taken from judgment and cut off from the land of the living. Though the poem does not explicitly state that *we* had an active part in the suffering of the servant, an ultimate cause of which is reserved for Yahweh, it does indicate that *our* thoughts were focussed on the servant and it implies that *we* were proximate contributors to his suffering. In sum, then, the poem makes quite clear *our* focus on him.

The servant, in turn, is the subject of 22 verbs in the verses which *we* utter (53.1-10),<sup>155</sup> and is in essence the subject of two other verbs, those describing the lamb

<sup>152</sup> For a discussion of these cola, see translation in Chapter 2, Secs. 2.13 and 2.14.

<sup>153</sup> ונחמדהו (53. 2); ונראהו (53.3); השבנהו (53.4)

<sup>154</sup> Cf. Sec. 3.4.4.

<sup>155</sup> Some disagreement exists concerning the end of *our* speech and the beginning of Yahweh's. Westermann (*Isaiah 40-66*, p. 267), Clifford (p. 181) and Hermisson (H.-J. Hermisson, 'Das vierte Gottesknechtlied im deuterocesajanischen Kontext' in *Der leidende Gottesknechte: Jesaja 53 und*



and ewe of 53.7. Of these, four are directly related to *us*. In 53.4 it is stated that the servant carried *our* sicknesses and bore *our* pains and in 53.5 the servant is described as pierced from *our* transgressions and crushed by *our* iniquities. No other verbs so clearly and formally describe the action of the servant on or for *us*.<sup>156</sup> However, his actions are of profound importance because they bring about *our* healing. On one level, then, the actions of the servant are less formally focussed on *us* than *our* actions on him but the effect of his actions are momentous.

The servant's actions which relate directly to *us* strongly suggest vicarious suffering, a concept which has generated much debate. A thorough study of Isa. 53 convinces Whybray that the suffering is not vicarious. He suggests that the text of 53.10ab, in which the servant is described as a guilt offering, is uncertain and the idea would be abominable to the ancient Israelite. He argues that *we* are depicted in v.4a as suffering in exile and thus the suffering cannot be vicarious because *we* too suffer. The servant suffers more intensely than *we* do as a result of *our* sins.<sup>157</sup> His doubts concerning vicarious suffering echo those made by Orlinsky.<sup>158</sup>

Opinions vary concerning the nature of the suffering of the servant. Many scholars disagree with Whybray and accept that the servant's suffering was vicarious.<sup>159</sup>

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*seine Wirkungsgeschichte*, ed. by B. Janowski and P. Stuhlmacher (FAT 14; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr/Paul Siebeck, 1996), pp. 1-25 (p. 10) [Henceforth: Hermisson, *Das vierte Gottesknechtlied*] argue that Yahweh's begins with the צדיק of 53.11c. Ceresko includes vv. 10-11ab within the divine speech (p. 51, n.32). Muilenburg argues that Yahweh speaks from v.10 (Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 627). The start of Yahweh's speech is taken as v.11 with due acknowledgment that *we* could speak v.11ab.

<sup>156</sup> Indeed, Clines might argue that the use of the term 'action' overstates the case (cf. pp. 41-42).

<sup>157</sup> R. N. Whybray, *Thanksgiving for a Liberated Prophet: An Interpretation of Isaiah Chapter 53* (JSOTSup. 4; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1978), pp. 58-59; 61-63; 65-66 [Henceforth: Whybray, *Thanksgiving*].

<sup>158</sup> Cf. H. M. Orlinsky, 'The So-Called "Servant of the Lord" and "Suffering Servant" in Second Isaiah', in *Studies in the Second Part of the Book of Isaiah* (VTSup.14; Leiden: Brill, 1967), pp. 1-133 (pp. 17; 53-57; 63).

<sup>159</sup> D. Moo refers to the "vicarious atonement of universal validity" that is the "fundamental characteristic of the Servant's work" (D. J. Moo, *The Old Testament in the Gospel Passion Narratives* (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1983), p. 82). Volz thinks that the idea of vicarious suffering is central to the poem (P. Volz, *Jesaia II* (KAT 9; Leipzig: A. Deichertsche, 1932), p. 181). Muilenburg (*Isaiah 40-66*, p. 623) and Duhm (B. Duhm, *Das Buch Jesaia*, 5th ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1968), p. 399) accept the idea of vicarious suffering. Janowski argues that v.10ab, in which Yahweh is described as having willed the suffering and the servant is compared to a guilt offering, "ist die zentrale Aussage des vierten EKL..." (B. Janowski, 'Er trug unsere Sünden: Jes 53 und die Dramatik der Stellvertretung' in *Der Leidende Gottesknecht: Jes 53 und seine Wirkungsgeschichte*, ed. by B.

For example, Clifford has suggested that even although the concept of vicarious suffering is not otherwise attested in the Hebrew Bible it cannot therefore be refused here *a priori*.<sup>160</sup> Clements has recently argued that a leading figure may serve as a representative of the people, wholly identified with them but separated and different from them. The four songs suggest that the servant is Israel suffering in exile and their fate as individuals embodied the nation. As Moses' death was necessary because of Israel's sins in the wilderness, the servant must suffer for and with the community he represents. God provides in the servant the sin offering by which Israel is healed.<sup>161</sup> Hanson, mentioned above,<sup>162</sup> similarly sees a shared suffering between *us* and the servant.<sup>163</sup> D. P. Bailey has recently provided an excellent summary of arguments concerning vicarious suffering, or more precisely, the concept of *Stellvertretung*. In essence, there is disagreement over the exclusivity or the inclusivity of the suffering of the servant. In the latter, the servant takes up a position of suffering and punishment without taking it over and thus does not exclude the others in suffering. In the former, the servant takes the place of the others and is left there alone. He summarises the ideas of several scholars in order to highlight the discussions related to these distinctions.<sup>164</sup>

Because this topic is complex and deserves significant time and space for thorough treatment, it is approached from one angle only, that of empathy. If the servant suffered along with *us*, then empathy is strongly suggested; if the servant suffered in place of *us* and *we* felt no suffering, then empathy for *us* might be more difficult to

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Janowski and P. Stuhlmacher (FAT 14; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck), pp. 27-48 (p. 41) [Henceforth: Janowski]).

<sup>160</sup> Clifford, pp. 178-179.

<sup>161</sup> R. E. Clements, 'Isaiah 53 and the Restoration of Israel' in *Jesus and the Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 and Christian Origins*, ed. by W. H. Bellinger, Jr. and W. R. Farmer (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1998), pp. 39-54.

<sup>162</sup> Cf. Sec. 3.5.1.

<sup>163</sup> Hanson, *World of the Servant*, p. 18.

<sup>164</sup> Hooker argues that the servant suffered alongside the rest of Israel and shared in this suffering; Wright thinks that the idea of representative suffering developed as a distinction from substitutionary suffering, but the innocent nevertheless suffers as a result of, because of or on behalf of the guilty; and Hofius favours the exclusivity of the place-taking within Isa. 53. Janowski favours an exclusive place-taking in Isa. 53, but after God makes clear the role of the servant there are elements that might be seen as substitutionary or representative. (D. P. Bailey, 'Concepts of *Stellvertretung* in the Interpretation of Isaiah 53' in *Isaiah 53 and the Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 and Christian Origins*, ed. by W. H. Bellinger, Jr. and W. R. Farmer (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1998), pp. 223-250.

establish. The servant suffers that which *we* should have suffered but it cannot necessarily be assumed that empathy arises because *we* do not suffer. Thus, instead of an examination of the poem for indications of vicarious suffering or the nuances in meaning, it might be best in the first instance to examine the poem in an effort to uncover any possible suggestions that *we* suffered.

It is here that Clines' approach provides some useful boundaries. Whybray and Clements argued on the basis of proposed identities and historical locations that *we* suffered alongside the servant. If possible identities are put aside because they are so difficult to establish and the poem is studied in its own right in the first instance, then the poem must be examined according to internal criteria in an effort to discover any suggestions concerning *our* suffering. With reference to 53.4, it could be proposed that the servant carried *our* sicknesses and pains alongside *us* rather than carrying them instead of *us*. The poem states, however, that the servant was perceived as someone quite different from *us* and was isolated. If the servant and *we* were both suffering from pains and sicknesses, then it seems rather contradictory to suggest that the servant was so vastly different and isolated. Whybray may offer an alternative, arguing that the suffering of the servant is more intensive, but this suggestion cannot be established by the poem itself.

Isa. 53.5 clearly states, however, that the servant brought healing to *us*. Healing certainly indicates sickness and thus it might be presumed that *we* suffered from some kind of sickness. While the poem might intimate that *we* suffered from sicknesses, it does not state unequivocally that *we* suffered. The servant, after all, carried *our* sicknesses and pains. Clines had argued that the poem is primarily about seeing the servant and the presentation of a new vision about the servant. The poem indicates that *we* at first did not see the servant correctly and only later did see the servant correctly. It is possible that *our* blindness not only led to the transgressions and iniquities, described in part by the simile of 53.6, but was in itself a transgression to be healed. The root רפא can frequently refer to a literal, physical healing from sickness or wounds,<sup>165</sup> but it can

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<sup>165</sup> In the niphal, as used in 53.5d, cf. Lev. 13. 18, 37; 14.3, 48.

similarly be used metaphorically.<sup>166</sup> Hermisson, in fact, argues that the healing here is a metaphorical phrase<sup>167</sup> and Isa. 6.10 describes a healing from misperception or ignorance.<sup>168</sup> The healing may be a physical healing which is somehow effected for *our* physical ailments but the poem does not unequivocally state that *we* suffered physically. The poem does describe *our* seeing after initial blindness, and on a figurative or metaphorical level it may be the blindness that is healed.

Thus, it might be best not to assume that *we* suffered physically in the same manner that the servant suffered because the poem does not specifically describe *our* physical suffering. It does describe *our* healing effected through the servant. If it is proposed, then, that *we* suffered, it might be more responsible within the limits of the poem to suggest that *we* suffered from a blindness which was not literal, since *we* physically saw the servant, but one which is figurative, a blindness which is the lack of understanding and recognising.

If this be the case, then the result does have ramifications for the concept of empathy. Both personae, it seems, suffer within the context of the poem and thus an empathy might be proposed as a result of shared suffering. It seems, however, that that which the servant suffers is of a different nature and quality from that which *we* suffer. It might therefore exceed the evidence in the poem to suggest that the servant necessarily empathised with *us* as a result of this suffering. To state this opinion, however, does not necessarily exclude an empathy by the servant for *us*. A combination of observations made previously suggest that the concept of empathy may lie below the surface of the poem. The close ties between the servant and *us* have been suggested, ties which might result from a shared nature and the span of time spent within the gaze of *us*.

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<sup>166</sup> The word is used, for example, to describe water which is made fresh (2 Kgs. 2.22; Ez. 47.8, 9) or a pot which cannot be mended (Jer. 19.11). Stoebe has noted that the prophets often use the verb 'in relation to wounds, ulcers, and injuries as images for the status of a people', citing Hos. 5.13; Jer. 30.13, 17; 33.6 (H. J. Stoebe, 'רפא' in *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament*, vol. 3, ed. by E. Jenni and C. Westermann, trans. by M. E. Biddle (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1997), pp. 1254-1259 (p. 1257) [Henceforth: Stoebe, רפא]).

<sup>167</sup> He states that this interpretation does not mean that it is not real but describes a divine act which evades human imaginative possibility and escapes the clutches of direct language (Hermisson, *Das vierte Gottesknechtlied*, p. 17).

<sup>168</sup> Stoebe notes that healing comes to mean forgiveness, citing Gen. 20.17; Lev. 26.16; Nu. 12.9ff.; Dt. 28.27, 35. This conception provides 'a fundamental insight into the status of human beings before

To these it might be added that the servant carried *our* sicknesses and pains, even if *we* did not necessarily experience this suffering, and the servant similarly was instrumental in bringing about *our* healing. The close connection between the servant and Yahweh has already been noted. By virtue of his close connection with Yahweh the servant may have known and understood *our* state of blindness and the purpose of his suffering. His silence and the implied willingness strongly suggest an acquiescence in the process; at the very least, the poem does not provide the evidence to suggest an unwillingness to participate. By virtue of his close connections with *us*, he would have understood this blindness more readily because he was one of *us*. If so, then the poem suggests, but by no means clearly states, that the servant empathised with *us* in *our* situation: he was one with *us* and had been in *our* midst for a length of time; he carried *our* sicknesses; and he understood through Yahweh the purpose of his suffering, which was healing for *us*, and apparently acquiesced in it. The poem evokes an empathy for *us* quite indirectly, an emotion or feeling which lay below its surface but is manifested through an amalgamation of hints and suggestions.

The poem further suggests that *we* attempted to empathise with the servant's situation once *we* recognised him and his relationship with Yahweh. In his discussion of the imagery used to describe the servant in v. 5, Muilenburg writes that the shifts in the portrait of the servant,

and indeed the wide diversity of terms used to describe the suffering, forbid any attempt to identify its precise nature. In a sense all suffering is here, all of the servant's suffering in the total context in which the speakers utter their confession and lament.<sup>169</sup>

Reventlow agrees: "no exact description of the pains is intended" and the language is in fact richly imagistic and metaphorical.<sup>170</sup> Elsewhere, only people or Yahweh 'crush', using *דכא* in the piel,<sup>171</sup> not iniquities; Yahweh or a sword typically 'pierce', using

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God' (Stoebe, *רפא*, pp. 1257-1258).

<sup>169</sup> Muilenburg, Isaiah 40-66, p. 622.

<sup>170</sup> H. G. Reventlow, 'Basic Issues in the Interpretation of Isaiah 53' in *Jesus and the Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 and Christian Origins*, ed. by W. H. Bellinger, Jr. and W. R. Farmer (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International), pp. 23-38 (pp. 27-31).

<sup>171</sup> Cf. Isa. 3.15; 53.10; Pss. 72.4; 89.11; 94.5; 143.3; Job 4.19; 6.9; 19.2; Pr. 22.22; La.3.34.

חלל,<sup>172</sup> not transgressions; and סבל can be used both literally<sup>173</sup> and figuratively,<sup>174</sup> either of which may be possible here. It might therefore be best to consider the description of suffering less as a ‘real’ portrayal than the depiction of intense suffering. The language evokes the intensity of suffering through the variety and the piling up of images one on the other. The numerous metaphors and similes suggest that *we* can only come to terms with the career of the servant in and through the metaphors and similes. This figurative language is so concentrated and varied that it indicates that *we* are, at the very least, attempting to understand the suffering of the servant by placing it in language that is accessible to *us*. The servant is like a suckling tree or a root in dry ground; he bears physically, he is pierced and he is crushed; he has experienced stripes; and he is a faithful sheep in contrast to *our* faithless, sheep-like wanderings. *We* are attempting to understand the servant empathetically, trying to imagine what his suffering may have felt like. More likely, however, *we* have empathetically entered into the experience of the servant and the many metaphors and similes are both the means of understanding and the manifestation of a process in which *we* actually have experienced that which the servant experienced. It may not be unfair to suggest, then, that *we* empathise with the suffering of the servant after recognition.

If the suffering of the servant is presented with figurative language and suggests *our* understanding of the servant, an empathetic understanding, then אָשָׁם may deserve closer scrutiny. In the first instance, the tentative translation offered in the preceding chapter suggested that the line could be rendered as it stands in the MT. Even if it is a translation with some weaknesses, some connection is made between the servant and אָשָׁם. The actual meaning of the term has elicited a wide variety of interpretations and much discussion<sup>175</sup> and thus the word will be studied within the context of the present

<sup>172</sup> Cf. Isa. 51.9; Ez. 28.9; 32.26; Job 26.13.

<sup>173</sup> Gen. 49.15; Isa. 46.7; Ps. 144.14; Ecc.12.5.

<sup>174</sup> Isa. 46.4.

<sup>175</sup> Kellermann has argued that “the death of the Servant results in atonement” like a guilt offering (D. Kellermann, ‘אָשָׁם’, in *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, vol. 1, rev. edn., ed. by G. J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren, trans. by J. T. Willis (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), pp. 429-437 (p. 435)) and Knierim argues that the use of the word in 53.10 refers to retribution (R. Knierim, ‘אָשָׁם’, in *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament*, ed. by E. Jenni and C. Westermann, trans. by M. E. Biddle (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1997), pp. 191-195 (p. 193)). Knierim further suggests that the root אָשָׁם

discussion of empathy between the servant and *us*. The preceding paragraph suggested that *we* attempted to understand the servant empathetically through the use of metaphorical descriptions of the manner in which he suffered. In the first instance, then, it is best to suggest that the description of the servant as אֲשָׁם may be metaphorical. The אֲשָׁם is associated with lambs,<sup>176</sup> goats<sup>177</sup> or rams.<sup>178</sup> In Lev. 5.7 it is specifically associated with הֵשׁ, the very word which is used to describe the servant in 53.7. Whybray and Orlinsky, as mentioned above, objected that Hebrew thought would find the offer of a human being anathema and they offer their arguments against vicarious suffering. If the servant is a human and is a guilt offering which is typically a lamb or ram, then the metaphorical language is conspicuous and is not incommensurable with the comparison of the servant to a lamb or ewe in 53.7. The servant is not *literally* an אֲשָׁם but is associated with it due to the perceived suffering, the possibility of death<sup>179</sup> and the healing. Thus, metaphorical language has been used once again as *we* describe the servant. *We*, who describe ourselves as sheep, describe the servant as an animal who may be sacrificed as אֲשָׁם. Thus, *we* not only indicate that *we* are metaphorically interpreting his fate in terms accessible to *us* but in terms which further suggest the connection between the two personae. This connection, in fact, emphasises the possibility of empathy: *we* are one with the entity who is the אֲשָׁם.

If, then, *we* compare the servant to אֲשָׁם and he brings healing to *us*, this association might shed some light on the possibility that *we* suffered. In Lev. 14, for example, the person who has suffered a skin disease offers אֲשָׁם, and thus it might be suggested that *we* suffered. Indeed, Averbek has recently drawn a parallel between Isa. 53 and Lev.14. He argues that the אֲשָׁם of Lev. 14 reconsecrates the leper. In his opinion, Isa. 53 “speaks from the perspective of the entire nation being in Babylonian captivity” and, with reference to the leper of Lev. 14, he wonders whether the term אֲשָׁם

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“relates to a common foundation assumed in all aspects from judgment of guilt to resolution of guilt” and the nominal forms “signify guilt-obligatedness” (author’s italics).

<sup>176</sup> כֶּשֶׁב (ה) (Lev. 5.6; 14.12, 13, 21, 24, 25; Nu. 6.12)

<sup>177</sup> שְׁעִירַת עִזִּים (Lev. 5.6)

<sup>178</sup> אֵיל (Lev. 5.15, 16, 18, 25; 19.21, 22; Nu. 5.8)

<sup>179</sup> The death of the servant was discussed in the previous chapter: cf. Secs. 2.3.11; 2.3.12; and 2.3.14.

is used here because “the holy nation had been expelled (i.e., desecrated) from the land”. The “expiatory sacrifice of the Suffering Servant” restored the people “to the land and to their God”, and the references to disease and illness in Isa. 53 suggest “a connection between the Suffering Servant and the dreaded disease(s) that could cause a person’s expulsion from the community of faith”.<sup>180</sup> Thus, one might suggest that just as the leper suffers and offers אָשָׁם, *we* suffer and offer אָשָׁם. A few points, however, could be made. The poem itself does not explicitly describe *our* physical suffering, though *we* suffered from blindness; it does not explicitly state that *we* offered the אָשָׁם, though *we* may have been proximate contributors to his suffering; and Averbeck places Isa. 53 within a proposed historical setting in order to make his point. In light of these observations, it seems that it would not be entirely justifiable to suggest that *we* suffered because the servant is אָשָׁם.<sup>181</sup>

It may be proposed, then, that *we* empathised with the experience of the servant after the recognition of his actual identity. The poem does not explicitly state that *we* suffered as the servant suffered, but the depiction indicates that *we* understood the sufferings of the servant and therefore described them in imagistic and metaphorical language which conveys vividly that which the servant felt.

In sum, empathy exists within the relationship between the servant and *us*. A combination of factors which in isolation might not indicate empathy describe an empathy for *us* in *our* situation by the servant. The poem further describes *our* empathy with the suffering of the servant after *our* recognition of his true status.

### 3.5.4 The Servant/*They* Relationship

Clines collects the plural entities of 52.14, 15; 53.11, 12 under the rubric of *they*. In 52.14-15 the servant “is an object to them”<sup>182</sup> but in 53.11f. “they are involved with him”.<sup>183</sup> Thus,

<sup>180</sup> R. E. Averbeck, ‘אָשָׁם’, in *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, vol. 1, ed. by W. A. VanGemeren (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1996), pp. 557-566 (pp. 563-564).

<sup>181</sup> For another recent discussion of the אָשָׁם in Isa. 53 which includes a comparison with Lev. 14, cf. H. Henning-Hess, ‘Bemerkungen zum ASCHAM-Begriff in Jes 53, 10’, *ZAW* 109 (1997), pp. 618-626.

<sup>182</sup> *They* merely look at the servant, shut *their* mouths in astonishment at him and ponder what *they* have



the duality is resolved through the harmonisation of its two poles: their objectified contemplation of him (52.14f.) is not negated by their involvement with him, but caught up in it.<sup>184</sup>

In the first instance, *their* involvement with the servant after recognition is certainly not incommensurate with a relationship marked by empathy. This possibility will be discussed presently. However, one cannot but wonder whether *their* contemplation of him in 52.14-15 is 'objectified'. *Their* appalled reaction to his disfigurement, which takes place before *their* recognition, and *their* startled response to the news that this entity is in fact the servant of Yahweh, which takes place after recognition, do not appear to be 'objectified'. *They* may indeed look upon the servant as an object, but the nature of the response indicates that *theirs* is not a cool, removed and objective view. It is one which participates in the disfigurement of the servant through disgust and thus the surprise that he is Yahweh's servant cannot but manifest itself by being startled or placing the hand to the mouth. It seems that, in fact, *they* have been involved with him, albeit on different levels, from the start of the interaction and this involvement cannot be described as 'objective'. The presumed duality is not unequivocal.

A brief mention of the shared vocabulary and the verbs of which *they* are a subject once again provides a starting point in an effort to expand the discussion of Clines and examine the relationship for hints of empathy. As mentioned above, the servant only shares the verb *ראה* with *them*. *They* see that this entity is in fact the servant of Yahweh (52.15c), a recognition presumably resulting from Yahweh's announcement in 52.13. The servant sees seed in 53.10c, a reference which occurs within the section spoken by *us*, and in 53.11a he sees from his toil, a reference found in the *they* section. Both the servant and *they* therefore achieve the same level of recognition by the end of the poem, sharing the ability to 'see'. Within the context of the poem, it would be difficult to suggest an empathy for the servant from *them* prior to recognition, when the servant was essentially isolated from *them*. After recognition, it

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heard about him.

<sup>183</sup> The servant joins *their* ranks and shares booty with *them*, he is proved innocent in *their* sight and he bears *their* guilt by suffering intervention for *them*.

<sup>184</sup> Clines, p. 38.

might be possible to suggest that *they* empathised with the servant's previous suffering in much the same manner as *we* empathised with him. However, this empathy can only remain speculative: unlike *us* there are not the same indications of possible suffering and healing that might be associated with blindness. *They* similarly do not share in the same nature as the servant nor is there any indication that the servant was amongst *them* for a lengthy span of time. In the first instance, then, any suggestion of empathy arising from shared seeing is hasty.

The verbs of which the two personae are subject contribute further to an understanding of the relationship. *Their* actions are centred on the servant in a manner similar to that of Yahweh or *us*, but this focus is not so clearly conveyed rhetorically. The first two verbs of which they are a subject, שָׁמְמוּ (52.14a) and יִקְפְּצוּ (52.15b), occur alongside the preposition על in order to emphasise the direction of this action: *they* were appalled and shut *their* mouth because of the servant. In 52.15cd the poem indicates that *they* see that which was not told to them and understand that which *they* did not hear. The context indicates that the identity of the servant is described. *They* had not heard about the servant and only afterwards see and understand him correctly. The servant is therefore presented as an object of *their* seeing and understanding, albeit through inference. The servant is the subject of 9 verbs in the *they* sections, and seven of these verbs have *them* as an object either implicitly or explicitly.<sup>185</sup> One could suggest, then, that *their* action is centred on the servant and a slender majority of the action of the servant within the relevant sections is centred on *them*. The poem, it seems, is concerned with *their* actions as they relate to the servant and certainly the action of the servant on behalf of *them* is not unimportant. The rhetoric implies a mutual focus of one on the other.

A closer look at the relationship suggests that it goes deeper than the ability to see by the end of the poem or the focus of the action of one persona upon another. Some time was spent in the preceding discussion of the servant/*we* relationship on the concept

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<sup>185</sup> He causes the many nations to start (52.15a); he vindicates the many (53.11c); he will bear *their* iniquities (53.11d); he will divide spoil to the strong (53.12b: *they* are obviously the indirect object here but are nevertheless recipients of his action); he poured out his soul to death, presumably for *them* (53.12c); he carried *their* sin (53.12e); and for *them* he will intercede (53.12).

of vicarious suffering, specifically examining the text in order to uncover any hints that *we* suffered. Three lines which echo the language depicting the relationship between the servant and *us* suggest a vicarious suffering within the servant/*they* relationship. These are as follows: וְעוֹנֹתָם הוּא יִסְבֵּל (v.11d); וְהוּא חָטָא רַבִּים נִשְׂאָ (v.12e); וּלְפִשְׁעֵימָם יִפְגִּיעַ (v.12f). At first glance these phrases lack the connotation of physical suffering by the servant so prominent in the servant/*we* relationship and yet intimations of suffering are not entirely absent. The servant bears iniquities, using the root סָבַל found in 53.4, a root which frequently describes a heavy, physical act in the Hebrew Bible.<sup>186</sup> With the object עוֹן it only appears in Lam. 5.7, a verse within a context strongly suggesting that those who bear iniquities suffered. *Their* iniquities may therefore cause the servant physical distress. The collocation of נִשְׂאָ חָטָא occurs only eight other times in the Hebrew Bible<sup>187</sup> and the bearing of sin is associated with suffering in at least four of the occurrences.<sup>188</sup> In addition, the נִשְׂאָ of 53.4 suggests that the servant suffered and the meaning of the verb may be the same here. The hiphil of פָּגַע was discussed previously. That which occurs in 53.6 carries a clear description of physical suffering and some scholars, such as Clines, argued that the intercession in v.12f refers to the servant's suffering itself.<sup>189</sup>

There are indications, then, that the servant suffered in the *they* sections. As mentioned above, the poem does not provide any clear indications of *their* suffering lest it be proposed that *they*, like *us*, suffered from a blindness which prevented *them* from seeing the servant properly. Thus, one might suggest that empathy does not inform this relationship because no shared suffering can be presumed.

A combination of factors might nevertheless suggest empathy. Clines had argued that the servant is involved with *them* after *their* recognition. This involvement might be related to empathy but it cannot be said to indicate empathy in the same

<sup>186</sup> Cf. Gen. 49.15; Isa. 46.7; Ps. 144.14; Ecc. 12.5.

<sup>187</sup> Lev. 19.7; 20.20; 22.9; 24.15; Nu. 9.13; 18.22, 32; Ez. 23.49.

<sup>188</sup> Lev. 20.20 (the couple dies childless); 22.9 (the line of Aaron will bear sin and die if they do not keep Yahweh's charge); Nu. 18.22 (the people of Israel will bear their sin and die if they come near the tent of meeting); Ez. 23.49 (Oholoh and Oholibah are punished).

<sup>189</sup> Clines, p. 42.

manner that was implied within the servant/*we* relationship: it is not based in the same nature or the extended span of time. One might further argue that the servant displayed a sympathy when he poured out his soul for *them*. Such a sympathy could, as discussed earlier, be based in empathy. The action of the servant for *them*, bearing *their* iniquities, sin and transgressions and interceding in a manner which may connote physical suffering, might similarly suggest a sympathy based in empathy. The vindication of the many and the division of spoil may further allude to a sympathy based in empathy: the servant assists *them* by vindicating *them* and providing the booty. The close relationship with Yahweh, indicated rhetorically by the description of the servant in 52.13 and the focus of Yahweh's actions on the servant, strongly alludes to the servant's understanding of the process in which he was engaged. The servant may therefore have understood *their* state and his role in altering it to a state in which *they* see. If this be the case, then the poem hints, and it is a hint less distinct than that found in the servant/*we* relationship, that empathy does inform the servant's attitude towards *them*.

### 3.5.5 Miscellaneous Observations on the Personae

Clines concludes his discussion of the personae with some relevant observations. He suggests that the servant stands in the centre of the nexus of relationships: the three in which the servant participates are strong and the others "barely exist". The poem carefully emphasises, however, that every action which Yahweh performs on the servant is somehow related to the other human personae. In 53.12 Yahweh allots the booty to the servant and the servant allots it to the strong. In 53.6 Yahweh lays all of *our* suffering on him and in turn the servant intercedes for *them* in 53.12, using the same root. Yahweh willed to crush the servant in 53.10a, using the root נכד. In 53.5b the pual participle of this root states that the servant was crushed for *our* iniquities and the verse indicates that this crushing was one of a number of sufferings which brought healing to *us* (53.5d). The reference to Yahweh making the servant sick in 53.10a echoes the nouns found in 53.3b and 53.4a. The latter reference makes clear that it is *our* sicknesses that the servant carried and once again it seems that his carrying is related to *our* healing.

The ultimate effect of Yahweh's action on the servant is *our* healing and the ability of *us* and *them* to see. That Yahweh worked through the servant in order to bring about the altered state suggests a desire to heal *us* and allow proper vision. The poem suggests in this desire to heal and provide insight that Yahweh wanted to cure the blindness that affected *us* and *them*. In this alleviation sympathy may exist. Preceding definitions have suggested that sympathy is frequently based in empathy and by extension it could be proposed that Yahweh empathised with the situation in which *we* and *they* existed. However, the rhetorical markers which drew the servant into such close relationships with the other personae are not conspicuous and even the actions of Yahweh which ripple through the servant affect the others only indirectly.

Secondly, Clines notes the difference in the relationships between the singular and the plural personae. Yahweh and the servant are in a strong relationship from the beginning whereas *we* and *they* grow and develop into similarity. That is, the plural personae initially share only a disgust towards the servant but eventually "the identity of the 'we' and the 'they' virtually merges" because the servant has the same essential relationship with both groups. He bears *our* sufferings and pains and *their* guilt and sin. To state that the identities 'merge' seems to be overstating the case because the two groups do not interact in the poem and are distinct by virtue of structure, words expressed (or not expressed) and identity, in which *we* remain anonymous but *they* are associated with nations and kings. Despite the similarity noted by Clines, there can be no proposal that any relationship is depicted between *us* and *them* and no empathy therefore exists.

Thus, it can be noted that Yahweh attempted to alleviate *our* and *their* blindness, or at least alter for the better the state in which these two personae found themselves, but it would be irresponsible to suggest that empathy was necessarily present. While the servant may have a similar relationship to *we* and *they*, there is no suggestion of empathy between the two characters.

### 3.6 Conclusions

It has been argued that rhetorical criticism as often defined by scholars is compatible with Clines' discussion and may complement some of the observations made by Clines. A study of the rhetorical structure of the poem suggested that it may focus on *our* confession and thus the poem may possess two centres: the servant and this confession. It was also noted that an identification based on a lack of specificity could apply to the other human personae in the poem. Clines' proposals concerning the effect of the servant on the reader does not necessarily reflect the nature of the servant described in the poem nor his conception of the passive servant. As a result, empathy for personae within the poem was examined. It was suggested that the poem consciously attempts to evoke an empathy for the servant and *us* through a number of techniques but an empathy for Yahweh and *them* does not seem to be sought. In light of this discussion, the importance of the relationship between form and content and the remarks of other scholars, it was decided that the focus of the present study could be legitimately altered. Instead of studying the poem according to Clines' themes, all of which are concerned with the relationship between personae, the poem was studied in an attempt to uncover any suggestions of empathy amongst the personae. A combination of factors suggested an empathy for the servant by Yahweh. The poem similarly indicated an empathy for *us* by the servant and for the servant by *us* after *our* recognition. There were no clear indications that *they* empathised with the servant and although there were hints of empathy for *them*, these hints were far more faint than the other examples forwarded. It was lastly noted that Yahweh may have sympathised with the plight of *us* and *them*, but the rhetoric of the poem prevents any suggestion of empathy.

In the following chapters, then, the other servant songs will be studied using the same basic procedure followed here. Indications of empathy will once again be sought but the process will be reversed. The actual text will be studied first in order to assess the presence of empathy and only afterwards will any proposals be made concerning the evocation of empathy from the reader.

## Chapter 4

### Empathy and Isaiah 42.1-4

#### 4.1 Introduction

In the preceding chapter, Clines' study of Isa. 53 was modified and the concept of empathy as it related to the poem was examined. It was suggested that formal criteria provide the basis for the reader's empathy for the servant and *us*. It was also noted that formal criteria draw some of the major personae closely together in a manner that suggests relationships marked by empathy. In this chapter, a similar procedure will be followed in a study of Isa. 42.1-4. Its rhetorical structure will be presented first in order to garner any clues concerning the meaning and purpose of the poem. Then, each of the possible relationships within the poem will be studied and rhetorical clues indicating empathy will be sought. This discussion will precede any observations concerning the possible elicitation of empathy from the reader for personae in the text.

#### 4.2 Translation and Notes

##### 4.2.1 Text and Translation

MT	Verse	Translation
<p>הֲנֵן עֲבָדִי אֶתְמַדְּבוּ  בְּחִירִי רָצִיתָ נַפְשִׁי  נָתַתִּי רוּחִי עָלָיו  מִשְׁפָּט לְגוֹיִם יוֹצִיא:</p>	42.1	<p>Behold my servant, I will uphold him!  My chosen, I delight (in him)!  I put my spirit upon him,  Justice to the nations he will bring forth.</p>
<p>לֹא יִצְעַק וְלֹא יִשָּׂא  וְלֹא-יִשְׁמִיעַ בְּחוּץ קוֹלוֹ:</p>	42.2	<p>He will not cry out and he will not raise up (his voice),  And he will not make his voice heard in the street.</p>
<p>קִנְיָה רְצוּץ לֹא יִשְׁבֹּר  וּפִשְׁתָּה כְּהָה לֹא יִכְבֶּנֶה  לְאִמַּת יוֹצִיא מִשְׁפָּט:</p>	42.3	<p>A crushed reed he will not break,  And a dim wick--he will not quench (it);  In truth he will bring forth justice.</p>
<p>לֹא יִכְהֶה וְלֹא יִרְוץ  עַד-יִשִּׂים בְּאָרֶץ מִשְׁפָּט  וּלְתוֹרָתוֹ אֵימִם יִחִילוּ פ:</p>	42.4	<p>He will not grow dim and he will not be crushed  Until he sets justice on the earth,</p>

	And for his teaching the coastlands await.
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## 4.2.2 Notes on the Translation

### 4.2.2.1 Isa. 42.1

Elliger presents arguments for the distinction between 42.1-4 and its immediate context: 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> has a petucha before and after the section; the Leningrad Codex has an entire line free after v.4; and he thinks that its form and content distinguishes it from 41.21-29 and 42.5ff.<sup>1</sup> The LXX begins with *Ἰακωβ ὁ παῖς μου... Ἰσραηλ ὁ ἐκλεκτός μου*, providing an identity for the servant. Tidwell suggests that the references to Jacob and Israel may have been original.<sup>2</sup> Muilenburg thinks the interpretation of the servant as Israel is derived from 41.8.<sup>3</sup> North notes that the sense of *חַמַּט* is to grasp by or with the hand.<sup>4</sup> Though the form is *yiqtol*, it is possible to translate it in the English present,<sup>5</sup> and indeed several scholars prefer this rendering.<sup>6</sup> The future is chosen here in order to provide a balance with the final *yiqtol* of v.1d, but with due recognition that the present is possible. For *חַמַּט* LXX reads *ἔδωκα*,<sup>7</sup> an aorist. Gibson argues that the *חַמַּט* is one of a number of *qatals* used within the present time frame which “describe the formal execution or performance” of an action: “the speaker is in effect viewed as in the state of doing the action”. He translates ‘I (will) put my spirit upon him’.<sup>8</sup> Whybray, by contrast,

<sup>1</sup> K. Elliger, *Deuterocesaja* (BKAT XI/I; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1978), p. 199 [Henceforth: Elliger].

<sup>2</sup> Arguing from metre, he rearranges the text and suggests the possibility of a scribal error (N. L. Tidwell, ‘My Servant Jacob, Is. XLII 1: A Suggestion’, in *Studies on Prophecy*, (VTSup. 26; Leiden: Brill, 1974), pp. 84-89.

<sup>3</sup> J. Muilenburg, ‘Isaiah: Chapters 40-66’ in *The Interpreter’s Bible*, vol. 5, ed. by G.A. Buttrick (New York: Abingdon Press, 1956), pp. 381-773 (p. 464) [Henceforth: Muilenburg, Isaiah 40-66].

<sup>4</sup> C. R. North, *The Second Isaiah* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), p. 107 [Henceforth: North, *Second Isaiah*]. Muilenburg offers similar observations (cf. p. 464)

<sup>5</sup> Cf. J. C. L. Gibson, *Davidson’s Introductory Hebrew Grammar: Syntax*, 4th edn. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994), §63b, pp. 74-76 [Henceforth: Gibson].

<sup>6</sup> Cf. J. D. W. Watts, *Isaiah 34-66* (WBC 25; Waco: Word, 1987), p. 111 [Henceforth: Watts]; J. L. McKenzie, *Second Isaiah* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1968), p. 36 [Henceforth: McKenzie]; North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 107; J. N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 40-66* (NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), p. 107 [Henceforth: Oswalt].

<sup>7</sup> ‘I put’.

<sup>8</sup> Gibson, §57b, p. 61.



translates ‘I have put’.<sup>9</sup> For 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> reads **ומשפטי** according to Burrows<sup>10</sup> but Goshen-Gottstein reads **ומשפטו**.<sup>11</sup> Targum reads **דיני**.<sup>12</sup> This word will be discussed in some detail below. North argues that **יציא** must have the sense of ‘speak, impart, reveal’ because it does not have a material object as its accusative object.<sup>13</sup>

#### 4.2.2.2 Isa. 42.2

For **יצעק** 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> reads **יזעק**.<sup>14</sup> The verbs in this verse will be discussed in some detail below.<sup>15</sup>

#### 4.2.2.3 Isa. 42.3

For **לא יכבנה** LXX reads **λίνον καπνιζόμενον οὐ σβέσει**,<sup>16</sup> lacking the pronominal suffix of the MT **יכבנה**, as does Syriac,<sup>17</sup> Targum,<sup>18</sup> Vulgate<sup>19</sup> and 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>, which reads **יכבה**. Elliger thinks that 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>, without the suffix, is probably original.<sup>20</sup> It was noted in chapter two that the MT of Isaiah is a comparatively reliable text whilst other witnesses often contain interpretations,<sup>21</sup> and the MT would be followed insofar as sense could be made of it. In this case, however, the textual

<sup>9</sup> R. N. Whybray, *Isaiah 40-66* (NCB; London: Oliphants, 1975), p. 72 [Henceforth: Whybray, *Isaiah 40-66*].

<sup>10</sup> M. Burrows, ed., *The Dead Sea Scrolls of St. Mark's Monastery*, vol. 1 (New Haven: American Schools of Oriental Research, 1950), pl. XXXV.

<sup>11</sup> M. H. Goshen-Gottstein, ed., *The Hebrew University Bible: The Book of Isaiah*, vol. 2 (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1981).

<sup>12</sup> ‘my judgment’

<sup>13</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 107. Whybray concurs, suggesting that it means ‘publish, proclaim’ (Whybray, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 72).

<sup>14</sup> ‘call’. Watts argues that there is no essential change in meaning (Watts, p. 113).

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Sec. 4.4.2.2.

<sup>16</sup> ‘a smoking wick he will not quench’

<sup>17</sup> **לֹא יִכְבֵּן לֵךְ נֹרָא** (a flickering lamp he will not quench).

<sup>18</sup> **לֹא יִטְפִי** (he will not extinguish).

<sup>19</sup> *linum fumigans non extinguet* (a smoking lamp-wick he will not extinguish).

<sup>20</sup> Elliger, p. 198. Indeed, in a recent discussion of the close relationship between the structure of major sections in 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> and the MT, Steck has argued that the time difference between the final formation of Isaiah and 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> is not great (O. H. Steck, ‘Bemerkungen zur Abschnittgliederung der ersten Jesajarolle von qumran (1QIsa<sup>a</sup>) im Vergleich mit redaktionsgeschichtlichen Beobachtungen im Jesajabuch’, in *Antikes Judentum und Frühes Christentum: FS für H. Stegemann*, ed. by B. Kollmann, W. Reinbold and A. Steudel (BZ NW 97; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1999), pp. 12-28 (p. 15)).

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Chapter 2, Sec. 2.1.

witnesses will be followed: the MT does not necessarily contain the best reading in all instances;<sup>22</sup> the weight of other witnesses is impressive; and the parallelism of the two cola is more balanced without the pronominal suffix. Though the lack of the pronominal suffix might allow the colon to be translated as a description of the servant ('a dim wick, he will not be quenched'), it should be noted that the wider use of the verb כבה in the MT indicates that the colon should not be translated in this manner. Of the nine other appearances of כבה in the piel, all contain either an explicit or implicit direct object different to the subject of the verb.<sup>23</sup> Moreover, the verb parallel to כבה, שבר, almost without exception<sup>24</sup> contains a direct object different to the subject when it appears in the qal. The servant therefore will not quench a dim wick. For לאמת, Syriac reads ܠܗܘܘܬܐ;<sup>25</sup> and Vulgate reads *in veritate*.<sup>26</sup> Watts translates 'yet truly'<sup>27</sup> and North argues that it literally means 'according to faithfulness'.<sup>28</sup> Beuken thinks the objective of the servant's action is indicated and notes the possibility of 'unto faithfulness' or 'so faithfulness comes to light'.<sup>29</sup> The Targum makes clear that the servant is working with the humble and the poor, reading ענותניא דכקני רעיע...והשיכיא דכבוצין עמי.<sup>30</sup>

#### 4.2.2.4 Isa. 42.4

The LXX reads ἀναλάμψει καὶ οὐ θραυσθήσεται for the first colon.<sup>31</sup> It thus omits the first adverb of negation and for ירִיף it reads θραυσθήσεται. For

<sup>22</sup> Tov, for example, argues that the readings of the MT are on the whole "preferable to those found in other texts, but this statistical information should not influence decisions in individual instances, because exceptions to this situation are not predictable" (E. Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), p. 299).

<sup>23</sup> Cf. 2Sam. 14.7; 21.17; Cant. 8.7; Ez. 32.7; 2Chr. 29.7 for explicit direct objects different to the verb. In Isa. 1.31; Jer. 4.4; 21.12 and Am. 5.6 the direct object is implicit, with the context suggesting that 'nobody', the subject, can quench a fire, the implicit direct object.

<sup>24</sup> Of the 53 appearances in the qal, Lev. 22.22 might be an exception but it is a passive participle.

<sup>25</sup> 'in truth/truly'.

<sup>26</sup> 'in truth'.

<sup>27</sup> Watts, p. 111.

<sup>28</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 106.

<sup>29</sup> W. A. M. Beuken, 'Mišpāt: The First Servant Song and Its Context', *VT* 22 (1972), pp. 1-30 (p. 25) [Henceforth: Beuken].

<sup>30</sup> 'the humble who are like a broken reed...and the poor who are like a dim lamp...'

<sup>31</sup> 'he will flame up and he will not be shattered'.

רצץ, Syriac reads ܪܨܥܘܿܬܐ,<sup>32</sup> and Targum reads ילאי.<sup>33</sup> North thinks that the qal of רצץ could be translated ‘get broken’.<sup>34</sup> Oswald agrees. Citing GKC 67q, he thinks the form found in the MT is a possible by form of an imperfect double ayin root and thus no emendation is necessary.<sup>35</sup> Duhm takes ירוץ<sup>36</sup> as do Korpel and de Moor.<sup>37</sup> The root רצץ is assumed here due to the comparison between the servant and the wick provided by the root כהה, and following Duhm and Korpel and de Moor, the emendation is accepted. For יכהה Syriac reads ܝܚܗܘܿܬܐ.<sup>38</sup> For ולתורתו 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> reads ולתורתיו and for ייחילו it reads ינחילו, ‘bequeath, apportion’.

### 4.3 The Rhetorical Structure of Isa. 42.1-4

A cursory examination of Isa. 42.1-4 indicates a regularity in its structure. It contains 12 cola within 6 bicola, not all of which are necessarily parallel. Within this regularity repetitions are prominent. In the first verse, four first person pronominal suffixes<sup>39</sup> and two first person verbs<sup>40</sup> refer to Yahweh. As a result the ‘I’ of Yahweh, who utters this poem, is presented and reiterated in the first three cola with no more self-references in the remainder of the poem. The noun מושפט is found in vv.1d, 3c and 4b. It centres the thought of the poem, according to Muilenburg,<sup>41</sup> and it is crucial to an understanding of the poem, as the subsequent discussion will show. The negating adverb לא is found seven times within the 43 words of the poem and one could therefore suppose that these negations are important to the poem. Its role in the description of the

<sup>32</sup> ‘will (not) flicker’. Watts translates ‘he is extinguished’.

<sup>33</sup> ‘will not labour’. Chilton translates ‘be weary’ (B. D. Chilton, *The Isaiah Targum* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1987), p. 81) and Stenning ‘he shall not weary’ (J. F. Stenning, *The Targum of Isaiah* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1949), p. 140).

<sup>34</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 106.

<sup>35</sup> Oswald, p. 107, n. 3.

<sup>36</sup> B. Duhm, *Das Buch Jesaia*, 5th edn. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1968), p. 313 [Henceforth: Duhm].

<sup>37</sup> M. C. A. Korpel and J. de Moor, *The Structure of Classical Hebrew Poetry: Isaiah 40-55* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), p. 119 [Henceforth: Korpel and de Moor, *Isaiah 40-55*].

<sup>38</sup> ‘will (not) be quenched’.

<sup>39</sup> רוחי; נפשי; בחירי; עבדי.

<sup>40</sup> נתתי; אתמך.

<sup>41</sup> Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 463.

action of the servant will be mentioned later. Lastly, the roots רָצַץ and כָּהֵה appear twice, drawing an implicit comparison between the servant and those with whom he works. Once again, this repetition will be discussed in more detail later. This collection of repetitions points to themes and concepts vital to an understanding of the poem.

Scholars have provided alternative interpretations of the poem's structure. Muilenburg argues that the poem itself is in fact one strophe, the final one in a longer poem which begins in Isa. 41.1.<sup>42</sup> He nevertheless divides Isa. 42.1-4 into v.1, vv.2-3 and v.4 for the sake of his discussion.<sup>43</sup> Though Clifford interprets the text from a rhetorical perspective, his study focusses not on 42.1-4 as a poem but the larger poem 41.1-42.9.<sup>44</sup> Gitay interprets 42.1-13 as one passage within which 42.1-4 serves as the thesis of the unit. Within vv.1-4, he focusses on the intimacy of the presentation of the servant, the seven-fold repetition of לָא, the repetition of מִשְׁפָּט and the chiasm found in vv. 3-4 resulting from the repetition of the roots רָצַץ and כָּהֵה. He does not provide any further insight into the division of 42.1-4.<sup>45</sup> Beuken argues that the structure is quite clear and notes seven actions or descriptions which apparently provide the skeleton of this structure: these are found in vv.1a; 1b'; 1b"; 2-3a; 3b; 4a'; 4a"-b.<sup>46</sup> Within a discussion of 42.1-9, Bailey proposes an ABCBA structure following this division: v.1; v.2; v.3; v.4a; v.4bc.<sup>47</sup> It thus centres on the parable of the reed and wick and he argues that "justice is defined by parables".<sup>48</sup> Jeremias focusses his discussion of Isa. 42.1-4 on

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<sup>42</sup> Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, pp. 447, 463.

<sup>43</sup> Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, pp. 463-467.

<sup>44</sup> R. J. Clifford, *Fair Spoken and Persuading: An Interpretation of Second Isaiah* (New York: Paulist Press, 1984), pp. 84-93 [Henceforth: Clifford].

<sup>45</sup> Y. Gitay, *Prophecy and Persuasion: A Study of Isaiah 40-48* (FThL 14; Bonn: Linguistica Biblica, 1981), pp. 121-131 [Henceforth: Gitay].

<sup>46</sup> Beuken, p. 3. The actions and descriptions are as follows: Yahweh designates his servant; Yahweh equips his servant; the mission of the servant (מִשְׁפָּט); the behaviour of the servant (no shouting/violence against the oppressed); the mission (מִשְׁפָּט); his destiny (oppression); his mission (מִשְׁפָּט).

<sup>47</sup> K. E. Bailey, "Inverted Parallelisms" and "Encased Parables" in Isaiah and their Significance for OT and NT Translation and Interpretation' in *Literary Structure and Rhetorical Strategies in the Hebrew Bible*, ed. by L. J. de Regt, J. de Waard and J. P. Fokkerman (Assen: van Gorcum & Co., 1996), pp. 14-30 (p. 25) [Henceforth: Bailey] The 'A' sections are connected by references to justice and nations/land and the 'B' sections by 'not crying out'/not failing.

<sup>48</sup> Bailey, p. 26.

the word **משפט** and suggests that the word divides the poem strophically.<sup>49</sup> His article therefore analyses **משפט** within v.1, vv. 2-3 and v.4. Korpel and de Moor also divide into three strophes, vv.1, 2-3 and 4. They take vv. 2 and 3 together because each colon contains **לא** and describes the humble behaviour of the servant.<sup>50</sup> Elliger divides the poem into vv. 1, 2-3ab and 3c (from **לאמת**)-4.<sup>51</sup> Hermisson agrees with Elliger.<sup>52</sup> Apart from Beuken and Bailey, most scholars divide the poem into three strophes but disagreement centres on v.3c. Muilenburg, Jeremias and Korpel and de Moor include it with the remainder of v.3 while Elliger and Hermisson prefer to take it with v.4.

The divisions provided by Elliger and Hermisson reflect the regularity of the poem and the prevalence of parallelism. Each strophe contains two bicola. However, Jeremias may validly claim that the important word **משפט** should not be unequally distributed within the strophes but should occur once in each strophe. From a rhetorical point of view, the proposal of Jeremias and Korpel and de Moor would have some advantages: the first and second strophes would end with the combination of **משפט** and **יוציא**, thus carrying the poem's progression through to the assurance of the final strophe; neither v.1d nor v.3c contain close parallelism to the preceding cola, and as a result the first two strophes would end with a colon whose irregularity draws attention to it; and the second and third strophes would begin with a description of the negated action of the servant. Over and against these observations, the divisions offered by Elliger and Hermisson have some strengths. Their analysis provides a strophic structure in which each strophe is composed of two bicola. The middle strophe contains two parallel bicola surrounded by two strophes with one parallel bicolon and one bicolon lacking the same semantic or syntactic parallelism. The middle strophe lacks the word **משפט** and as a result the manner in which the servant carries out his task becomes the primary focus of this strophe. Lastly, the final strophe begins with two cola which quite conspicuously

<sup>49</sup> J. Jeremias, 'משפט im ersten Gottesknechtslied (Jes XLII 1-4)', *VT* 22 (1972), pp. 31-42 (p. 33) [Henceforth: Jeremias].

<sup>50</sup> They make no mention of the lack of the **לא** in v.3c (Korpel and de Moor, *Isaiah 40-55*, pp. 146-147).

<sup>51</sup> Elliger, p. 199.

<sup>52</sup> H.-J. Hermisson, 'Der Lohn des Knechts', in *Die Botschaft und die Boten: Festschrift für Hans Walter Wolff zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. by J. Jeremias and L. Perlitt (Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1981), pp.

refer to the first and second strophes: v. 3c repeats the **משפט** and the **יציא** of v.1d and v.4a repeats the roots **רצן** and **כהה** from v.3ab. Indeed, in vv.3ab and 4a the order of the repeated words or roots is reversed and thus the connection seems conscious.

In the discussion of Isa. 53, the central strophe and the central cola appeared to be of some importance in the meaning of the poem and one might similarly note that the central cola of Isa. 42.1-4 are vv.2b and 3a. These cola are not parallel but appear within the two bicola describing the manner by which the servant will carry out his task. That the middle strophe contains the central cola is not surprising but that this middle strophe similarly lacks the rather important word **משפט** is of some interest. The possible ramifications of this point will be drawn out below, but in the meantime one observation might be made. Isa. 53 centred in one respect on the servant but ‘turned’, as it were, on *our* confession; Isa. 42.1-4 seems to centre on **משפט** but turns on the depicted action of the servant.

Any rhetorical structure can only be tentatively chosen and in this instance v.3c will be taken with v.4 because it preserves the apparent symmetry of cola and vv.3c and 4a echo consciously the preceding strophes.

#### **4.4 Empathy within Isa. 42.1-4**

##### **4.4.1 The Yahweh/Servant Relationship**

The discussion of the servant/Yahweh relationship in Isa. 53 centred primarily around the verbs shared by the two personae and the action of Yahweh on the servant. Here, the two do not share verbs but the action of Yahweh on the servant is nevertheless quite clear. Two of the three verbs of which Yahweh is a subject are combined with a preposition defining the direction of the action. In v.1a, the **בו** emphasises the grasping or upholding of the servant and in v.1c the **עליו** similarly depicts the placement of the spirit of Yahweh on the servant. Yahweh, or his ‘soul’, also accepts or takes delight in the servant, called ‘my chosen’. The direction is not conveyed in such clear rhetorical

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269-287 (p. 280) [Henceforth: Hermisson, Lohn].

terms but it does involve the servant. Thus, Yahweh's actions are associated exclusively with the servant.

Six of the first 13 words of the poem contain an 'I' reference to Yahweh.<sup>53</sup> He initiates the action in the poem and describes the events. On one level, the 'I' references focus on the action of Yahweh, who presents himself as the one who grasps, delights and gives. On another level, four of these I's references occur as pronominal suffixes emphasising the connection between the servant and Yahweh. The servant is 'my servant', 'my chosen', in whom 'my soul' delights and Yahweh has placed 'my spirit' upon him.<sup>54</sup> The poem therefore highlights from the start that the servant is not necessarily his own entity but exists in relationship to Yahweh. The following verses then focus on the interaction of the servant with other entities in the poem, interactions described by Yahweh. Thus, the servant in this poem not only exists firstly in relationship to Yahweh but is only seen through the description given by Yahweh.

A combination of intimacy and assurance mark this relationship. A number of scholars have argued that the relationship so vividly depicted with I's references can be characterised as one of intimacy, as mentioned in the previous chapter.<sup>55</sup> Muilenburg argues that the use of 'my' in 'my servant' depicts an intimate association like that found in Isa. 41.8-9 and that the verb רצה similarly connotes intimacy.<sup>56</sup> Hanson<sup>57</sup> and Gitay<sup>58</sup> too have suggested that Yahweh presents the servant in intimate terms. Volz has noted that Yahweh has personally stepped in and chosen the servant,<sup>59</sup> thereby contributing the sense of the personal to the intimate. These suggestions could be strengthened by two other factors relevant to this relationship. In the following discussion it will be proposed

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<sup>53</sup> עבדי, אתמך, בחירי, נפשי, נתתי, רוחי.

<sup>54</sup> These words, in conjunction with the task of taking משפט to the nations, has provided the material for the debate on the identity of the servant. It is not the purpose of the present discussion to pursue this debate. For a summary of the possibilities cf. Melugin (R. F. Melugin, *The Formation of Isaiah 40-55* (BZAW 141; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1976), pp. 64-67 [Henceforth: Melugin, *Formation*]) and North (C. R. North, *The Suffering Servant in Deutero-Isaiah*, 2nd edn. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1956), pp. 139-142 [Henceforth: North, *Suffering Servant<sup>2</sup>*]).

<sup>55</sup> Cf. Chapter 3, Sec. 3.5.2.

<sup>56</sup> Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 464.

<sup>57</sup> P. D. Hanson, *Isaiah 40-66* (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1995), p. 44 [Henceforth: Hanson].

<sup>58</sup> Gitay, pp. 126, 130.

<sup>59</sup> P. Volz, *Jesaia II* (KAT 9; Leipzig: A Deichertsche, 1932), p. 152. Attention to this quote was first directed by the comments of North (*Second Isaiah*, p. 107).

that the servant experiences some suffering as he carries out his task, evoked by v.4a and possibly connoted in v.2. Yahweh promises in v.1a that he will ‘grasp’ or ‘uphold’ the servant. He similarly assures the servant that he will not grow dim or be crushed until he has put justice in the earth and states that the coastlands await the teaching of the servant. The promise of assistance and the description of presumed success indicates an ongoing interest in the affairs of the servant by Yahweh. These assurances may reflect a participation in the events with the servant.

Once again, it would be difficult to point out any clear indication of an empathy for the servant from Yahweh but a combination of characteristics intimates empathy. The action of Yahweh is focussed on the servant; the servant exists in relationship to Yahweh, presented and prepared by him; an intimacy and/or a personal touch inform the presentation; and indications of assurance and ongoing assistance suggest continuing participation. Through its repetitions, its tone and the actions described within it, the poem conveys a sense that Yahweh participates with the servant in his action and may well empathise with him in the task at hand and the possible concomitant suffering.

#### **4.4.2 The Servant and Others**

##### **4.4.2.1 Introduction**

In his study of Isa. 53, Clines collected under the heading *they* the variety of plural references found in 52.13-15 and 53.11-12. If his approach is applied loosely to Isa. 42.1-4, then a decision must be made concerning the references to the reed and wick. If the reed and wick refer to a specific entity distinct from the nations or coastlands then two relationships require study; otherwise, only the servant/nations need to be considered with the reed and wick acting as an image describing the manner of the action of the servant.

Scholarly opinion concerning the reed and wick vary from those interpretations that favour a concrete reference to those who prefer a more general reference. Begrich argues that the breaking of the reed and the extinguishing of the lamp reflects a judicial custom signifying judgment on the condemned. The servant does not proceed in this



manner because the condition of the condemned is difficult enough already.<sup>60</sup> Koenig offers some comments on Begrich's proposals, suggesting that he has not proven the historical reality of the rite, before suggesting that the reed and lamp represent the tools of the servant-scribe.<sup>61</sup> Elliger argues that the reed and wick refer to the people in exile to whom the servant will show that Yahweh's salvation reaches to the ends of the earth.<sup>62</sup> Jeremias argues that v.3 refers to the pardon of Israel and the assurance that it will not be abandoned.<sup>63</sup> McKenzie thinks that the images describe the poor and helpless,<sup>64</sup> an idea favoured by Eaton, who additionally posits that the reed and wick may have referred especially to the sufferings of the exile.<sup>65</sup> Melugin notes that קנה רצון is associated with Egypt in Isa. 36.6//2Kgs.18.21 and Ez. 29.6. Because פשתה כבו similarly refers to Egypt in Isa. 43.17, Melugin concludes that 42.3 draws on traditional language about security: the servant does not rely on the crushed reed and break it nor depend on and then extinguish a dimly burning wick.<sup>66</sup> Mettinger too argues that the reed and wick are metaphors for Egypt and thus the servant Israel should not rely on it and crush it.<sup>67</sup> Kim has recently argued that the terms refer to the weakened and shattered Judaeans on an explicit level and the foreign forces of Egypt and Babylon on an implied level.<sup>68</sup> Hanson, Bailey and Beuken prefer to avoid concrete referents. Hanson suggests that the description contrasts the manner of conflict and raw force with "embodied compassion".<sup>69</sup> As mentioned above, Bailey argues that the parable of the reed and wick defines מושפט, "compassion for the weak and the bruised". The balance of external bruising and internal lack describes the human predicament.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>60</sup> J. Begrich, *Studien zu Deuterocesaja*, 2nd edn., ed. by W. Zimmerli (München: Chr. Kaiser, 1969), pp. 137; 163-165.

<sup>61</sup> J. Koenig, 'L'allusion inexplicquée au roseau et à la mèche (Isaïe XLII 3)', *VT* 18 (1968), pp. 159-172.

<sup>62</sup> Elliger, p. 214.

<sup>63</sup> Jeremias, p. 37.

<sup>64</sup> McKenzie, p. 38. Note the rendering of the Targum, mentioned in Sec. 4.2.2.3.

<sup>65</sup> J. H. Eaton, *Festal Drama in Deutero-Isaiah* (London: SPCK, 1979), p. 49.

<sup>66</sup> Melugin, *Formation*, p. 99.

<sup>67</sup> T. N. D. Mettinger, *A Farewell to the Servant Songs: A Critical Examination of an Exegetical Axiom* (Lund: CWK Gleerup, 1983), p. 31.

<sup>68</sup> H. C. P. Kim, 'An Intertextual Reading of "A Crushed Reed" and "A Dim Wick" in Isaiah 42.3', *JSOT* 83 (1999), pp. 113-124.

<sup>69</sup> Hanson, pp. 45-46.

<sup>70</sup> Bailey, p. 26.

Beuken argues that there is no need trying to identify the reed or the wick because the “main objective of V.3a is not to tell who will profit from his merciful way of acting, but to state this aspect of the Servant’s behaviour”.<sup>71</sup>

Perhaps it might be best to study some of the language more carefully in order to arrive at a defensible position. The language used to describe the reed and wick may be helpful. The qal passive participle of רָצַץ is found six times in the Hebrew Bible, referring to the crushed or oppressed people Israel,<sup>72</sup> the unreliable reed which is Egypt,<sup>73</sup> the reed in Isa. 42.3a, the oppressed of Isa. 58.6 and oppressed Ephraim in Ho. 5.11. References to the nations, Egypt in particular, or Israel are therefore possible. The adjective כָּהֵה refers to the ability of an individual to see,<sup>74</sup> the appearance of leprous spots in Lev.13<sup>75</sup> and the spirit of disheartened mourners in Zion.<sup>76</sup> A dim wick could theoretically refer to an individual’s ability to see, the appearance of the wick to others or the inner state of individuals. While these examples might give an idea of the semantic range of the words, it provides no unequivocal answer to the difficulty of interpreting the images.

This difficulty in identification echoes the discussion of similar difficulties in Isaiah 53 and thus it might be best to follow the lead provided by Clines once again. He interpreted the poem *qua* poem with minimal reference to context. If his approach is applied here, then any suggestion that the reed and wick represent Israel cannot be accepted because there is no specific mention of Israel. Thus, it seems that the description of the reed/wick must be taken either as a general description of the interaction of the servant or a description of his interaction with the nations. In the discussion of the rhetorical structure of the poem, it was suggested that it is composed of three strophes, v. 1, 2-3b and 3c-4. No overt reference to the nations is found in the central strophe. In light of this absence, one might therefore wish to interpret v. 3ab as a general description of the servant’s method of interaction. The entire poem, however,

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<sup>71</sup> Beuken, p. 25.

<sup>72</sup> Dt. 28.33.

<sup>73</sup> 2Kgs. 18.21; Isa. 36.6.

<sup>74</sup> 1Sam.3.2.

<sup>75</sup> Lev. 13.6, 21, 26, 28, 39, 56.

suggests that an applicability to the nations is justifiable. This point can in fact be supported with reference to the central setting of the reed/wick description: the interaction with the nations revolves around and is informed by this illustration. The internal criteria further indicate that the reed/wick interaction is central to a poem whose central theme is the servant's task in taking **משפט** to the nations. Thus, it will be assumed that the interaction of the reed/wick provides a vivid illustration of the interaction of the servant with the nations. However, the very nature of the description of the interaction of the servant with the reed/wick does not mean that it cannot be a general description of the task of the servant. This point will be of some importance when the wider context is considered. The self-imposed limitations, then, ask that the interaction of the servant with the reed/wick be taken as an illustration of the interaction of the servant with the nations.

#### 4.4.2.2 The Servant/Nations Relationship

The rhetorical analysis offered in the second section noted the importance of the repetition of the roots **רצף** and **כהה**. The servant and the reed/wick share the two roots, and the chiasmic arrangement of these roots in 42.3ab-4a certainly suggests a conscious comparison between the two. The two adjectives stemming from these roots have already been discussed and thus the related verbs which describe the servant deserve study. The qal of **כהה** appears six times in five passages in the Hebrew Bible. In those appearances apart from 42.4a, the eyesight of Job and Isaac is described as growing dim;<sup>77</sup> the eyes of Moses did not grow dim as he aged;<sup>78</sup> and Yahweh announces that the right eye of the worthless shepherd will be utterly blinded.<sup>79</sup> It therefore appears that the servant will continue to see, and the examples of Isaac, Moses and Job may connote images of endurance. It was suggested that the MT **ררף** be interpreted as a verb whose root is **רצף** and the emendation to **ררף** was accepted. The

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<sup>76</sup> Isa. 61.3.

<sup>77</sup> Gen. 27.1 (the eyesight of Isaac grows dim with age); Job 17.7 (his eyesight grows dim with grief).

<sup>78</sup> Dt. 34.7.

<sup>79</sup> Zach. 11.17 (2x).

niph'al of רצו refers to the breaking of a wheel<sup>80</sup> and of Egypt<sup>81</sup> and certainly suggests that the entity has been exposed to some sort of violence.

The connotations provided by the repetitions furnish two sets of observations. In the first instance, the poem provides a negative contrast: the crushed reed which is not broken by the servant is entirely different from the servant who will not be crushed and the dim wick which he does not extinguish is distinct from a servant who does not grow dim. To push the figurative language further, it might be suggested that those with whom the servant works may be growing dim in their ability to see or be seen, and they may be despondent. Strictly speaking, the servant himself will not grow dim in his ability to see, as the qal of כהה apparently indicates. By virtue of the comparison, however, one might suggest that the servant will similarly not grow despondent and will continue to be seen. Secondly, it cannot necessarily be assumed that the servant will not experience the same external or internal pressures experienced by the reed or wick simply because the poem states that the servant will not grow dim or be crushed.<sup>82</sup> The parallelism implies that the servant will face these same pressures. Westermann has argued that v.4ab “is the only place in the song which suggests that the Servant’s task is to involve him in grievous suffering”.<sup>83</sup> Beuken refers to a “vague indication of distress” and writes the following:

When the Servant will meet oppressed people, he will not strike the first blow. The Servant himself will not perish under the oppression which he will experience while completing his task.<sup>84</sup>

It can certainly be suggested that Isa. 42.1-4 portrays a servant who suffers as those with whom he works has suffered and the use of repetitions suggests that it is a similar type of suffering. To use Beuken’s terminology, the servant is oppressed as the people are oppressed. It is at the very least a oneness with those with whom he works.

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<sup>80</sup> Eccl. 12.6.

<sup>81</sup> Ez. 29.7.

<sup>82</sup> Bailey (p. 26) and Elliger (p. 213) have suggested the same.

<sup>83</sup> He asserts that this theme “is to be taken up in the other songs” (C. Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66: A Commentary*, trans. by D.M.G. Stalker (London: SCM Press, 1969), p. 96 [Henceforth: Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66*]).

Such a description, in which the servant feels the same pressures as those whom he treats with compassion, is infused with the concept of empathy. This feeling or state therefore infuses the relationship between the servant and the reed/wick.

Though the interaction of the servant with the reed and wick may illustrate the manner in which the servant will interact with the nations, the poem depicts the relationship through another set of repetitions. The relationship between the servant and the nations is most explicitly conveyed through the repetition of **משפט**, which centres the thought of the poem, to borrow Muilenburg's phrase. The discussion of the rhetorical structure of the poem noted that the word is repeated three times, in vv.1d, 3c and 4b. The servant is to take **משפט** to the nations and place it on the earth. Because it is a term vital to an understanding of the poem and the relationships within, it deserves some discussion.

In general, **משפט** has "decided judicial connotations"<sup>85</sup> and these connotations inform many of the nuances of meaning.<sup>86</sup> Such legal overtones are echoed in many of the discussions of the meaning or translations of the word in Isa. 42.1-4: Laato chooses 'justice';<sup>87</sup> Westermann prefers 'justice/judgment';<sup>88</sup> and Watts translates 'verdict'.<sup>89</sup> Like Watts, Liedke argues that **משפט** can be interpreted as a verdict, one which signifies deliverance or condemnation. In Isa. 42.1-4 the former applies.<sup>90</sup> With reference to the wider context of Isaiah and the moral imperative of Isa. 1.17, Sawyer has argued that **משפט** describes a servant who will discriminate in favour of the poor (the bruised reed) and those with hardly a spark of hope (the bruised lamp), thus providing an image of protection in the new age.<sup>91</sup> Beuken and Jeremias have examined the term as it is found

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<sup>84</sup> Beuken, p. 26.

<sup>85</sup> P. Enns, 'משפט', in *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, vol. 2, ed. by W. A. VanGemeren (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1996), pp. 1142-1144.

<sup>86</sup> Cf. G. Liedke, 'שפט', in *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament*, vol. 3, ed. by E. Jenni and C. Westermann, trans. by M. E. Biddle (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1997), pp. 1392-1399 (esp. pp. 1395-1397) [Henceforth: Liedke].

<sup>87</sup> A. Laato, *The Servant of Yahweh and Cyrus: A Reinterpretation of the Exilic Messianic Programme in Isaiah 40-55* (CB 35; Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell, 1992), p. 75.

<sup>88</sup> Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 95.

<sup>89</sup> Watts, p. 119.

<sup>90</sup> Liedke, p. 1396.

<sup>91</sup> J. F. A. Sawyer, *Isaiah*, vol. 1 (Edinburgh: St. Andrew's Press, 1984), p. 16 and *Isaiah*, vol. 2

in Isa. 42.1-4 in some detail. Beuken argues that **יִצְיֵא מִשְׁפֵּט** could be translated 'he will establish justice, he will enforce righteousness' and **מִשְׁפֵּט** 'is more a situation, a state of being, to be realised than a decision to be proclaimed'.<sup>92</sup> He proposes another meaning when **מִשְׁפֵּט** is combined with **שִׁים**. Citing a number of parallel texts,<sup>93</sup> he argues that the word means an ordinance, a law to be proclaimed or the juridical statute of the new situation of justice. He supports his interpretation of **יְשִׁים מִשְׁפֵּט** with reference to the parallel between **מִשְׁפֵּט** and **תּוֹרָה**.<sup>94</sup> Beuken suggests that the poem alters Israel's conception of **מִשְׁפֵּט**<sup>95</sup> and presents a **מִשְׁפֵּט** which is based on mercy and not an oppression of the nations.<sup>96</sup> Jeremias argues that **מִשְׁפֵּט** has a different meaning in each of his three strophes: in the first it is power, in the second it is pardon and in the third salvation.<sup>97</sup>

Other scholars prefer a wider meaning. North notes that 'revelation' is a possibility<sup>98</sup> and this translation too appeals to McKenzie, who notes the parallel with **תּוֹרָה**.<sup>99</sup> Bailey, as mentioned above, has proposed that the parable of the reed and wick in the middle defines **מִשְׁפֵּט** as compassion.<sup>100</sup> His conclusion echoes the mercy of Beuken, is similar to the pardon recommended by Jeremias for the **מִשְׁפֵּט** in vv. 2-3 and is supported by Hanson's preference for 'the order of compassionate justice'.<sup>101</sup> While these interpretations diverge somewhat from the strictly juridical view of **מִשְׁפֵּט**, the word itself allows such latitude. Mafico, for example, has noted the variety of meanings possible for **מִשְׁפֵּט** which reflect a forensic quality. He has also argued that the forensic sense of the word notwithstanding,

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(Edinburgh: St. Andrew's Press, 1984), p. 64 [Henceforth: Sawyer, *Isaiah*].

<sup>92</sup> Beuken, pp. 5-6.

<sup>93</sup> Ex. 21.1; 15.25; Jos. 24.25; 1Sam.30.25 and some collocations which are not precisely similar parallels (Beuken, p. 7).

<sup>94</sup> Beuken, p. 7.

<sup>95</sup> In the preceding chapters Israel wonders about its proper place amongst the nations and thinks that the metamorphosis of history will come as salvation for Israel and punishment for the nations (Beuken, pp. 28-29).

<sup>96</sup> Beuken, pp. 24-26.

<sup>97</sup> Jeremias, p. 39.

<sup>98</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 108.

<sup>99</sup> McKenzie, p. 37.

<sup>100</sup> Bailey, p. 26.

there is strong evidence that attests that originally the substantive מִשְׁפָּט referred to the restoration of a situation or environment which promoted equity and harmony...in a community.<sup>102</sup>

In this restoration promoting harmony, echoes of the compassion seen by Bailey are evident. Mafico further notes the importance of attending to the context in order to arrive at a suitable meaning for the word<sup>103</sup> and indeed Bailey has interpreted the word in the light of the poem itself.

The preceding summary of scholarly opinion indicates that the precise meaning of the word as it appears in Isa. 42.1-4 cannot be readily nor unequivocally decided, though most would agree that the judicial connotations cannot be disregarded. In light of the present discussion, in which the poems are studied primarily *qua* poems in order to understand their internally articulated meaning, it is appropriate to consider the possible nuance in meaning provided by this immediate context. It has been argued that vv.2-3b constitute the central strophe of the poem and according to Bailey the parable contained within this strophe defines מִשְׁפָּט as compassion. It has further been suggested that vv.3-4a depict a relationship infused with empathy. If compassion is at the centre of the poem and empathy informs the manner in which the servant will interact with the nations, those to whom he will bring מִשְׁפָּט, then it is no small step to propose that the manner of the servant's interaction with the nations will reflect, and perhaps give content to, that which he brings. The poem provides an image through the interactions described a מִשְׁפָּט inculcating compassion and empathy. This is not to suggest that the legal connotations are thereby dismissed but within this wider judicial framework the poem seems to be drawing attention to a possible nuance of the word.

If compassion and empathy inform the interaction of the servant with the nations and the meaning of מִשְׁפָּט, then v.2 deserves further consideration. The rhetorical structure of the poem places this verse in the same strophe as the interaction with the reed and wick and it therefore supplements the description of the manner of

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<sup>101</sup> Hanson, p. 42.

<sup>102</sup> T. L. J. Mafico, 'Just/Justice', in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. by D. N. Freedman, vol. 3 (New York: Doubleday, 1992), pp. 1127-1129 (p. 1128) [Henceforth: Mafico].

<sup>103</sup> Mafico, p. 1128.

interaction. Whybray, for example, thinks that v.2 contrasts the servant with the prophets of doom. This verse describes the “quiet proclamation of God’s universal rule, which brings comfort to the exiles”.<sup>104</sup> Beuken cites the royal overtones found in 42.1-4 and proposes that the verse refers to the manner in which the justice of political relations is carried into effect. The servant will not do so by vigour of voice or public show.<sup>105</sup>

A study of the verbs in the verse may suggest that suffering or distress is a part of the servant’s task. Muilenburg argues that *קָרַע* is usually associated with the idea of distress or grief, though the parallelism here suggests a more general meaning.<sup>106</sup> Elliger argues that the element of need is not inherent in the root. The servant does not need to cry out because the content of *מִשְׁפָּט* is not judgment but salvation. He concludes that vv.2-3a refer less to a method of announcement than the content.<sup>107</sup> Jones suggests that the cry connotes the image of a person pleading publicly for justice without securing a hearing or gaining vindication. He therefore proposes that the phrase could be translated ‘one will not cry’ with two possible meanings: either “royal Israel will judge with perfect righteousness” or “Israel herself will never again have reason to make the complaint voiced in 40:27”.<sup>108</sup> This latter interpretation is reflected in Sawyer’s suggestion that nobody in the Messianic kingdom will be heard crying for help because all are safe and content.<sup>109</sup> Unlike Elliger, Jones seems to accept an implicit need within this cry: no cry is necessary if Israel judges with perfect righteousness or Israel will feel no need to cry. The ideas forwarded by Jones are not without difficulties. He assumes an identification which cannot be unequivocally accepted. Given the flow of the poem, the impersonal translation seems forced, and thus it is unlikely that royal Israel judges and the one who will not cry out is the one judged. Moreover, it has been proposed that v.4a depicts a servant encountering a distress analogous to that experienced by the reed and wick. It therefore cannot be assumed that Israel will have no reason to complain or

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<sup>104</sup> Whybray, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 72.

<sup>105</sup> Beuken, p. 24.

<sup>106</sup> Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 465.

<sup>107</sup> Elliger, pp. 209-210, 214.

<sup>108</sup> D. R. Jones, ‘Isaiah II and III’, in *Peake’s Commentary on the Bible*, ed. by M. Black and H. H. Rowley (Wokingham: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1982), pp. 516-536 (p. 519).

<sup>109</sup> Sawyer, *Isaiah*, vol. 2, p. 65.



that all are safe and content: the task, it appears, may well include suffering. A study of the verb itself provides more material to support the proposal that suffering may be implied. The qal of צעק appears 46 times in the Hebrew Bible and virtually all indicate distress or a desire for help.<sup>110</sup> Elliger may be correct in his assertion that need is not inherent in the meaning, but the use of the word frequently connotes the idea of a need for relief. Melugin argues that לא ישא קול probably means the servant will not utter a lament<sup>111</sup> but acknowledges that the phrase can be used in a non-lamentary fashion.<sup>112</sup> Marcus has noted that the phrase נשא קול occurs 17 times in the Hebrew Bible and concludes that “in 75% of the instances נשא קול connotes raising the voice in distress”. Thus, one can presume that its collocation with צעק suggests a similar meaning.<sup>113</sup> The hiphil of שמע is used at least 14 times in conjunction with קול.<sup>114</sup> Some occurrences possess threatening or negative overtones<sup>115</sup> whilst others are used in a more festive, positive manner.<sup>116</sup> The term itself seems to be neutral and context indicates the manner of translation. One might therefore propose that the first two verbs set a tone of great emotion and possibly distress which presumably colours the meaning of the final verb.

If this be the case, then a choice arises. The servant may feel the distress often associated with these verbs but does not cry out in response. Or, the servant does not even feel distress and thus feels no need to cry out. The preceding discussion of the verbs indicates that pain and distress are usually felt and it was suggested that v.4a connotes the suffering of the servant. Verse 2 may indeed refer to the manner by which the servant will bring out משפט but the manner is not simply one which is quiet and does not speak. It may suggest a restraint despite pain experienced and may therefore be a foreshadowing of the suffering of the servant implied by v.4a. He will suffer distress in

<sup>110</sup> 1Kgs.20.39 may prove an exception, in which the blindfolded prophet cries out to gain Ahab's attention. It is still a cry of great emotion.

<sup>111</sup> He cites Gen. 21.16; Nu. 14.1; Ju. 2.4.

<sup>112</sup> For the latter he cites Isa. 24.14 and 52.8; Melugin, p. 99.

<sup>113</sup> He notes that 13 are followed by בכה; in Ju. 9.7 it is used more neutrally; and in Isa. 24.14 and 52.8 it is used joyfully (R. Marcus, 'The 'Plain Meaning' of Isaiah 42.1-4', *HTR* 30 (1937), pp. 249-259 (p. 251)).

<sup>114</sup> Dt. 4.36; Jos. 6.10; Ju. 18.25; 2Kgs. 7.6; Isa. 30.30; 58.4; Ez. 27.30; Ps. 26.7; 66.8; Cant.2.14; 8.13; Neh. 8.15; 1Chr. 15.16; 2Chr. 5.13

<sup>115</sup> 2Kgs. 7.6; Isa. 30.30; 58.4; Ez.27.30.

the execution of his task. While this distress does not provide as conspicuous a comparison with the reed and wick as v.4a, it nevertheless suggests that the servant suffers as the reed and wick suffers.

This proposal reflects a rhetorical pattern within the poem. The description of the servant's interaction with the reed and wick in v.3ab is rhetorically surrounded by suggestions of the suffering of the servant in v.2 and v.4a. In v. 1 the poem describes Yahweh's preparation of the servant, one which might indicate success by virtue of divine intervention, and in v.4bc are further indications of the ultimate success of the servant. Success encloses and limits the suffering of the servant which in turn surrounds a compassionate and empathetic interaction, the centre of the poem. The pattern is not entirely dissimilar to that of Isa. 53: exaltation surrounds the suffering of the servant, and *our* confession, one which elicits empathy, resides in the centre.

In sum, then, it has been argued that the interaction of the servant with the reed and wick illustrates, but is not necessarily limited to, the interaction between the nations and the servant. Repetitions intimated the presence of empathy and empathy may therefore influence the conception of *משפט*. V. 2 implies that the servant will experience pain and distress but will nevertheless not cry out. This suffering foreshadows that suggested by v.4a. The suffering of the servant therefore surrounds and encloses his interaction with the reed and wick, further intimating an empathy with an entity that has suffered. This pattern is complemented by allusions to success in vv.1 and 4bc, which enclose the compassion of v.3-4a and partially echoes the pattern found in Isa. 53.

#### 4.4.3 The Yahweh/Nations Relationship

Clines argued that the *we* and *they* of Isa. 53 only establish a relationship with Yahweh through the servant. A similar situation seems to apply here: Yahweh prepares the servant and then sends him on his task to the nations, but Yahweh does not interact directly with the nations. The servant who takes *משפט* to the nations and acts with

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<sup>116</sup> Ps. 26.7; 66.8; Cant. 2.14; 8.13; 1 Chr. 15.16; 2Chr. 5.13.

compassion exists between Yahweh and the nations. A chart of the finite verbs found in the poem clearly illustrates the servant's role:

Verse	Yahweh	Servant	Nations
1.	אתמך		
	רצתה		
	נתתי		
		יוציא	
2.		יצעק	
		ישא	
		ישמיע	
3.		ישבור	
		יכבנה	
		יוציא	
4.		יכהה	
		ירוץ	
		ישים	
			ייחילו

Though this chart visually underscores the position of the servant between Yahweh and the nations, it is in a sense deceptive. The interaction of the servant with the reed and wick is illustrative of the interaction with the nations and thus the interaction described in the middle of the poem is not reflected in the chart. If all verbs were included, including the participial רצוץ from v.3a, then the clear movement depicted above would be broken. These corollaries notwithstanding, the poem nevertheless emphasises the servant's position between Yahweh and the nations.

It was suggested in Isa. 53 that Yahweh works through the servant in order to bring about a proper perception of Yahweh and his workings, a goal which may be related to the healing of 53.5. One could note that the servant takes compassionate justice to the awaiting nations. This compassionate justice presumably originates with Yahweh and thus one might argue that Yahweh sends compassionate justice to the nations. The poem suggests that Yahweh is providing something to the nations for which they explicitly await, indicating a need that requires filling. This attempt to

alleviate a possible need, coupled with overtones of compassion, may suggest sympathy. Though sympathy may frequently be based in empathy, the poem does not furnish enough material to propose that Yahweh necessarily empathised with the nations.

#### 4.5 Reader Empathy for the Personae of Isa. 42.1-4

A number of formal factors within the poem indicate that it seeks to elicit the empathy of the reader. Yahweh clearly presents the servant but the audience is not specifically named. Westermann may be correct in his assertion that this song is a designation made in public,<sup>117</sup> but no direct references are made to the identity of the audience. Elliger admits that a clear audience is lacking but draws an analogy with 40.1-8. A specific prophetic experience is in the background, with the prophet in the heavenly sphere listening as Yahweh's voice presents him to the heavenly council.<sup>118</sup> Other scholars agree with the heavenly council setting.<sup>119</sup> North notes that the identity of the audience is not provided: it cannot be the nations because they are referred to in the 3rd person; it may be supernatural beings;<sup>120</sup> or it could be the prophet.<sup>121</sup> While Elliger may be correct, North's more circumspect observations cannot be ignored: no audience is specifically described. Furthermore, Clines had suggested that the poem should be studied without reference to context. If this procedure is followed and no audience is specifically addressed, then it might be best to accept that the audience is unnamed. This absence of an explicitly specified audience in 42.1-4 suggests that the reader may become the audience as legitimately as any proposed and theoretical audience. The servant is therefore introduced directly to the reader.

If Yahweh presents the servant to an unnamed audience which includes the reader, then the reader participates in this presentation. The intimacy of the relationship between Yahweh and the servant has been noted and thus the reader is virtually invited to view the servant in the same terms as Yahweh. The reader is asked not just to focus

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<sup>117</sup> Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 94.

<sup>118</sup> Elliger, p. 200. Oswalt has recently questioned the heavenly council setting for 40.1-11 (p. 50).

<sup>119</sup> Cf. for example Whybray (*Isaiah 40-66*, p. 71) and Watts, who places it in the heavenly court (Watts, p. 119).

<sup>120</sup> Cf. Isa. 6.8; 1Kgs.22.19ff.

<sup>121</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 106.

on the servant and his work but to note, and perhaps share, the intimacy manifested by Yahweh. In Isa. 53 it was suggested that first person language facilitates empathy. Drawing from this observation, Yahweh's first person language, in which he speaks directly to the reader, might contribute to the reader's own sense of intimacy with the servant. If so, then the possibility of empathy for the servant similarly informs the relationship between reader and servant.

Other factors may contribute more convincingly to the evocation of empathy for the servant. It was suggested above that v.2 describes the servant suffering and v.4a connotes suffering on the part of the servant. The suffering of v.4a resembles that of the reed and wick and suggests an empathy for the reed and wick. Thus, a reader may respond empathetically due to the suffering, which may result from internal as well as external pressure, and is experienced by one whose actions manifest compassion for those who suffer. Building on this observation, it might be argued that the reader could empathise with the servant by virtue of the task given the servant. Taking justice to the nations is a monumental task, vast in scope. Assurances of success notwithstanding, the task is intimidating and the reader might empathise with a servant who will not only face suffering but will do so in the pursuit of a difficult mission.

Empathy for the reed and wick may similarly be evoked. The poem describes the servant's compassion for the reed and wick and it was suggested that this interaction is informed by empathy. If the servant exhibits an empathy for this entity and the reader is asked to focus on the servant, then it seems that the reader is asked to feel for the reed and wick in a manner analogous to that exhibited by the servant. As the servant manifests empathy in the poem, the reader virtually takes part in that manifestation. In addition, the description and suggestion of suffering may elicit an empathy for the reed and wick. The suffering conveyed so vividly through the imagistic language of brokenness and dimness might arouse empathetic feelings in the reader.

In the discussion of Isa. 53, it was noted that the language described the suffering of the servant graphically and made the suffering more accessible to the reader. An analogy can be drawn here. The suffering of the reed and wick is presented in imagistic language and thus the suffering can be more readily envisaged. The transferral

of the images of a crushed reed and a dim wick to the servant through comparison similarly facilitates empathy with the servant. It is not just that he withstands suffering, but it is a suffering presented through physical images: he does not grow dim nor is he crushed or broken.

Lastly, the issue of anonymity was of some importance in Isa. 53. The lack of specific identification prompted Clines to argue that the servant could more adequately affect the reader. Once again, an analogy is justified. No names appear in this poem and thus the personae are known not by their names but by their actions and interactions. Yahweh presumably presents the servant but it is the intimacy, assurance and possible empathy which is of more importance than names. The servant is unnamed and thus it is the nature of the relationship with the reed and wick or with Yahweh which is emphasised rather than identity. The reed and wick may refer to the nations in the poem, who are similarly not named, or the terms could in fact depict Israel or Egypt if outside descriptions are considered. The poem has eschewed any clear reference and thus it is once again the interaction rather than identity which is relevant. Thus, anonymity might facilitate empathy. The personae, their situations and their interactions draw attention. Compassion and empathy are highlighted rather than identity.

#### **4.6 Conclusions**

In this chapter, it has been suggested that empathy informs relationships within Isa. 42.1-4. The servant is not only compared with the reed/wick but through this comparison it is indicated that he will experience a suffering similar to that experienced by the reed/wick. It provides a basis for empathy and is consonant with the concept of compassion noted by some scholars. If the interaction of the servant and the reed/wick informs the interaction with the nations, then compassion and empathy for the nations are present. The presentation of the servant in intimate terms, the close relationship between Yahweh and the servant and the promises of continuing support and success all suggest that Yahweh may empathise with the servant. The presence of this empathy is not so strongly suggested as that between the servant and the reed and wick. If the servant is sent by Yahweh to the awaiting nations, a task which involves compassionate

justice, then it might be suggested that an empathy for the nations by Yahweh may be present. The poem does not provide enough materials to support this proposal any further. Lastly, a number of formal features indicates that the poem intends to elicit empathy of the reader for personae in the poem.

In sum, then, Isa. 53 and 42.1-4 both contain suggestions of empathy. This may exist within the poem and it may be elicited from the reader through formal means. In the next chapter, the second servant song isolated by Duhm, Isa. 49.1-6, will be examined an an effort to uncover any intimations of empathy within it.

## Chapter 5

### Empathy and Isaiah 49.1-6

#### 5.1 Introduction

In the preceding chapter it was proposed that empathy in Isa. 42.1-4 is most strongly intimated through the interaction of the servant with the reed and wick. A number of characteristics similarly indicate that the poem is constructed in such a manner that empathy might be elicited from the reader. In this chapter, the procedure followed in that poem will be followed for the second of Duhm's songs, Isa. 49.1-6.

#### 5.2 Translation and Notes

##### 5.2.1 Text and Translation

MT	Verse	Translation
שְׁמַעוּ אֵימִים אֵלַי וְהִקְשִׁיבוּ לְאֲמִים מֵרְחֹק יְהוָה מִבֶּטֶן קִרְאָנִי מִמְעַי אֲמִי הִזְכִּיר שְׁמִי:	49.1	Listen, o coastlands, to me! Pay attention, o peoples from afar! Yahweh, from the womb he called me, From the belly of my mother he invoked my name.
וַיִּשֶׁם פִּי כַחֲרֵב חֶדֶה בְּצֶל יָדוֹ הִחְבִּיאַנִי וַיִּשְׁיִמְלֵנִי לְחֵץ בְּרֹדֶד בְּאִשְׁפָּתוֹ הִסְתִּירָנִי:	49.2	And he made my mouth like a sharp sword, In the shadow of his hand he hid me; And he made me into a polished arrow, In his quiver he concealed me.
וַיֹּאמֶר לִי עַבְדֵי-אַתָּה יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר-בְּךָ אֶתְפָּאֵר:	49.3	And he said to me, 'My servant are you, Israel, In whom I will be glorified'.
וְאָנִי אָמַרְתִּי לְרִיק יִגְעֵתִי לְתֹהוֹ וְהִבֵּל כֹּחִי כְלִיתִי אֲכֹן מִשְׁפֹּטֵי אֶת-יְהוָה וּפְעֻלָּתִי אֶת-אֱלֹהֵי:	49.4	But I, I said 'For nothing I have toiled, For pointlessness and futility my strength I have sapped; Surely, my justice is with Yahweh, And my recompense with my God'.
וַעֲתָה אָמַר יְהוָה יִצְרֵי מִבֶּטֶן לְעַבְדִּי לוֹ לְשׁוֹבֵב יַעֲקֹב אֵלָיו	49.5	But now Yahweh says, The one who formed me from the womb for his servant,



<p>וַיִּשְׂרָאֵל לֹא יֵאָסֶף וְאֶכְבֵּד בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה וְאֵלֵהי הָיָה עֵזִי:</p>		<p>To bring back Jacob to him, That Israel might not be gathered (And I was honoured in the eyes of Yahweh, And my God was my strength);</p>
<p>וַיֹּאמֶר נָקַל מְהִיּוֹתָהּ לִי עֶבֶד לְהִקְיָם אֶת־שִׁבְטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וּנְצִירֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְהַשְׁיֵב וּנְתִיתִיךָ לְאֹרֶךְ יָמִים לְהִיְוֹת יְשׁוּעָתִי עַד־קֶצֶה הָאָרֶץ ס:</p>	<p>49.6</p>	<p>And he said, ‘It is too small a thing for you to be my servant, To raise up the tribes of Jacob, and the preserved of Israel to bring back; And I make you a light to nations, To be my salvation until the end of the earth.</p>

## 5.2.2 Notes on the Translation

### 5.2.2.1 Isa. 49.1

LXX seems to take the מרחוק with the following clause in v.1bc, reading καὶ προσέχετε ἔθνη· διὰ χρόνου πολλοῦ στήσεται λέγει κύριος.<sup>1</sup> Goshen-Gottstein wonders whether it is a theologically motivated change and notes that λέγει κύριος is simply a formulaic expansion.<sup>2</sup> The Syriac too seems to reformulate these cola, reading ܘܢܘܨܘܢܐ ܘܢܘܨܘܢܐ ܘܢܘܨܘܢܐ ܘܢܘܨܘܢܐ ܘܢܘܨܘܢܐ.<sup>3</sup> For ܘܢܘܨܘܢܐ LXX reads ἔκάλεσεν τὸ ὄνομά μου;<sup>4</sup> Syriac reads ܘܢܘܨܘܢܐ,<sup>5</sup> Targum שמי.<sup>6</sup> North argues that הזכיר שמי literally means ‘he caused my name to be mentioned’ but opts for ‘he designated me by name’.<sup>7</sup> Landy translates ‘made mention of my name’<sup>8</sup> and Korpel and de Moor translate ‘mentioned my name’.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> ‘...and give heed, o nations. After a long interval it will come to pass, says the Lord’.

<sup>2</sup> M. H. Goshen-Gottstein, ed., *The Hebrew University Bible: The Book of Isaiah*, vol. 3 (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1993).

<sup>3</sup> ‘From afar the Lord has called me. And from the womb and from the belly of my mother...’

<sup>4</sup> ‘he called/summoned my name’.

<sup>5</sup> ‘mentioned my name’.

<sup>6</sup> ‘he mentioned my name’.

<sup>7</sup> C. R. North, *The Second Isaiah* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), pp. 186-187 [Henceforth: North, *Second Isaiah*].

<sup>8</sup> F. Landy, ‘The Construction of the Subject and the Symbolic Order: A Reading of The Last Three

### 5.2.2.2 Isa. 49.2

The ל in לַחֲזֹן is translated ‘into’ following comments made by Gibson.<sup>10</sup> The first hand of 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> reads ח for ל with the latter placed supralinear.<sup>11</sup>

### 5.2.2.3 Isa. 49.3

‘Israel’ is maintained for reasons set out below.<sup>12</sup> de Boer, who argues for its retention, takes it as a vocative ‘o Israel’.<sup>13</sup> North thinks there should be no comma afterwards, taking it with the qualifying relative clause that follows.<sup>14</sup> For אֲשֶׁר בְּכֶךָ אֶתְפָּאֵר Syriac reads אֲשֶׁר בְּכֶךָ אֶתְפָּאֵר.<sup>15</sup>

### 5.2.2.4 Isa. 49.4

The Syriac translation offers significant alterations for the first bicolon. It reads אֲנִי אֲחִיבָה לְיִשְׂרָאֵל לְיִשְׂרָאֵל לְיִשְׂרָאֵל לְיִשְׂרָאֵל.<sup>16</sup> The servant clearly addresses Jacob here and the three references to his despondency are elided into two. North,<sup>17</sup> Watts<sup>18</sup> and Whybray<sup>19</sup> have argued that the אֲמַרְתִּי of v.4a means ‘I thought’ but the other three uses of the root in the poem suggest that speaking

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Suffering Servant Songs’, in *Among the Prophets: Language, Image and Structure in the Prophetic Writings*, ed. by P. R. Davies and D. J. A. Clines (JSOTSup. 144; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), pp. 60-71 (p. 63) [Henceforth: Landy].

<sup>9</sup> M. C. A. Korpel and J. C. de Moor, *The Structure of Classical Hebrew Poetry: Isaiah 40-55* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), p. 400 [Henceforth: Korpel and de Moor, *Isaiah 40-55*].

<sup>10</sup> J. C. L. Gibson, *Davidson’s Introductory Hebrew Grammar: Syntax*, 4th edn. (T & T Clark: Edinburgh, 1994), §94, Rem.8, pp. 117-118 [Henceforth: Gibson].

<sup>11</sup> Cf. M. Burrows, *The Dead Sea Scrolls of St. Mark’s Monastery*, vol. 1 (New Haven: American Schools of Oriental Research, 1950). Note too that 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> reads חֲזֹן in 49.2a with a ח supralinear.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. esp. N. Lohfink, “‘Israel’ in Jes 49,3”, in *Wort, Lied und Gottespruch: Beiträge zu Psalmen und Propheten. Festschrift für J. Ziegler*, vol. 2, ed. by J. Schreiner (Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 1972), pp. 217-229.

<sup>13</sup> P. A. H. de Boer, *Second Isaiah’s Message* (OTS 11; Leiden: Brill, 1956) p. 53 [Henceforth: de Boer].

<sup>14</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 188.

<sup>15</sup> ‘in whom I am glorified/by whom I am praised’.

<sup>16</sup> ‘And I did not say to the seed of Jacob, ‘Vainly I have laboured, and I have given my strength for vanity...’

<sup>17</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 188.

<sup>18</sup> J. D. W. Watts, *Isaiah 34-66* (WBC 25; Waco: Word, 1987), p. 182 [Henceforth: Watts].

<sup>19</sup> He prefers ‘I thought (to myself)’ (R. N. Whybray, *Isaiah 40-66* (NCB; London: Oliphants, 1975), p. 138).

is not impossible either. North notes that the אכן expresses a strong contrast, “as of something wrongly imagined”.<sup>20</sup> Hermisson notes, with reference to 53.4, that it introduces the proper over the false interpretation of facts.<sup>21</sup> LXX translates the two instances of את with παρὰ κυρίῳ and ἐναντίον τοῦ θεοῦ μου,<sup>22</sup> thereby offering two different prepositions. Targum attempts to make sense of the two appearances of את, translating each with קדם,<sup>23</sup> and Vulgate translates the את with cum. Watts translates ‘with Yahweh/with my God’<sup>24</sup> as does Hanson.<sup>25</sup> Following these suggestions and comments made by Gibson,<sup>26</sup> ‘with’ is taken.

### 5.2.2.5 Isa. 49.5

1QIsa<sup>b</sup> adds כה after ועתה, which supports Westermann’s assertion that it should be added.<sup>27</sup> The participle ‘formed’ is taken in the past as a reference to the first verse.<sup>28</sup> For לא in 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> reads לו; but 4QIsa<sup>d</sup> reads לא with MT. LXX reads συσταθήσομαι<sup>29</sup> for יאסף. It seems to take Jacob and Israel as the objects of לשובב, lacks a negating adverb and יאסף is included within the following clause. Syriac reads ܠܝܫܪܐܝܝܠ ܠܐ ܝܘܫܒܒ<sup>30</sup> and Targum וישראל לדחלתיה יתקרב<sup>31</sup> for וישראל לא יאסף.

<sup>20</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 186.

<sup>21</sup> H.-J. Hermisson, ‘Der Lohn des Knechts’ in *Die Botschaft und die Boten: Festschrift für Hans Walter Wolff zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. by J. Jeremias and L. Perliitt (Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1981), pp. 269-287 (p. 276) [Henceforth: Hermisson, Lohn].

<sup>22</sup> ‘with the Lord’ and ‘before my God’.

<sup>23</sup> ‘before’.

<sup>24</sup> Watts, p. 182.

<sup>25</sup> P. D. Hanson, *Isaiah 40-66* (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1995), p. 129 [Henceforth: Hanson].

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Gibson, §118, Rem. 1, p. 148.

<sup>27</sup> C. Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66: A Commentary*, trans. by D. M. G. Stalker (London: SCM Press, 1969), p. 206 [Henceforth: Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66*].

<sup>28</sup> Gibson notes that participles can be found in all three time settings (Gibson, §113c and Rem. 1, pp. 136-137).

<sup>29</sup> ‘I will be gathered’.

<sup>30</sup> ‘and Israel I might assemble’.

<sup>31</sup> ‘and Israel to its God might be brought near’. Stenning translates ‘and that Israel should be brought near to the fear of him’ (J. F. Stenning, *The Targum of Isaiah* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1949), pp. 164-165). Jastrow notes that דחל לא II can mean ‘deity’ (M. Jastrow, *A Dictionary of the Targumim, The Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature*, vol. 1 (New York: Pardes, 1950), p. 292).

Vulgate reads *et Israhel non congregabitur*,<sup>32</sup> thus taking the לֹא. North favours לו though he thinks that there is no substantial difference in meaning between the two readings;<sup>33</sup> Westermann too takes לו;<sup>34</sup> and Oswalt translates ‘to him’.<sup>35</sup> de Boer argues that the niphal means ‘be gathered/swept away’ and needs the לו, thereby rendering ‘that Israel be not swept away’.<sup>36</sup> Landy, however, has argued that the ‘preserved’ of v.6, which will be discussed presently, may support the ketiv, לֹא. ‘Preserved’ as a translation for נִצְרִי is more emotive and more common than the proposed ‘offshoots, descendants’, which is derived from נָצַר.<sup>37</sup> If so, the clause would read ‘that has not been gathered up’, i.e. perished.<sup>38</sup> For reasons set out below, Landy will be followed. The yiqtol אֶסָּף is taken in a modal sense, possible for yiqtol.<sup>39</sup> North repoints וְאֶפְכַּד to וְאֶפְכַּד and argues that v.5ef as it stands is parenthetical.<sup>40</sup> Syriac reads ܐܘܢܝܢܘܢܐ<sup>41</sup> for וְאֶפְכַּד; LXX reads καὶ δοξασθήσομαι;<sup>42</sup> and Targum ויקירנא.<sup>43</sup> Korpel and de Moor keep the MT pointing and translate in the present.<sup>44</sup> North’s suggestion seems justifiable for וְאֶפְכַּד and will be followed. For עֲזִי 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> reads עֲזֹרִי, ‘my help’, possibly reflecting the frequent appearance of the root elsewhere in DI, especially in 49.8 and 50.7, 9.<sup>45</sup> The MT will be followed for two reasons: the root עֲזַר always appears in the verbal form in DI, not as a noun or adjective, and the association of Yahweh with ‘strength’, עֲזָר, is found in 45.24 and 51.9.

<sup>32</sup> ‘and Israel will not be assembled’.

<sup>33</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 186.

<sup>34</sup> Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 206, n. b.

<sup>35</sup> J. N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 40-66* (NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), p. 285 [Henceforth: Oswalt].

<sup>36</sup> de Boer, p. 53. Whybray argues similarly. If the ketiv is correct, אֶסָּף must mean ‘sweep away’ (R. N. Whybray, *Isaiah 40-66* (NCB; London: Oliphants, 1975), p. 139 [Henceforth: Whybray, *Isaiah 40-66*]).

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Whybray, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 139.

<sup>38</sup> Landy, p. 65.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Gibson, §64c, p. 79.

<sup>40</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 186.

<sup>41</sup> ‘I will be honoured’.

<sup>42</sup> ‘and I will be glorified’.

<sup>43</sup> ‘and I am honoured’.

<sup>44</sup> Korpel and de Moor, *Isaiah 40-55*, pp. 400-401.

<sup>45</sup> The other appearances are found in Isa. 41.6-14 (4x); 41.13, 14; 44.2.

### 5.2.2.6 Isa. 49.6

Whybray thinks that the initial **וַיֵּאמֶר** was probably added;<sup>46</sup> Duhm strikes it out because the line is overfull;<sup>47</sup> Scharbert thinks that it indicates a later insertion.<sup>48</sup> For **נקל מהיותך לי עבד** LXX reads **μέγα σοί ἔστιν τοῦ κληθῆναι σε παῖδά μου**.<sup>49</sup> North argues that the phrase literally reads ‘from your becoming a servant to me’.<sup>50</sup> Oswald argues that the **מִן** preceding the **הַיּוֹתֶךָ** is one of comparison and thus yields ‘it is too light a thing’.<sup>51</sup> The Targum translates **עבד** in the plural. 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> reverses the order of Jacob and Israel in this verse. At MT **וַיִּצְיָרֵי** 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> attests the ketiv; LXX reads **καὶ τὴν διασπορὰν**;<sup>52</sup> Syriac reads **ܠܘܘܬܐܝܪܐܝܢܐ**;<sup>53</sup> Targum **וגלות**.<sup>54</sup> North wonders whether **וַיִּצְיָרֵי** was originally **וַיִּצְרֵי**, meaning something like ‘offshoots’, which would provide a better parallel to ‘tribes’.<sup>55</sup> As mentioned above, Whybray agrees, rendering ‘offshoots, descendants’.<sup>56</sup> Watts favours the qere, translating ‘protected ones’.<sup>57</sup> Scharbert translates ‘Geretteten Israels’.<sup>58</sup> Before **לְאֹרֵי גוֹיִם** LXX adds **εἰς διαθήκην γένους**.<sup>59</sup> The MT **לְאֹרֵי גוֹיִם** might literally mean ‘a light of nations’ but the construct state can be translated ‘to’.<sup>60</sup> For **יְשׁוּעָתִי** LXX reads **εἰς σωτηρίαν**,<sup>61</sup> apparently omitting the first person possessive pronoun. Orlinksy argues that triumph,

<sup>46</sup> Whybray, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 139.

<sup>47</sup> B. Duhm, *Das Buch Jesaja*, 5th edn. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1968), p. 370 [Henceforth: Duhm].

<sup>48</sup> J. Scharbert, *Deuterocesaja-der ‘Knecht Jawes’?* (Hamburg: Verlag Dr. Kovač, 1995), p. 21 [Henceforth: Scharbert].

<sup>49</sup> ‘It is a great thing for you to be called my servant...’

<sup>50</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 189.

<sup>51</sup> Oswald, p. 286, n. 5; author’s italics.

<sup>52</sup> ‘and the diaspora/dispersion’.

<sup>53</sup> ‘the shoot of Israel’.

<sup>54</sup> ‘exiles’.

<sup>55</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 186.

<sup>56</sup> Whybray, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 139.

<sup>57</sup> Watts, p. 184.

<sup>58</sup> Scharbert, p. 24.

<sup>59</sup> ‘for a covenant of people’.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. Gibson, §34, p. 31.

<sup>61</sup> ‘for salvation’.

victory or vindication would be better translations than the usual ‘salvation’, with its misleading post-biblical theological overtones and associations.<sup>62</sup>

### 5.3 The Rhetorical Structure of Isa. 49.1-6

Muilenburg divides 49.1-6 into three strophes of similar dimensions: vv. 1-3; vv.4,5ef;<sup>63</sup> and vv.5a-d, 6.<sup>64</sup> Clifford offers no rhetorical structure for 49.1-6 as a unit, discussing it instead as a part of 49.1-26.<sup>65</sup> Korpel and de Moor have argued that 49.1-6 is a sub-canto of 49.1-26 and cite substantial versional support for the division between 49.6 and 7. Within the poem itself, they take each verse as a strophe, thereby suggesting six strophes.<sup>66</sup> Merendino separates the poem into four strophes: the יהוה of v.1b marks the first strophe; the ויאמר of v.3a the second; the ועתה of v.5 the third; and the ויאמר of v.6 the fourth. Each strophe is related to the others through vocabulary and grammatical similarities.<sup>67</sup> Landy has suggested in passing that the outer ring referring to the peoples and nations envelopes the ingathering of Israel and the presence of Yahweh in the womb. At the centre is the prophet’s emptiness and failure.<sup>68</sup> Extrapolating from his comments, one could possibly argue that the poem possesses a rough ABCBA rhetorical structure.

One point of agreement amongst most scholars concerns v.5. It marks a transitional point in the poem and is characterised by formal elements encouraging this interpretation. The waw of the ועתה initiates v.5 and continues a series of four bicola which had been broken by the אכן of v.4. It similarly emphasises a shift in perspective with the ‘now’. The vocabulary also consciously echoes vv.1c and 3a: the מבטן of v.5b

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<sup>62</sup> H. M. Orlinsky, ‘The So-Called “Servant of the Lord” and “Suffering Servant” in Second Isaiah’, in *Studies on the Second Part of the Book of Isaiah* (VTSup.14; Leiden: Brill, 1967), pp. 1-133 (p. 99, n. 2) [Henceforth: Orlinsky].

<sup>63</sup> He transposes v.5ef to a position following v.4.

<sup>64</sup> J. Muilenburg, ‘Isaiah: Chapters 40-66’ in *The Interpreter’s Bible*, vol. 5, ed. by G. A. Buttrick (New York: Abingdon Press), pp. 381-773 (pp. 564-569) [Henceforth: Muilenburg, Isaiah 40-66].

<sup>65</sup> R. J. Clifford, *Fair Spoken and Persuading: An Interpretation of Second Isaiah* (New York: Paulist Press, 1984), pp. 150-155.

<sup>66</sup> Korpel and de Moor, *Isaiah 40-55*, pp. 400-405; 432-434.

<sup>67</sup> R. P. Merendino, ‘Jes 49.1-6: ein Gottesknechtslied?’, *ZAW* 92 (1980), pp. 236-248 (p. 238) [Henceforth: Merendino].

<sup>68</sup> Landy, p. 65.

is a repetition of that in v.1c; the phrase **לו עבד** echoes **לי עבדי** in v.3a; and, if these connections are granted, one might propose that **יהוה אמר יהוה** is reminiscent of **יהוה קראני** in v.1c. Other characteristics might indicate that v.5 is a turning point. Vv.2-4b flow quite naturally into one another due to the series of waw's. These end with the exclamation of faith in v.4cd and then vv.5-6 move towards the statement of the final task with the aid of the waws and infinitives of purpose. In the first instance, then, it might be best to suggest that the poem may be formed by two halves within which may be further subdivisions.

As for further divisions within the two halves, Korpel and de Moor have provided some powerful and convincing arguments in their delimitation of strophes. Citing versional evidence as well as markers that signal strophic boundaries,<sup>69</sup> their argument that each of the Massoretic verses constitutes a strophe will be accepted. Muilenburg had provided some observations concerning the division of the poem into its respective strophes but his observations are not presented so systematically as those of Korpel and de Moor, and they are similarly weakened by his transposition of v.5ef, which may be interpreted where it stands. If v.5ef remains in place, then Muilenburg's divisions become somewhat unbalanced. Merendino ignores the emphatic beginning of v.4 which seems to be stressed through the personal pronoun and may suggest the beginning of a strophe.

Before continuing with a discussion of the relationships, two further characteristics prompted by Landy deserve some comment. He had mentioned the envelope of the poem and the centrality of the failure of the servant. The envelope, as he calls it, might consist of the exclamation in v.1ab and the description of the extended task in v.6de, both of which refer to the interaction of the servant with the nations. To paraphrase or rephrase Landy's observation, the interaction of the servant with the tribes of Jacob and the preserved of Israel occurs within the framework of the servant's task to the nations. Secondly, Landy had argued that the servant's emptiness and failure is at the centre. In one sense he may be correct: the despondency over the first task lies near the centre of the poem and the new task to the nations may arise from Yahweh's

response to the despair. On a more formal level, it is not the despair that is the centre of the poem but the exclamation of faith. The poem contains 25 cola,<sup>70</sup> the thirteenth of which is v.4c. Immediately following the servant's statement of failure is the central colon, which, with its parallel colon, expresses a faith in Yahweh creating a sharp juxtaposition with the despondency at the end of the first stanza. It is a rhetorical characteristic which will be considered in more detail presently.

The preceding paragraphs have suggested that this poem contains two stanzas, or canticles as Korpel and de Moor define them, formed by 6 strophes. References to the nations form the outer boundaries of the poem and the poem centres on the servant's expression of confidence in Yahweh which contrasts the immediately preceding perceived failure.

## 5.4 Empathy within Isa. 49.1-6

### 5.4.1 The Yahweh/Servant Relationship

The preceding chapters focussing on Isa. 53 and 42.1-4 have begun with a study of shared verbs and pronominals which have granted a pathway into the discussion. This chapter will proceed in the same manner. In the first instance, Yahweh and the servant share only two verbs, אָמַר and הִיָּה. The latter is found only three times in the poem and provides some insight into the relationship, which will be discussed presently. In v.5f the servant states that 'my God is my strength'; in v.6a the infinitive is used in Yahweh's utterance that 'it is too small a thing for you to be my servant'; and in v. 6e Yahweh states that the servant is 'to be my salvation'. As for אָמַר, Yahweh is the subject three times, and in each case addresses the servant. In the first address, Yahweh pronounces to the servant that he is 'my servant Israel' and will glorify Yahweh (v.3). The second and third appearances describe the announcement of the extended task to the servant although the servant is not explicitly the object of the action (vv.5a, 6a). Through speech, Yahweh defines the identity of the servant and his tasks. The servant is the subject of אָמַר only once and he addresses Yahweh in v.4a if it is rendered 'said'

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<sup>69</sup> Korpel and de Moor, *Isaiah 40-55*, pp. 432-434.

<sup>70</sup> For delimitation of cola, cf. Korpel and de Moor, *Isaiah 40-55*, pp. 406-409.



rather than ‘thought’. The poem formally confirms that the relationship between Yahweh and the servant is one of speaking and hearing and they are in a sense drawn together by **אמר**.

The actions of the personae as depicted by the verbs within the poem have similarly provided some insight into the relationships. Yahweh is the subject of 13 verbs in the poem and pronominal suffixes, objects and, on two occasions, an ellipsis indicates that every divine action is directed at or towards the servant. The verbs and the relevant references are as follows:

49.1	קראני
	הזכיר שמי
49.2	וישם פי
	החביאני
	וישימני
	הסתירני
49. 3	ויאמר לי
	בך אתפאר
49. 5	אמר
	יצרי
	היה עזי
49. 6	ויאמר
	ונתתיך

The **אמר** of v.5a and the **ויאמר** of v.6a, as mentioned above, are presumably directed at or to the servant despite the lack of a specific object. As a result, it might be suggested that Yahweh only acts on or through the servant, creating a certain exclusivity within the relationship. Though the servant certainly interacts with others, as discussed below, the same cannot be said of Yahweh.

Before a brief examination of the verbs of which the servant is subject, it might not be inappropriate to consider the nature of Yahweh’s action on the servant. Landy describes the first action of Yahweh in terms which suggest a close relationship between the servant and Yahweh marked by intimacy. Yahweh, as Landy might put it, is there in

the womb calling the servant from the very beginning of his being.<sup>71</sup> This implied intimacy parallels and echoes that found in Isa.42.1-4, and perhaps that found in Isa. 52.13. It is interesting to note that it appears at or near the beginning of all three poems. Here it seems to be an intimacy more personal and formative than that of the presentation of the servant in 42.1-4 or indeed the announcement in 52.13. Yahweh is in the womb calling the servant and also participates in the physical formation of the servant. Yahweh creates the servant's mouth as a sharp sword and makes the servant a burnished or polished arrow, evoking a relationship between creator and created like that of the potter Yahweh.<sup>72</sup>

Hints of intimacy are supplemented by the possible nuances of the two hiding verbs, **חבא** and **סתר**. In v.2b it is stated that Yahweh hid his servant as sharp sword in the shadow of his hand and in v.2d it is reported that the servant as polished arrow is concealed in the divine quiver. The root **חבא** occurs 38 times in the Hebrew Bible but only six times in the hiphil. In the other five appearances, one person hides another individual, or group of individuals, for the sake of protection.<sup>73</sup> Volz had argued that Yahweh kept the servant safe in the first instance, letting him grow up in seclusion until he was sent into the world, as a warrior keeps a sword safe until the right moment.<sup>74</sup> Westermann proposes that the concealment with God forms a part of the servant's equipment, citing a similar concept in Jer. 1.19.<sup>75</sup> Wagner thinks that the idea of care and protection vouchsafed by Yahweh may be indicated, and it is possible that the concept could be developed into the idea of a servant ready but hidden.<sup>76</sup> Laato attends to the hiphil connotations, noting the idea of protection.<sup>77</sup> Indeed, the Syriac for shadow or shade which is used to translate **צל**, **ܘܘܠܐ**, can also be used metaphorically for

<sup>71</sup> Landy, pp. 62-63.

<sup>72</sup> Cf. esp. Jer. ch. 18 and Gen. 2.7.

<sup>73</sup> Josh. 6.17, 25; 1 Kgs. 18.4, 13; 2 Kgs. 6.29.

<sup>74</sup> P. Volz, *Jesaia II* (KA<sup>1</sup> 9; Leipzig: A. Deichertsche, 1932), p. 157.

<sup>75</sup> Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 208.

<sup>76</sup> S. Wagner, 'חבא', in *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, vol. 4, ed. by G. J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren, trans. by D. E. Green (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), pp. 165-171 (p. 170).

<sup>77</sup> A. Laato, *The Servant of Yahweh and Cyrus: A Reinterpretation of the Exilic Messianic Programme in Isaiah 40-55* (CB 35; Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell, 1992), p. 113 [Henceforth: Laato, *Servant and Cyrus*]. In his translation, however, he chooses 'hid' (p. 106).

protection.<sup>78</sup> Merendino notes that the collocation **בצל יד** occurs otherwise only in Isa. 51.16, though similar passages can be found in Isa. 30.2-3.; Jer. 48.45; Ez. 17.23; 31.6-7.<sup>79</sup> Those found in Isa.30.2-3 certainly suggest protection and the others are compatible with protection. The hiphil of the root **סתר** can also refer to a hiding for the sake of protection: one can be hidden in the shadow of Yahweh's wings<sup>80</sup> or in a hut.<sup>81</sup> Thus, Yahweh's intimacy merges with a power that ensures safekeeping to produce an image of protection.

The servant is the subject of only nine verbs in the poem<sup>82</sup> and context suggests that four are associated with Yahweh. The direction so conspicuous in Yahweh's actions is absent. As mentioned above, the servant seems to speak to Yahweh in v.4a; in v. 5e the servant states that he 'was honoured in the eyes of Yahweh'; in v.6a Yahweh states that 'it is too small a thing for you to be my servant', thus highlighting the servant's status as Yahweh's servant; and in v.6e the servant is 'to be my salvation'. It can be suggested, then, that Yahweh's actions focus on the servant whereas the action of the servant is frequently associated with Yahweh but not necessarily directed at Yahweh. Instead, the verbs of which the servant is subject and which relate to Yahweh reiterate the nature of the relationship between the two. The servant is Yahweh's servant, he is honoured in Yahweh's eyes and he is Yahweh's salvation.

The insight provided by verbal repetitions can be supplemented with a brief look at the ubiquitous 'I' in the poem. Even a cursory examination of the poem reveals an unusually high number of 'I' references spoken by the servant and a few which refer to Yahweh. If the first person references found in verbs, pronouns or pronominal suffixes are listed, then it becomes immediately clear that much of this poem focusses on the 'I' of the servant.

<sup>78</sup> J. P. Smith, *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1903).

<sup>79</sup> Merendino, p. 240.

<sup>80</sup> Cf. Ps. 17.8.

<sup>81</sup> Cf. Ps. 27.5. G. Wehmeier has similarly suggested that the idea of hiding and thus protecting people is evident in Isa. 49.2; Pss. 17.8; 27.5; 31.21 (G. Wehmeier, 'סתר', *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament*, vol. 2, ed. by E. Jenni and C. Westermann, trans. by M. E. Biddle (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1997), pp. 813-819 (p. 814)).

<sup>82</sup> מהיותך, להקים, להשיב, להיות (v.5); לשוכב, ואכבד (v.4); אמרתי, יגעתי, כליתי

verse	Servant	Yahweh
49.1	אלי	
	קראני	
	אמי	
	שמי	
49.2	פי	
	החביאני	
	וישימני	
	הסתירני	
49.3	לי	
		עבדי
		אתפאר
49.4	ואני	
	אמרתי	
	יגעתי	
	כחי	
	כליתי	
	משפטי	
	ופעלתי	
	אלהי	
49.5	יצרי	
	ואכבד	
	ואלהי	
	עזי	
49.6		לי
		ונתתיך
		ישועתי

The chart provides the basis for two observations. Firstly, it suggests that the 'I' of the servant provides a thread which runs through the poem, a centrality which may be analogous to the centrality of the servant in Isa. 53. Secondly, an unusually interesting correlation may be found in the 1s references to Yahweh. The latter is the subject of only two first person verbs, which state that Yahweh will be glorified in the servant and that Yahweh makes the servant a light to nations. The two actions are related: the servant, a light to the nations, is the means by which Yahweh will be glorified. The two first person singular pronominal suffixes provide a more interesting point. Only twice is a 1s suffix referring to Yahweh found on a noun and these words are עבדי (v.3a) and

ישועתי (v.6e). The poem states clearly that the servant is to be ‘my salvation to the ends of the earth’ and it underscores this message with a rhetorical parallel: my servant is my salvation. If the servant is Yahweh’s salvation, stated in v.6 and underscored by a repetition which spans the two stanzas of the poem, then the close connection between the two personae is not only based upon the servanthood of the servant but his status as Yahweh’s salvation. Thus, the servant is the centre of the poem, the glorification of Yahweh may be connected with the servant’s status as light to the nations and the servant is most emphatically Yahweh’s salvation. These points correlate quite nicely.

Before continuing with the discussion, the term ישועתי deserves some attention. This precise word, the construct of the noun ישועה with the 1s suffix, only occurs 13 times in the Hebrew Bible.<sup>83</sup> Of these, Yahweh speaks of his own salvation only four times<sup>84</sup> while on seven occasions a human speaker refers to the deity as ‘my salvation’ or asserts that ‘my salvation’ comes from him.<sup>85</sup> However, for Yahweh to say to another ‘you are my salvation’ is unprecedented, and even the related nouns תשועה and ישע do not include such a reference when accompanied by the 1s suffix.<sup>86</sup> The connection between the servant and Yahweh’s salvation is not only emphasised but the terminology is quite unusual.

The previous mention of the servant as a central thread leads naturally to a discussion of the rhetorical structure and its possible contribution to an understanding of the relationship between Yahweh and the servant. It was noted above that v.4c is the central colon of the poem. It and its parallel colon describe a statement of faith contrasting the despair of v.4ab. The centrality of the cola suggests some importance and this central importance is further underlined by its placement just prior to v.5. The latter marks the start of the second stanza of the poem and thus one might argue that

<sup>83</sup> Isa. 12.2; 49.6; 51.6, 8; 56.1; Pss. 22.2; 62.2, 3, 7; 88.2; 91.16; 140.8; Job 30.15.

<sup>84</sup> Isa. 51.6, 8; 56.1; Ps. 91.16.

<sup>85</sup> Isa. 12.2; Pss. 22.2; 62.2, 3, 7; 88.2; 140.8.

<sup>86</sup> For תשועה cf. Pss. 38.23; 51.16; Isa. 46.13. For ישע cf. 2Sam. 22.3, 47; 23.5; Isa. 51.5; Mich 7.7; Hab. 3.18; Pss. 18.3, 47; 25.5; 27.1, 9; 62.8. Yahweh speaks of his own salvation in Isa. 46.13 and 51.5. In the other examples a person speaks of Yahweh as my salvation except in 2Sam. 23.5. Here, Yahweh will make David’s salvation prosper.

v.4cd marks a climax to the first stanza. As mentioned above,<sup>87</sup> the אֶכֶךְ clearly contrasts the previous incorrect interpretation with the correct one which follows. As such it is perhaps a formal marker for the climax of the stanza.

If 49.4cd is of such importance structurally, the language contained within deserves closer scrutiny. The מִשְׁפָּטִי has been variously translated by commentaries,<sup>88</sup> but, in the first instance, the presence of מִשְׁפָּט in the central colon of this poem is quite interesting in light of the focus on the word in Isa. 42.1-4. As a result of the discussion of the word in the previous chapter it might be supposed that overtones of compassion may be associated with the noun here. Indeed, the possibility of such a connection is certainly strengthened by the absence of intervening occurrences of מִשְׁפָּט between 42.4 and 49.4. While it may not be justified to suggest that the compassionate overtones of 42.1-4 necessarily carry to Isa. 49.4, the implications of the previous use have not been pre-empted in the meantime.

The form of the word, the noun מִשְׁפָּט with the 1s pronominal suffix, may in fact suggest the concept of compassion. North takes the suffix as an object genitive ('the judgement passed on me') and argues that the servant is "expressing his conviction that Yahweh's verdict on his service will be a favourable one".<sup>89</sup> Westermann offers a similar interpretation.<sup>90</sup> If so, then it would not be impossible that overtones of compassion are present. Vindication of a despondent servant may be informed by compassion, particularly in light of the heartfelt anguish and the despondency of perceived failure expressed in v.4ab.

Before addressing v.4ab, however, further mention should be made of מִשְׁפָּטִי. It occurs only 16 times in this form in the Hebrew Bible, four of which are spoken by Yahweh<sup>91</sup> and the remainder by humans.<sup>92</sup> Only here does a human speaker so

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<sup>87</sup> Cf. Sec. 5.2.2.4.

<sup>88</sup> Oswalt translates 'my justice' (p. 285); Watts renders 'just compensation' (p. 182); Hanson 'my cause' (p. 129); and North translates the whole line 'the Lord will declare his confidence in me' (North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 188).

<sup>89</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, pp. 189-190.

<sup>90</sup> Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 210.

<sup>91</sup> Isa. 51.4; Ez. 39.21; Zeph. 3.8; Job 40.8.

<sup>92</sup> Isa. 40.27; 49.4; 50.8; Mi. 7.9; Pss. 9.5; 17.2; 35.23; Job 27.2; 29.14; 34.5, 6; Lam. 3.59.

explicitly associate Yahweh with **משפטי** in a nominal clause.<sup>93</sup> Not only is the despair immediately balanced by an assertion of possible vindication by Yahweh but this very means of expression gives emphasis. Indeed, the clause may provide a further nuance of the relationship. Gibson notes that the prepositions **את** and **עם** are frequently indistinguishable and can be used with the sense of ‘in the possession, care, knowledge of’. He cites Isa. 49.4 amongst his examples<sup>94</sup> and thus the justice or just right of the servant is in the possession or care of Yahweh. There is the sense of the servant’s dependence on Yahweh, relying on Yahweh to judge him appropriately. Thus, at the centre of the poem is an expression of faith emphasised through its uniqueness, one which may connote compassion for the servant and a dependence of the servant on Yahweh.

The parallel to **משפטי** is **פעלתי**, a word which has most typically been translated ‘reward’ or ‘recompense’.<sup>95</sup> North notes that the word appears only 14 times in the Hebrew Bible, ten of which are used similarly to that in Isa. 49.4.<sup>96</sup> Yahweh is the one who recompenses the servant, if the object genitive is taken in parallel with the translation of **משפטי**. It should further be noted that this form of the noun **פעלה**, with the 1s prominal suffix, appears nowhere else in the Hebrew Bible. This form of the noun attracts attention, perhaps supplementing the focus drawn by virtue of poetic centrality of v.4c and the placement of the two cola at the end of the first stanza.

The two cola portray an assurance on the part of the servant, an assurance in which Yahweh, the servant’s God, will justify him and provide recompense. The

<sup>93</sup> The term ‘nominal clause’ is chosen over the term ‘verbless clause’ for reasons set out by Gibson (§49, p.52).

<sup>94</sup> The others are 1Sam.9.7; Pr. 2.1; 11.2 (Gibson, §118, Rem.1, p. 148).

<sup>95</sup> North (*Second Isaiah*, p. 55) and Westermann (*Isaiah 40-66*, p. 206) translate ‘my recompense’ and Watts (p. 182) and Hanson (p. 129) ‘my reward’. Koehler-Baumgartner offers ‘reward’ and Vollmer prefers the idea of wages (J. Vollmer, ‘פעל’, in *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament*, vol. 2, ed. by E. Jenni and C. Westermann, trans. by M. E. Biddle (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1997), pp. 1014-1018 (p. 1017). Hermisson has argued that the motif of reward and success informs all of the servant songs. Within 49.1-6, he argues that the servant does not expect a reward from Yahweh despite his failure, something in recognition of his efforts, but the reward of the servant is included within a success that will be brought about by Yahweh. It is thus kept with Yahweh (Hermisson, Lohn, p. 275).

<sup>96</sup> C. R. North, *The Suffering Servant in Deutero-Isaiah*, 2nd edn. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1956), p. 163 [Henceforth: North, *Suffering Servant*<sup>2</sup>]. He only notes a few: Isa. 40.10, 61.8; 62.11 and 65.7, but no other examples are given. The appearances are as follows: Lev. 19.13; Isa. 40.10; 49.4;

structure and language thus combine in order to highlight the assurance expressed by the servant, one which may be infused with a dependence of the servant on Yahweh, the possible compassion of Yahweh for the servant and Yahweh's recompense.

The words spoken in v.4ab deserve some comment due to their juxtaposition with the central cola and the strength of the emotions expressed. The verbs convey a strong sense of effort and suffering, and the nouns the uselessness and pointlessness of the task. **יגע** appears 26 times in the Hebrew Bible and it can cover a wide range of meanings: physical weariness,<sup>97</sup> a tiredness akin to exasperation;<sup>98</sup> a spiritual exhaustion,<sup>99</sup> and a labouring and fatigue resulting from suffering.<sup>100</sup> The piel of the parallel verb **כלה** occurs approximately 140 times in the Hebrew Bible and might be translated 'to finish, fulfil, destroy'. The first singular appears only 16 times,<sup>101</sup> and while these cannot be taken as a comprehensive summary of the word's meaning, it is interesting to note that destruction and death are closely associated with the verb.<sup>102</sup> If he has consumed his strength it is most likely a total consumption. This collocation of verbs, **יגע** with **כלה**, suggest a labouring and exhaustion that may connote death.

The nouns are equally forceful. The twelve occurrences of **ריק** in the Hebrew Bible most clearly describe a pointlessness or helplessness.<sup>103</sup> BDB suggests 'worthlessness' for this occurrence of **תהו**, though ideas such as nothingness, emptiness or uselessness may be adequate.<sup>104</sup> Fox has provided some useful observations

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61.8; 62.11; 65.7; Jer. 31.16; Ez. 29.20; Pss. 17.4; 28.5; 109.20; Pr. 10.16; 11.18; 2 Chr. 15.7.

<sup>97</sup> 2Sam. 23.10; Josh. 24.13.

<sup>98</sup> Isa. 43.24.

<sup>99</sup> Isa. 40.30, 31: the border between the physical and spiritual here may be quite thin.

<sup>100</sup> Jer. 45.3; Pss. 6.7; 69.41; Lam.5.5.

<sup>101</sup> Gen. 24.45; Ex. 32.10; 33.3, 5; Nu. 16.21; 17.10; 25.11; Dt. 32.23; 2Sam.22.39; Isa. 49.4; Ez. 6.12; 7.8; 13.15; 22.31; 43.8; Job 31.16.

<sup>102</sup> Apart from Isa. 49.4, the subject of the qatal is always Yahweh, and always involves the divine wrath which might destroy those on whom it is vented. Of the nine yiqtoles, Yahweh is the subject of six, all of which describe divine destruction. In 2 Sam. 22.39 David uses the verb to describe his defeat of enemies.

<sup>103</sup> Lev. 26.16, 20; Isa. 30.7; 49.4; 65.23; Jer. 51.34; 51.58; Hab.2.13; Pss. 2.1; 4.3; 73.13; Job 39.16. For Isa. 49.4, Koehler-Baumgartner suggest 'for nothing, futilely, vainly'. Shepherd argues that it almost always signifies what is useless, to no purpose or vain and suggests 'to no purpose' for Isa. 49.4 (J. Shepherd, 'ריק', in *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, vol. 3, ed. by W. A. VanGemeren (Pasternoster: Carlisle, 1997), pp. 1106-1109 (p. 1107)).

<sup>104</sup> Konkel has suggested that **תהו** often signifies nothingness, void or emptiness and prefers 'nothing' for



concerning the meaning of the word הבל and he proposes ‘inefficacy’ in 49.4.<sup>105</sup> ‘Vanity’ informs many discussions of the word as it is used in Isa. 49.4.<sup>106</sup> Muilenburg has argued that triads are of great importance in DI, providing a rhetorical means of emphasis,<sup>107</sup> and it certainly seems to be the case here: the three are piled one on top of the other to describe the servant’s emotions. It could further be noted that these three nouns occur nowhere else as a group in the Hebrew Bible and thus a unique collocation strengthens the focus on this triad. This assembly of nouns therefore underscores the futility of the servant’s attempts, contrasts strongly the faith found in v.4cd and paradoxically complements the unusual terminology found in v.4cd.

As mentioned above, the words of v.4 are presumably addressed to Yahweh although they are not explicitly directed at Yahweh. The ‘now’ of v.5 suggests a shift and the extended task of v.6 confirms that Yahweh responds. Through this expression of despondency it almost seems that the servant is seeking an alteration of the situation through a reaction from Yahweh, who is in a position to alleviate any distress. This point is certainly possible if the suffixes of משפטי and ופעלתי are taken as object genitives, indicating the confidence that Yahweh will judge and recompense him appropriately and possibly with some compassion. Thus, it might be suggested that the servant implicitly requests sympathy from Yahweh, asking for an intervention that is alleviation.

Yahweh’s response in a sense reflects an almost regal distance from the servant. Yahweh does not respond directly to the expression of hopelessness by the servant but

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49. 4 (A. H. Konkel, ‘בהר’ in *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, vol. 1, ed. by W. A. VanGemeren (Pasternoster: Carlisle, 1997), pp. 606-609 (p. 607)). Görg has suggested that ideas of briefness, fleetingness (*Flüchtigkeit*) or uselessness, futility or vainness (*Nutzlosigkeit*) can inform the word when it appears in parallel with הבל (M. Görg, ‘תהר’, *ThWAT*, vol. 8, pp. 555-563 (p. 559)).

<sup>105</sup> M. V. Fox, *Qohelet and His Contradictions* (JSOTSup. 71; Sheffield: The Almond Press, 1989), pp. 29, 46.

<sup>106</sup> Koehler-Baumgartner offer ‘vanity’; Fredericks thinks it refers to insubstantial human efforts such as the despair of vain piety in Job 9.29 or Isa. 49.4 (D. C. Fredericks, ‘הבל’, in *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, vol. 1, ed. by W. A. VanGemeren (Pasternoster: Carlisle, 1997), pp. 1005-1006 (p. 1005)); and Seybold sees it as an adverb here, describing an action whose character is exposed as breath or vanity (K. Seybold, ‘הבל’, in *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, vol. 3, ed. by G. J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren, trans. by J. J. Willis, G. W. Bromily and D. E. Green (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), pp. 313-320 (pp. 314-316)).

instead simply expands the task. The extension of the task may in fact suggest a disinterest by Yahweh for the servant's immediate plight and a greater interest in a wider task to the nations, no matter what effect this might have on the servant. The extension of the task to include the nations might, however, indicate that Yahweh possesses a confidence in the effectiveness of the servant. Success might be the expected result rather than failure.<sup>107</sup> If v.4 is interpreted as an implicit plea for intervention, followed immediately by the וַעֲתָהּ of v. 5, then the poem structurally provides Yahweh's reaction immediately. The implication of confidence through extension and the speedy reply may in fact be an expression of sympathy which is appropriate for a despondent servant. Indeed, the vigour of the opening verse, in which the servant addresses the nations, indicates a renewed energy and confidence. It might be fair to suggest, then, that the servant in the juxtaposition of expressions of despair and confidence sought a sympathy from Yahweh which is in turn depicted through the answer, the confidence placed in the servant and the servant's subsequent enthusiasm.

It appears that no one feature of the poem clearly conveys an empathy but once again a combination of factors indicates that empathy informs the relationship. The shared verb אָמַר indicates that it is a relationship based on speaking and hearing, a dialogical relationship. Yahweh acts only on the servant, providing an air of exclusivity to the relationship in which the servant alone is the mediator of Yahweh. Some of Yahweh's actions might contribute to a sense of empathy: Yahweh is in the womb calling the servant; he creates and forms the servant; and he provides an almost paternal protection for the servant. The verbs of which the servant is subject and which relate to Yahweh underscore the nature of the relationship: he is Yahweh's servant, he is Yahweh's light to the nations and he was honoured in Yahweh's eyes. The study of the 'I' references in the poem suggested a close tie between Yahweh's glorification and the servant as light to the nations, and it reiterated that the servant *is* Yahweh's salvation. The two are inextricably bound. The terminology found in v.4cd and its rhetorical placement draw attention to it and v.4ab may contain overtones of a call for compassion

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<sup>107</sup> Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, pp. 390-391.

<sup>108</sup> Cf. Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 212.

from a distressed servant and a dependence of the servant on Yahweh. The strong emotions expressed in v.4ab may imply a request for alleviation and thus a cry for sympathy may be present. Yahweh responds quickly, in structural terms, with an extension of the task of the servant and a divine confidence in the servant can be presumed. Although the poem does not describe the alleviation of the servant's difficulties explicitly, the energy and enthusiasm of v.1ab indicate an altered attitude. The discussion in chapter three<sup>109</sup> noted that empathy can be elicited through visual cues and an inference of the situation of the other person. In total, the passage describes an intimate relationship in which Yahweh empathises with the servant.

#### 5.4.2 The Servant/Israel Relationship

The mere statement of this relationship causes difficulties due to the *crux interpretum* of v.3. If the servant is Israel, goes the argument, the servant has a mission to Israel, a task difficult to envision. If the 'Israel' of v. 3b is deleted, then the conundrum is happily avoided; if it is maintained, then an exposition is in order whereby the relationship between the servant 'Israel' and the entity described in vv.5-6 is explained. The difficulties surrounding the servant Israel's mission to Israel may be avoided if the infinitives of vv.5-6 are taken as gerundives. Budde, for example, has argued this case,<sup>110</sup> drawing criticism from North,<sup>111</sup> and more recently Mettinger's repetition of these proposals<sup>112</sup> has been rejected in strong terms by Hermisson.<sup>113</sup> Some have proposed the deletion of the word **יִשְׂרָאֵל** from v.3 on the basis of metre.<sup>114</sup> This

<sup>109</sup> Cf. Sec. 3.4.2.

<sup>110</sup> K. Budde, 'The So-Called "Ebed-Yahweh Songs" and the Meaning of the Term "Servant of Yahweh" in Isaiah, chaps. 40-55', *American Journal of Theology* 3 (1899), pp. 499-540 (pp. 519-523).

<sup>111</sup> North observes that such an interpretation, while grammatically possible, is awkward and involved (North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 189). He also mentions that Hitzig was the first to propose that the infinitives be taken as gerundives (*Suffering Servant*<sup>2</sup>, p. 30).

<sup>112</sup> T. N. D. Mettinger, *A Farewell to the Servant Songs: A Critical Examination of an Exegetical Axiom* (Lund: CWK Gleerup, 1983), pp. 34-37.

<sup>113</sup> Hermisson contends that v.5 would then produce an unusual phrase which no man would speak ('who formed me (Jacob/Israel) from the womb to be a servant, so he might lead Jacob back to him') and the prophet in 44.21-22 is commissioned to bring Israel back to Yahweh (H.-J. Hermisson, 'Voreiliger Abschied von den Gottesknechtliedern', *Theologische Rundschau* 49 (1984), pp. 209-222 (p. 220)).

<sup>114</sup> Orlinsky argues that metre might warrant deletion (Orlinsky, p. 85).

expedient too has been criticised<sup>115</sup> and the difficulty in establishing metre in Hebrew poetry might not warrant this excision.<sup>116</sup> Westermann provides a useful summary of arguments favouring the deletion<sup>117</sup> but his proposals can be countered with legitimate alternatives.<sup>118</sup>

If arguments do not support deletion, the mission of the servant Israel to Israel still deserves explanation. Much of the discussion concerning the possibility of the servant Israel's task to Israel is certainly related to the proposals for the identity of the servant discussed in the first chapter.<sup>119</sup> Thus, a short summary of some proposals concerning the identity of the servant Israel in 49.1-6 will precede some observations more directly relevant to the task at hand. Westermann, as mentioned above, seems to favour the individual view,<sup>120</sup> as does Schwartzentruber,<sup>121</sup> Eaton<sup>122</sup> and Wilcox and Paton-Williams.<sup>123</sup> Laato argues that the Israel of v.3 is the loyal, active servant and that of vv.5-6 the disloyal, passive servant.<sup>124</sup> The servant Israel is not an individual, however, but a collective entity. In this interpretation of the servant as a group within Israel he has recently been followed by Mettinger.<sup>125</sup> Muilenburg argues that the servant

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<sup>115</sup> Cf. North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 187; Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 565.

<sup>116</sup> Though Watson favours a stress based theory of metre for Hebrew poetry, he notes the many theories and difficulties in the procedure (W. G. E. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry: A Guide to its Techniques*, 2nd edn. (JSOTSup. 26; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), pp. 87-113). R. Alter too forwards some reservations about metre (R. Alter, *The Art of Biblical Poetry* (New York: Basic Books, 1985), pp. 8-9).

<sup>117</sup> He admits that the history of the text favours retention. However, he thinks that grammar and metre might warrant deletion; 'Israel' appears in the middle of two half-verses; the verse makes good sense without 'Israel'; DI never uses 'Israel' except in parallel to Jacob; the other songs never give the servant a name; the mission of Israel to Israel precludes the collective view; and he wonders how Israel could say 'from the womb of my mother' or what sense could be made from a reference to Israel's mouth (Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66*, pp. 211-212).

<sup>118</sup> Muilenburg favours retention and his comments on Kennicott 96, the only manuscript lacking 'Israel', are helpful (*Isaiah 40-66*, p. 567). Wilcox and Paton-Williams provide a series of arguments which in essence counter Westermann's observations concerning the parallel between Israel/Jacob, the naming of the servant and the use of metaphors (P. Wilcox and D. Paton-Williams, 'The Servant Songs in Deutero-Isaiah', *JSOT* 42 (1988), pp. 79-102 (cf. pp. 91-93)).

<sup>119</sup> Cf. Chapter 1, Sec. 1.3.2.

<sup>120</sup> Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66*, pp. 211-212.

<sup>121</sup> Schwartzentruber, p. 75.

<sup>122</sup> J. H. Eaton, *Festal Drama in Deutero-Isaiah* (London: SPCK, 1979), p. 64.

<sup>123</sup> Wilcox and Paton-Williams, pp. 91-92.

<sup>124</sup> Laato, *Servant and Cyrus*, pp. 35, 108.

<sup>125</sup> T. N. D. Mettinger, 'In Search of the Hidden Structure: YHWH as King in Isaiah 40-55' in *Writing and Reading the Scroll of Isaiah: Studies of an Interpretive Tradition*, vol. 1, ed. by C. C. Broyles and C. A. Evans (FIOTL 1; Leiden: Brill, 1997), pp. 143-154.

is Israel even although 49.1-6 presents the greatest obstacle to this collective interpretation.<sup>126</sup> Sawyer has suggested that the Zion and servant stories run in parallel. With reference to Isa. 40.9, he proposes that “the female figure who is elsewhere called Zion, is sent as a herald of good tidings to Zion/Jerusalem and the cities of Judah”. It is therefore possible that Israel/Jacob is “described as having a mission to Israel”.<sup>127</sup> Melugin notes that the text in chapter 49 clearly identifies the servant with Israel and the collection as a whole seems to understand the servant as Israel. The concepts of the ideal Israel, remnant Israel or corporate Israel are but hypotheses not stated in the text. “When one reads 49,1-6 without presupposing one or another of these theories”, he writes,

one is struck by the fact that the text itself gives us no clues to solve our problem. We simply have a servant Israel who is nevertheless in some fashion given the task of restoring the tribes of Israel. Precisely what is meant is not explained; it is as if the ambiguity was deliberate.<sup>128</sup>

He later acknowledges that within the collection “the servant is sometimes closely related to the prophet who has spoken the oracles in Isaiah 40-55”.<sup>129</sup> It seems as though “the collection has deliberately blurred the line between prophet and Israel”.<sup>130</sup> Hanson’s metaphorical interpretation, in which the servant at times seems to be prophet, prominent individuals, obedient Israel or the faithful remnant,<sup>131</sup> reflects an attempt to explain adequately the ambiguity perceived by Melugin.

This selection of choices results in part from the interpretation of the poem in its DI context and it is precisely at this point that Clines’ example from Isa. 53 might assist in a move beyond these difficulties. It might be useful, therefore, to study the poem without reference to its DI context. Thus, 49.1-6 presents a singular entity, called the servant Israel, who is sent by Yahweh to return the tribes of Jacob and the preserved

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<sup>126</sup> Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 565 and also p. 408.

<sup>127</sup> J. F. A. Sawyer, ‘Daughter of Zion and Servant of the Lord in Isaiah: A Comparison’, *JOT* 44 (1989), pp. 89-107 (pp. 103-104) [Henceforth: Sawyer].

<sup>128</sup> R. F. Melugin, *The Formation of Isaiah 40-55* (BZAW 141; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1976), p. 146 [Henceforth: Melugin, *Formation*].

<sup>129</sup> Melugin, *Formation*, p. 147.

<sup>130</sup> Melugin, *Formation*, p. 147.

<sup>131</sup> Hanson, p. 128.

of Israel. Two Israels are therefore presumed, but it is not assumed that the servant necessarily signifies a singular person because it is presented in the singular. It may in fact be a collective identity. In the first instance, then, the interaction of the servant Israel and the preserved of Israel and tribes of Jacob will be studied in an effort to discover more about the nature of the relationship rather than attempting to solve the *crux interpretum*. In the following discussion, 'servant' will refer to the entity who speaks the poem and is called 'my servant Israel' in v.3, and 'Israel' will refer to the plural entity to whom the servant is sent.

This discussion provides an extremely useful transition and insight into the servant/Israel relationship. Both personae partake, as it were, of the concept of Israel. One is the servant Israel and the other the preserved of Israel or the tribes of Jacob. In Isa. 53 the servant and *we* were of the same nature, and the servant and the reed and wick in 42.1-4 were compared to each other. Here, the servant is once again one with those with whom he interacts. Both are Israel in a sense and this continuity may provide the groundwork for a relationship based on, or at least influenced by, empathy.

Preceding sections have used repetitions as an entry into the study of the relationships and such repetitions are of some use here. Jacob/Israel are the subject of only one verb in the poem, the  $\eta\sigma\alpha'$  of v.5d, and thus the servant shares no verbs with this entity. Five of the nine verbs of which the servant is subject, however, are related to his interaction with Israel. In v.4ab, he states that he laboured and consumed his strength for nothing, presumably a reference to his first task with Israel, and in vv. 5-6 three infinitives indicate that he was to return and raise up Israel. Both sets of verbs provide some insight into the relationship. In the preceding section the language of v.4 was studied in detail and the despair and despondency of the servant is palpable because of it. It might be suggested, then, that great effort was apparently exerted and great despondency followed. The servant was particularly committed to a task to raise up or restore an entity of whom he is a part. Apparent failure brought about a despondency proportional to the commitment.

The infinitives are similarly helpful in a study of the relationship. The servant is to return and restore Israel to Yahweh, as indicated in vv.5-6. The first mention of the

servant's original task occurs in v.5c, in which the servant reports that he was sent by Yahweh to bring Jacob back to Yahweh, and the last specific reference to his first mission is found in v.6c, in which Yahweh states that the servant was to bring back the tribes of Jacob. North wonders whether any significance should be attached to the hiphil and polel forms of שׁוּב, and concludes that the poet was probably concerned with both the political and spiritual.<sup>132</sup> More important than the fine distinction in meaning is the repetition of the root שׁוּב, which is found only in these two verses. It appears first in the description of the servant's initial task and it occurs in the final reference in v.6c. It thus encloses the servant's first mission and as such emphasises the return of Israel and Jacob to Yahweh. Jacob/Israel are thus rhetorically enclosed by a servant who is one with them and who was to return them to their God.

In addition to the connection under the rubric 'Israel' and the observations granted by virtue of the verbs, traces of similar experiences encountered by the two personae may be implied. The נִצְרִי of v. 6c in the ketiv is from the adjective נִצְרִי, which might be rendered 'preserved';<sup>133</sup> the qere is the passive plural participle of נִצַּר, which also means preserved. Because scholarly opinion<sup>134</sup> and the qere support the participle, it will be accepted. The passive participle occurs only six times in the Hebrew Bible and judgment may inform the context in which the participles appear elsewhere.<sup>135</sup> Overtones of judgment may inform the reference to the preserved of Israel in 49.6, particularly if they are to be returned to Yahweh: a return suggests a straying away and is compatible with judgment. The preserved may therefore have experienced no small amount of suffering through which they did survive. Some scholars seem to accept that the preserved of Israel did suffer. Koehler-Baumgartner translates 'spared'; Wagner thinks that it refers to those in the deportation or the diaspora;<sup>136</sup> and Hanson

<sup>132</sup> Though the polel contains political references in Isa. 58.12, Jer. 50.19 and Ez. 39.27, moral or spiritual connotations in v.5 and political in v.6 may be intended. Style too could account for the differences (North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 189).

<sup>133</sup> Cf. BDB. Watts translates the ketiv 'protected' (p. 184).

<sup>134</sup> Cf. Laato, *Servant and Cyrus*, pp. 106-108; Watts, p. 184.

<sup>135</sup> Cf. Isa. 1.8; 65.4; Ez. 6.12; Pr. 7.10. In Isa. 48.6 Yahweh reveals to stubborn Israel new and 'preserved' things.

<sup>136</sup> S. Wagner, 'נִצַּר', *ThWAT*, vol. 5, pp. 577-587 (p. 584).

speaks of ‘battered Israel’.<sup>137</sup> Though these latter interpretations may depend on a proposed historical context, the use of the phrase in other judgmental contexts does suggest that the preserved of Israel did suffer.

In the notes to the translation, the arguments of Landy concerning  $\text{הסא}$  were presented and they were tentatively accepted. Certainly the qere  $\text{לו}$  could be taken and the verse would describe Israel gathered to Yahweh as a part of the return. If overtones of suffering and judgment inform the idea of ‘preserved’ in v.6, then it would not be outside the bounds of possibility that the gathering here refers to the prevention of death of the preserved. The niph'al of  $\text{הסא}$  occurs 81 times in the Hebrew Bible. If Isa. 49.5 is excluded, eight of these are negated<sup>138</sup> while only one occurs with  $\text{לו}$ .<sup>139</sup> Thus, a combination with  $\text{אל}$  would be more common than one with  $\text{לו}$ . Four of the eight which are negated exist in contexts describing or suggesting death<sup>140</sup> and indeed the niph'al frequently refers to death when it is not negated.<sup>141</sup> Sawyer has suggested that the ideas of gathering or assembling may have given rise to the meaning of death or eradication. This ambivalence might be found in Isa. 49.5.<sup>142</sup> A double entendre might be posited and a gathering which connotes death is justifiable. Such an interpretation indicates that the servant was to have had a role not just in returning Israel to Yahweh but in the maintenance of the life of Israel. The brooding possibility of death might explain the commitment of the servant and would mesh quite well with the preserved who may have faced judgment and suffering.

If, then, the servant is a part of Israel, it is possible that he experienced the same suffering which is implied in the poem and was called from within Israel to return Israel to Yahweh that it might thereby avoid death. If this possibility is not accepted due to the lack of explicit descriptions, then it might be suggested that Israel has faced suffering, as

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<sup>137</sup> Hanson, p. 130.

<sup>138</sup> Ex. 9.19; 2Sam. 14.14; Isa. 60.20; Jer. 8.2; 25.33; Ez. 29.5; Job 27.19; 2Clu. 30.3. Gen. 29.7 might be added because it is negated by context.

<sup>139</sup> Ex. 32.26.

<sup>140</sup> 2Sam. 14.14; Jer. 8.2; 25.33; Ez. 29.5.

<sup>141</sup> Cf. Gen. 25.8, 17; 35.29; 49.29, 33; Nu. 20. 24; 27.13; 31.2; Dt. 32.50; 2Kgs.22.30; Ju. 2.10.

<sup>142</sup> J. F. A. Sawyer, ‘ $\text{רָבַק}$ ’, in *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament*, vol. 3, ed. by E. Jenni and C. Westermann, trans. by M. E. Biddle (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1997), pp. 1099-1101 (p. 1100).



indicated by 'preserved', and is to be returned to Yahweh that it might not be gathered. The servant, as a part of Israel called to return Israel to Yahweh, cannot but be aware of this plight even if he did not experience it himself.

Several features found in the poem when considered in combination strongly suggest an empathy for Israel by the servant. If the 'Israel' of 49.3 is maintained, then a servant Israel is sent to a preserved of Israel and the tribes of Jacob. Both partake of the concept of Israel and thus the servant is one with those with whom he interacts. The verbs of which the servant is subject and which relate to the interaction of the two personae indicate a great effort for Israel and the enveloping of the Israel he is to return to Yahweh. The preserved of Israel may well have suffered in judgment and this judgment and suffering might suggest that the servant was to act in order that Israel would not perish. Thus, a servant who is united with the preserved of Israel under the rubric 'Israel' and whose task is presented as one which is to both envelop and return them may have participated in the implied suffering. At the very least, he would not have been unaware of the possibility of suffering experienced by those who had been preserved. These features in total suggest that an empathy from the servant for Israel informed the relationship.

#### **5.4.3 The Servant/Nations Relationship**

The task of the servant to the nations is in many ways continuous with the mission to Israel. Yahweh explicitly stated that it was too small a thing to return the preserved of Israel to him and then proceeded to enlarge the task. That Yahweh extends his task in v.6 without necessarily abrogating the first suggests that the limited task to Israel may be subsumed within the wider task. Indeed, the servant calls on the nations to hear and pay attention to him in v.1ab, which indicates that the preparation in which his mouth becomes a sharp sword is applicable to his wider task. Furthermore, the discussion of the rhetorical structure of the poem noted that the mission to the nations served as a framework within which the preparation of the servant, the perceived failure and the mention of the first task occurred. These internal events, then, provide the rationale for the servant's introductory address to the nations, found in v.1a, and the task

as a light to the nations, found in v.6d. The interaction between Yahweh and the servant, most centrally depicted in v.4cd, seems to act as the heart or centre of the servant's task to the nations.

The nations are the subject of only two verbs in the poem, the imperatives of v.1ab, and as a result the two personae do not share any verbs which might provide insight into the relationship. The only verb of which the servant is a subject and which relates to the interaction with the nations is found in v.6e. It is an infinitive construct in which Yahweh states that he made the servant 'to be my salvation to the end of the earth'. The unusual use of **ישועתי** has already been discussed and it could further be noted that **אור גוים** appears only here and in Isa. 42.6. Otherwise this precise collocation is not found in the Hebrew Bible. Thus, the servant's task amongst the nations is described in terminology which is almost unique in the Hebrew Bible.

The servant as light to the nations has caused some discussion amongst scholars. Gelston argues that there is unlikely to be any difference between the **עמים** of Isa. 51.4 and the **גוים** of 42.6 and 49.6, in which the nations are the Gentiles. He notes the arguments of de Boer, Orlinsky and Whybray, all of whom, he suggests, see the political restoration as a demonstration of Yahweh's world-wide sovereignty which the nations recognise for the first time.<sup>143</sup> The illumination, according to Gelston, is probably the demonstration to them that Yahweh is the supreme God.<sup>144</sup> In a discussion of light within the Book of Isaiah, Clements notes that the phrase may mean that the Gentile nations share in salvation or that the nations will see that the time for Israel's deliverance will come. Clements argues that 49.6 suggests the former.<sup>145</sup> Orlinsky examines 49.1-6, 49.7 and 49.22-26 and concludes precisely the opposite: it is eisegesis to make a light of nations mean Israel in exile is to bring redemption to the world.<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> For the discussions of the other scholars, cf. de Boer (p. 92); Orlinsky (p. 117); and Whybray (*Isaiah 40-66*, p. 139).

<sup>144</sup> With these observations Gelston argues that it is easier to view the servant as Israel (A. Gelston, 'Universalism in Second Isaiah', *JTS* 43 (1992), pp. 377-398 (pp. 393-394).

<sup>145</sup> R. E. Clements, 'A Light to the Nations: A Central Theme in the Book of Isaiah', in *Forming Prophetic Literature: Essays on Isaiah and the Twelve in Honor of J. D. W. Watts* (JSOTSup. 235; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), pp. 57-69 (p. 67).

<sup>146</sup> Orlinsky, pp. 100-102.

Landy notes the parallel with *ישועה* and wonders whether the light is salvation itself, in which the prophet as light embodies salvation, or whether the light is that which brings salvation, in which the illumination is teleological. The distinction, Landy concludes, does not necessarily stand: the illumination is the prophet, possibly experienced as salvation, and he provides a vision of an ethical and political truth.<sup>147</sup> Differences of opinion are inevitable, but the poem seems to suggest that the servant is to *bring* salvation, as indicated by the address in v.1ab, and the terminology suggests that the servant *is* Yahweh's salvation and *is* a light to the nations. No indications of closer ties between the servant and the nations exist within the poem, however. Despite the address to the nations and the status of the servant, a distinction between the two remains rhetorically clear.

It was noted above that the servant addresses this entire poem to the nations, and within this poem is the reported speech of v.4. This verse contains the expression of deep despondency and confidence, as mentioned above. The verse is not specifically addressed to Yahweh, although repetitions, context and response certainly indicate that Yahweh is addressed and hears the exclamation. The absence of an addressee and the placement of this verse within a wider address to the nations might suggest that these words are to have some effect on the nations listening. As such, the words may be intended to elicit a response of empathy from the nations for the servant expressing these emotions, and thus they may be drawn into the message. It cannot be proposed on the basis of this observation, however, that an empathy necessarily existed between the two personae. The Yahweh/servant relationship contained enough material to suggest empathy, as did the servant/Israel relationship, but the servant/nations relationship is not nearly so rich or complex. It might therefore be best to suggest that the utterance may have been intended as a rhetorical device meant to elicit empathy from the nations but no more can be said.

In sum, the relationship described between the servant and the nations is marked by a continuation of the original task to Israel. The structure of the poem, in which the references to the nations provide an envelope, emphasises that this

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<sup>147</sup> Landy, p. 65, n. 4.

relationship ultimately derives from the Yahweh/servant relationship. The reference to the servant as light parallels the reference to the servant as Yahweh's salvation and suggests that the servant is to bring salvation to the nations and/or be that salvation. The description of despondency may be intended to elicit empathy from the nations for the servant but it cannot be presumed that empathy necessarily informs the relationship as a result. No suggestions of empathy can be found within this relationship.

#### **5.4.4 The Yahweh/Israel and Yahweh/Nations Relationships**

The poem does not describe any direct contact between Yahweh and the nations and is thus not dissimilar to the preceding poem. It was noted above that Yahweh acts exclusively on the servant and the servant interacts with both Israel and the nations. Yahweh, however, explicitly attempted to bring Israel back to him that it might not be gathered, a possible reference to death. So too, Yahweh sends the servant to the nations and tells him to be a light to nations and his salvation, an action that does not necessarily exclude Israel. In both cases, the poem suggests that Yahweh attempts to improve the lot of Israel and the nations. This attempt may reflect a divine sympathy for Israel and the nations, and some scholars mentioned in chapter three<sup>148</sup> argued that sympathy is often based in empathy. The rhetorical continuity between Yahweh and Israel or the nations, however, seems to be lacking. An implication of Yahweh's sympathy for Israel and the nations may underlie the poem but once again the poem lacks data to propose any more.

#### **5.5 Reader Empathy for the Personae in Isa. 49.1-6**

Many of the features mentioned in previous paragraphs contribute to the establishment of an empathetic relationship between the reader and personae in the poem. One means of establishing this relationship may derive from the ambiguity in addressees. The entire poem is transparently addressed to the nations and the reported speech of v.4 presumably addressed to Yahweh. The addressee of v.4 is not explicitly stated, however, and thus the reader and audience are as much addressees of this

statement as Yahweh and/or the nations. The reader may therefore be told directly what the servant was feeling after his initial failure and may therefore be drawn into the text by virtue of this participation. Some scholars mentioned in the notes to the translation have suggested that אָמַר be translated 'I thought',<sup>149</sup> thereby depicting an inner dialogue to which the reader now becomes privy. Extrapolating from this interpretation, the reader may be drawn into the poem through this insight into the inner thoughts of the servant and invited to participate with the emotions expressed through this rhetorical technique.

The lack of a clear addressee serves another related function. The servant is conveyed as one who is simply bursting forth with a deeply felt conflict of despair and confidence in order to alleviate pain. The lack of an addressee would thus point to the sheer despondency that seeks relief not from a direct address but from the catharsis of expression. In sum, then, the lack of a clear addressee for v.4 may have a threefold rhetorical effect: the reader becomes the addressee as legitimately as Yahweh or the nations; the utterance may in fact be an insight into the inner thoughts of the servant; and it may be a device meant to indicate the depth of emotion felt by the servant.

Landy has argued that the prophet's emptiness and failure is found at the centre of the poem and it was suggested previously that the middle of the poetic structure is found in v.4cd, an expression of hope and confidence. Two observations can be made here. In a sense Landy may be correct. The poem virtually centres on the perceived futility of the servant and implies that this emotion is vital to an understanding of the servant and his tasks. It seems to be a part of the turning point from the more restricted task to Israel to the wider, extended task. Secondly, one might argue that this cry of hopelessness is intentionally placed near the centre of the poem precisely because it presents an unusually jarring note. The vibrancy and energy of v.1ab is apparent, in which the servant addresses the nations with enthusiasm; the expression of faith in v.4cd may represent a turn in the perception of the servant, in which he moves from despair to the hope that Yahweh will judge him fairly and possibly compassionately; and v.5ef,

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<sup>148</sup> Cf. Sec. 3.4.2.

<sup>149</sup> Cf. Sec. 5.2.2.4.

which seems to be a parenthetical aside following the mention of the first task, is imbued with a confidence and faith not dissimilar to that found in v.4cd. The despondency thus provides an unusual note in the depiction of the attitude of the servant. As the anomalous expression it therefore attracts some attention and its juxtaposition with v.4cd confronts the reader with a vivid tension.

One might argue, then, that the atypical but momentous expression of despondency and despair might ask that the reader empathise with the servant. He has attempted with great effort to return those of whom he is a part to Yahweh. This task, which is presumably for the benefit of the preserved of Israel, seems to meet with failure. Rejection by those of whom one is a part may elicit greater despair and perhaps a proportionally greater empathy from the reader. The reaction of the servant may be viewed even more empathetically by the reader because the servant was given such apparently efficacious, God-given tools and was disappointed by them in the first instance. In addition, the servant may perceive or experience failure in the extended task to the nations because it has been experienced previously. Empathy may therefore be elicited for that which the servant has experienced and for that which may once again result. One might further suggest that this expression of despair, juxtaposed with the confidence of v.4cd, lucidly summarises a tension within the servant, one in which hopelessness exists alongside a faith and confidence. This tension too is a state which might evoke empathy from the reader.

If the term 'preserved' connotes suffering and 'gather' suggests death, then empathy might be elicited for the preserved of Israel. However, it cannot but be noted that the preserved do not seem to have responded to the work of the servant despite his preparation and his effort. If so, then any notions empathy need to be balanced with the recognition that this entity may be of such obduracy that even the tools provided by Yahweh and the exhaustive efforts of the servant proved of no avail. This obtuseness may mitigate against empathy.

In the discussion of Isa. 53, it was noted that first person language frequently draws the reader into the poem and asks the reader to focus on the speaker. The servant presents this entire poem in the first person, with some reported speech from himself and

Yahweh, and thus the reader cannot but focus on the servant. The reader encounters not only first person language but a report which bursts with an emotional energy combining both confidence and faith with a dark despair. The poem, in the combination of first person language and tangible affect cannot but draw the reader into the poem and into the character of the servant. That which is described by the servant may therefore elicit greater empathy because it expresses firsthand the thoughts and feelings of the servant.

Figurative and metaphorical language may facilitate empathy for the servant. The image of Yahweh entering the womb and the protection offered to his servant as sword and arrow intimated the possibility of empathy. The servant as a light to nations, parallel to the description of the servant as Yahweh's salvation, imagistically describes both the servant's state and his task. When Yahweh states that the servant, a living entity, is 'my salvation', he juxtaposes the physical with an idea or concept which is less tangible, a procedure which is metaphorical.<sup>150</sup> These images are a concrete means through which the reader might envision the servant. A reader can visualise Yahweh in the womb and protecting the servant, the servant as a light to the nations and the salvation of Yahweh as the servant, who gives concrete form to Yahweh's salvation. Thus, the metaphorical language may be vital as a method of drawing the reader into an empathetic relationship.

In Isa. 53 the difficulties in identification were likened to an anonymity which facilitated empathy, and in 42.1-4 the lack of identification may have served a similar purpose. Here, the personae are explicitly named and it would therefore be inappropriate to suggest that anonymity contributes to the elicitation of an empathy from the reader for the servant. One might wonder, however, if the difficulties in identifying the servant may encourage participation with the poem. The ambiguity concerning the identity of the servant invites the reader to examine the possibilities, weighing arguments for or against the proposals summarised in Section 4.2. This conundrum, however, arises due to the context of DI. If Clines' method is followed, then within the context of the poem the reader simply encounters one entity entitled 'the servant Israel'

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<sup>150</sup> Cf. G. Lakoff, 'The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor' in *Metaphor and Thought*, 2nd edn., ed. by A. Ortony (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 202-251. Theories of metaphor will be

that interacts with another entity called 'the preserved of Israel'. It is not questions of identity which are foremost but the nature of the interactions, the perceived failure, the extended task and, perhaps most importantly, the close connection between the two entities called 'Israel'.

In sum, therefore, the poem provides a number of formal criteria through which the reader may feel an empathy for the servant and possibly Israel. The reader may therefore be better able to intuit an empathy amongst characters. Of great importance is the expression of despondency in v.4ab and possibly 4cd, central to the structure of the poem. The absence of an explicit addressee for this utterance of despondency also contributes. This absence may allow the reader to be the addressee as validly as Yahweh or the nations, it may provide an insight into the inner thoughts of the servant and it may convey implicitly the sheer emotion of the servant. The first person language of the servant, one which describes a variety of emotions, similarly is essential in eliciting sympathy and empathy. Figurative language is once again of great use in the description of these emotions within the poem and in the provision of images accessible to the reader. Anonymity is not strictly relevant but the use of names indicates formally the close connection between the servant Israel and Israel.

## 5.6 Conclusions

The preceding discussion has suggested that empathy exists within 49.1-6: there are indications of an empathy by Yahweh for the servant and the servant for Israel. It can similarly be asserted that the poem formally invites the reader to empathise with the servant and thus participate in the empathy which exists within the poem. If, then, this second servant song exhibits an interest in empathy then the third song too deserves to be studied in an effort to uncover any concern with empathy. This will be the task of the next chapter.

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discussed in some detail in chapter 9.



## Chapter 6

### Empathy and Isaiah 50.4-11

#### 6.1 Introduction

The preceding three chapters have suggested that empathy can be found between the personae in the first, second and fourth songs isolated by Duhm and that elements within these chapters contribute to the elicitation of reader empathy for personae in the text. In this chapter, the third song isolated by Duhm will be studied in an effort to uncover any indications of empathy within the poem or rhetorical characteristics which might elicit empathy from the reader.

#### 6.2 Translation and Notes

##### 6.2.1 Text and Translation

MT <sup>1</sup>	Verse	Translation
<p>אֲדַנִּי יְהוָה גָּתַן לִי  לְשׁוֹן לְמוֹדִים  לְדַעַת לְעוֹת אֶת-יָעַר  דְּבַר יָעִיר  בְּבֹקֶר בְּבֹקֶר יָעִיר לִי אָזֶן  לְשִׁמְעַ כְּלַמוּדִים:</p>	Isa. 50.4	<p>Adonai Yahweh gave me  A tongue of disciples  To know (how) to support the  weary with a word.  He awakens morning by  morning,  He awakens my ear  To hear like disciples.</p>
<p>אֲדַנִּי יְהוָה פָּתַח-לִי אָזֶן  וְאֲנֹכִי לֹא מְרִיתִי  אֲחֹרֶר לֹא נִסּוּגְתִּי:</p>	Isa. 50.5	<p>Adonai Yahweh opened my ear,  And I, I did not rebel,  Backwards I did not turn;</p>
<p>גִּבִּי נָתַתִּי לְמַכִּים  וּלְחֵי לְמַרְטִים  פְּנֵי לֹא הִסְתַּרְתִּי  מִכְלָמוֹת וְרֹק:</p>	Isa. 50.6	<p>My back I gave to those who smite,  And my cheeks to those who pluck  beards;  My face I did not hide,  From insults and spit.</p>
<p>וְאֲדַנִּי יְהוָה יַעֲזֹר-לִי  עַל-כֵּן לֹא נִכְלַמְתִּי  עַל-כֵּן שִׁמְתִּי פְּנֵי כַחֲלָמִישׁ</p>	Isa. 50.7	<p>Adonai Yahweh helps me,  Therefore I was not humiliated,  Therefore I made my face like flint,</p>

<sup>1</sup> The division of verses is set out on the basis of that found in BHS. The division of vv.4 and 8 will be discussed in some detail below.

וַאֲדַע כִּי־לֹא אֶבְוֹשׁ:		And I knew that I would not be ashamed.
קָרוֹב מִצְדִּיקִי מִי־יִרְיֵב אֶתִּי נִעְמְדָה יַחַד מִי־בְעַל מִשְׁפָּטִי יִגַּשׁ אֵלָי:	Isa. 50.8	Near is the one who vindicates me. Who will contend with me? Let us stand together. Who is my adversary? Let him draw near to me.
הֲנִן אֲדַגֵּי יְהוָה יַעְזֹר־לִי מִי־הוּא יִרְשִׁיעֵנִי הֲנִן כָּלֶם כַּבֵּגַד יִבְלוּ עַשׂ יֵאָכְלֶם:	Isa. 50.9	Behold, Adonai Yahweh helps me: Who is he that will condemn me? Behold, all of them like a garment will wear out, A moth will consume them.
מִי בְכֶם יִרָא יְהוָה שָׁמַע בְּקוֹל עַבְדּוֹ אֲשֶׁר הִלֵּךְ חֹשְׁכִים וְאֵין נֹגֵה לוֹ יִבְטַח בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה וַיִּשְׁעֶן בְּאֱלֹהָיו:	Isa. 50.10	Who amongst you fears Yahweh, Heeding the voice of his servant, Who walks in darkness And there is no light for him? He trusts in the name of Yahweh And leans on his God.
הֲנִן כָּלְכֶם קֹדְחֵי אֵשׁ מֵאֲזֵרֵי זִיקוֹת לָכוּ בְּאוּר אֲשֶׁכֶם וּבְזִיקוֹת בְּעֵרְתֶם מִיַּדִּי הִיְתָה־זֹאת לָכֶם לְמַעַצְבָּה תִּשְׁכַּבּוּן פִּי:	Isa. 50.11	Behold, all of you kindlers of fire, Those who gird brands! Go in the flame of your fire And in brands you will be consumed. From my hand this will befall you: In torment you will lie down.

## 6.2.2 Notes on the Translation

### 6.2.2.1 Isa. 50.4

For Vulgate translates לעות *sustentare*<sup>2</sup> and Targum לאלפא<sup>3</sup>. North favours something like ‘sustain’ or ‘console’.<sup>4</sup> Westermann translates ‘to answer’<sup>5</sup> and Morgenstern takes לענת<sup>6</sup>. For את-יעף North notes that the accusative particle can occur with a word lacking the article, as in Isa. 41.7. He also thinks the דבר could be taken as

<sup>2</sup> ‘to sustain’.

<sup>3</sup> ‘to teach’.

<sup>4</sup> C. R. North, *The Second Isaiah* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), p.201[Henceforth: North, *Second Isaiah*].

<sup>5</sup> C. Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66: A Commentary*, trans. by D. M. G. Stalker (London: SCM Press, 1969), p. 225 [Henceforth: Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66*].

<sup>6</sup> J. Morgenstern, ‘The suffering servant-a New Solution’, *VT* 11 (1961), pp. 292-320; 406-431 (p. 311) [Henceforth: Morgenstern].

an accusative of instrument.<sup>7</sup> Watts argues that דבר is best translated as an adverb, proposing ‘with a word’ or ‘by a word’.<sup>8</sup> Gibson’s discussion of nouns and adjectives as adverbs supports Watts and indicates that דבר could indeed be translated ‘with a word’.<sup>9</sup> For לדעת...דבר, LXX reads τῷ γυνῶναι ἐν καιρῷ ἡνίκα δεῖ εἰπεῖν λόγον<sup>10</sup> and Syriac ܕܐܘܪܘܟܢܐ ܕܐܘܪܘܟܢܐ ܕܐܘܪܘܟܢܐ.<sup>11</sup> North thinks the first יעיר should be deleted and notes that it is marked by pasek, “an indication that early scribes were dubious about it”.<sup>12</sup> Whybray concurs.<sup>13</sup> For both יעיר 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> reads ויעיר. Syriac takes the first יעיר with the first בבקר and then reads the second בבקר with the following words, which gives ܕܐܘܪܘܟܢܐ ܕܐܘܪܘܟܢܐ ܕܐܘܪܘܟܢܐ.<sup>14</sup> Both instances of יעיר are retained here for reasons set out below. They are translated in the English present because the second follows בבקר בבקר, which may indicate continuity, as suggested below. Gibson has argued that yiqtol can refer to a range of actions in the present describing typical conduct or “actions repeated or continued over a longer or shorter period”.<sup>15</sup> LXX seems to read כלמודים with the following verse, giving καὶ ἡ παιδεία κυρίου ἀνοίγει μου τὰ ὦτα.<sup>16</sup>

### 6.2.2.2 Isa. 50.5

For יהוה 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> reads אלוהים.

<sup>7</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 201.

<sup>8</sup> J. D. W. Watts, *Isaiah 34-66* (WBC 25; Waco: Word, 1987), p. 196 [Henceforth: Watts].

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Gibson, §117d, p. 144.

<sup>10</sup> ‘to know in the right time when it is proper to speak a word’. Watts notes that the LXX takes לעות as a denominative verb from עת, time (Watts, p. 196).

<sup>11</sup> ‘...that I might make known and make manifest to the weak ones a word’.

<sup>12</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 201.

<sup>13</sup> R. N. Whybray, *Isaiah 40-66* (NCB; London: Oliphants, 1975), p. 151 [Henceforth: Whybray, *Isaiah 40-66*].

<sup>14</sup> ‘I will wake up in the morning. In the morning he will make for me ears to hear teaching’.

<sup>15</sup> J. C. L. Gibson, *Davidson’s Introductory Hebrew Grammar: Syntax*, 4th edn. (T & T Clark: Edinburgh, 1994), §63b, pp. 74-75 [Henceforth: Gibson].

<sup>16</sup> ‘and the teaching of the Lord opens my ears’.

### 6.2.2.3 Isa. 50.6

For 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> reads למטלים למרטים, which Hempel translates ‘to those who lay me low’.<sup>17</sup> Muilenburg translates 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> ‘rods of wrought iron’.<sup>18</sup> Watts suggests that the MT reads ‘to those making bare’.<sup>19</sup> For 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> reads הסירותי, which means ‘I turn (my face) away’ and Muilenburg notes that the Vulgate is similar, translating *averti*.<sup>20</sup> According to Watts the LXX ἀπέστρεψα<sup>21</sup> supports 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>.<sup>22</sup> North thinks that the 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> text is attractive and the meaning would be much the same as MT.<sup>23</sup>

### 6.2.2.4 Isa. 50.7

For v.7a, LXX reads καὶ κύριος βοηθός μου ἐγενήθη;<sup>24</sup> Syriac translates the verb *ܠܗܘܢ*,<sup>25</sup> and Targum סעיד סעיד.<sup>26</sup> The יעזר here and in v.9a is taken in the English present for reasons mentioned above with reference to יעיר: it might describe typical conduct or actions repeated over a period of time. Hanson takes it in the present here.<sup>27</sup> For אבוש the modal is preferred after the vayyiqtol.<sup>28</sup>

### 6.2.2.5 Isa. 50.8

Syriac places a full stop after its translation of קרוב מצדיקי, reading *ܘܡܘܬܘܟܘܢܘܢ*.<sup>29</sup> Targum translates מצדיקי with זכותי.<sup>30</sup> North translates the phrase *בעל משפטי*, the only example of this combination, as ‘my opponent’ but allows ‘my

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 225, note d. Hempel points למטלים (J. Hempel, ‘Zu Jes 50. 6’, *ZAW* 76 (1964), p. 327).

<sup>18</sup> J. Muilenburg, ‘Isaiah: Chapters 40-66’ in *The Interpreter’s Bible*, vol. 5, ed. by G. A. Buttrick (New York: Abingdon Press), pp. 381-773 (p. 585) [Henceforth: Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*].

<sup>19</sup> Watts, p. 196.

<sup>20</sup> Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 585.

<sup>21</sup> ‘I have (not) turned away’.

<sup>22</sup> Watts, p. 196.

<sup>23</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 201.

<sup>24</sup> ‘but the Lord was my help’.

<sup>25</sup> ‘helped me’.

<sup>26</sup> ‘assists’.

<sup>27</sup> P. D. Hanson, *Isaiah 40-66* (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1995), p. 141 [Henceforth: Hanson].

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Gibson, §64c, p. 78.

<sup>29</sup> ‘For near is he who vindicates me’.

antagonist' or 'my accuser'.<sup>31</sup> Westermann translates 'my adversary'<sup>32</sup> as does Muilenburg, who further suggests that the phrase literally means 'lord of my right'.<sup>33</sup>

#### 6.2.2.6 Isa. 50.9

At לִי...הָ לXX reads ἰδοὺ κύριος βοηθεῖ μοι,<sup>34</sup> interpreting the yiqtol יֵעֹזֵר with an indicative present active; Syriac translates יֵעֹזֵר with ܐܘܘܪܝܢܝܐ,<sup>35</sup> a pael participle, which could suggest the future.<sup>36</sup> North translates 'will come to my aid', arguing that the servant is not describing a situation in which he finds himself but one he anticipates or imagines.<sup>37</sup> For v.9cd, LXX transposes into 2mpl.

#### 6.2.2.7 Isa. 50.10

For יִרְאֶה Targum translates מִדְּהִלִּיא<sup>38</sup> and 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> reads יִרְאִי, a plural participle which may result from a scribal error.<sup>39</sup> For שִׁמְעֵנִי LXX reads ἀκουσάτω,<sup>40</sup> an aorist imperative, and Corney notes that it has been used to support emendation of the MT to a jussive.<sup>41</sup> Syriac translates שִׁמְעֵנִי with ܐܘܘܪܝܢܝܐ,<sup>42</sup> a pael imperfect and the two yiqtol of v.10ef are translated in the imperfect.<sup>43</sup> The Targum, according to Goshen-Gottstein,

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<sup>30</sup> 'my acquittal/innocence'.

<sup>31</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 204.

<sup>32</sup> Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 226.

<sup>33</sup> Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 586.

<sup>34</sup> 'behold the Lord helps me'.

<sup>35</sup> 'helps me'.

<sup>36</sup> Participles may in the proper context have future meaning (cf. T. Nöldeke, *Compendious Syriac Grammar*, transl. by J. A. Crichton (London: Williams & Norgate, 1904), §270, p. 211).

<sup>37</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 204.

<sup>38</sup> 'fearers'.

<sup>39</sup> Corney has argued that it may originate due to the בכמה or dittography from יהוה (R. W. Corney, 'Isaiah L 10', *VT* 26 (1976), pp. 497-498) [Henceforth: Corney]).

<sup>40</sup> 'hear'. Watts translates 'let him hear' (p. 196).

<sup>41</sup> Corney, p. 497. He argues that behind the vorlage of the LXX lay a text similar to 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>. In this vorlage the divine name was represented by a yod. The LXX translator took the final yod of יִרְאִי as an abbreviation of the divine name, thus restoring the singular participle, and transferred the yod to שִׁמְעֵנִי.

<sup>42</sup> 'he will hear'.

<sup>43</sup> ܐܘܘܪܝܢܝܐ...ܐܘܘܪܝܢܝܐ ('will believe...will be redeemed').

shows some duplication with עברו.<sup>44</sup> For v.10cd, LXX reads οἱ πορευόμενοι ἐν σκότει οὐκ ἔστιν αὐτοῖς φῶς.<sup>45</sup> The אשר will be discussed in some detail below. For הלך LXX reads οἱ πορευόμενοι<sup>46</sup> and 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> also reflects a 3mpl, הלכו. Corney argues that the plural verb accommodates the plural participle read by 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>, יראי,<sup>47</sup> and Oswalt thinks it indicates that 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> understood the passage as a reference to God's people.<sup>48</sup> Syriac reads ܩܘܡܝܢܐ<sup>49</sup> for הלך and Targum כגבר דמהליך.<sup>50</sup> Here, הלך is taken in the singular, in line with the 3ms of the other verbs in the verse and the Syriac and Targum. It is also taken in the English present, one which might refer back to the events of vv.6-7 but is not necessarily inapplicable to the present and future. Muilenburg too takes in the present.<sup>51</sup> For v.10ef, LXX reads the 2mpl. The yiqtol of v.10ef, despite their form, may refer to the suffering of the servant in vv.6-7, as discussed below. Because yiqtol can refer to past actions which are iterative or customary<sup>52</sup> or typical action within the present time frame,<sup>53</sup> a present translation is taken which would apply to past, present or future. North seems to favour the jussive<sup>54</sup> but Muilenburg the present.<sup>55</sup>

#### 6.2.2.8 Isa. 50.11

For כלכם 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> reads כולם. For מאזרי Syriac reads ܩܘܡܝܢܐ<sup>56</sup> to which BHS refers in its suggestion of ܩܘܡܝܢܐ. LXX reads κατασχύετε.<sup>57</sup> North notes that the MT

<sup>44</sup> Cf. M. H. Goshen-Gottstein, ed., *The Hebrew University Bible: The Book of Isaiah*, vol. 3 (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1993). Targum reads בעקא אורייתא דעבד נבייא דעבדוהי בקל עבדוהי נבייא דעבדוהי ('...to the voice of his servants the prophets, who perform the law (when) in trouble').

<sup>45</sup> 'those who travel in darkness, there is no light for them'.

<sup>46</sup> 'those who travel'.

<sup>47</sup> Corney, p. 498.

<sup>48</sup> Oswalt, p. 327, n. 42 and p. 329.

<sup>49</sup> 'whoever goes'.

<sup>50</sup> 'like a man who walks'.

<sup>51</sup> Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 588.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. Gibson, §63a, p. 73.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. Gibson, §63b, p. 74.

<sup>54</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 205.

<sup>55</sup> Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 587.

<sup>56</sup> 'those who kindle', the pael pl. ptc. of ܩܘܡܝܢܐ (to kindle, set on fire, inflame).

<sup>57</sup> 'you (pl.) strengthen'.

literally means ‘who gird (sparks)’.<sup>58</sup> The alteration to מְאִירִי (‘who light’) might anticipate the אור but he prefers the harder reading and more vivid picture of the MT. He similarly notes that the piel might have something of a reflexive force<sup>59</sup> and Muilenburg notes the reflexive meaning with ‘gird yourselves’.<sup>60</sup> Westermann alters to מְאִירִי.<sup>61</sup> North also notes that אִיר, which he translates ‘flames’, is stronger than אור, ‘light’.<sup>62</sup> LXX reads τῶ φωτὶ<sup>63</sup> which Watts thinks is supported by Syriac and Vulgate.<sup>64</sup> North argues that the הִיתָה is the perfect of certainty and translates in the past, ‘has happened’.<sup>65</sup> For הִיתָה LXX reads ἐγένετο, an aorist. Though בערתם and הִיתָה are qatal, they may be taken in the future.<sup>66</sup> For MT למעצבה LXX reads ἐν λύπῃ;<sup>67</sup> Syriac reads ܩܘܪܘܢܐܢܐ.<sup>68</sup> For v.11f, Targum reads לתקלתכון תתובון.<sup>69</sup> North notes that it literally translates ‘you shall lie down to a place of torment’ and thinks that the idea of lying down includes death.<sup>70</sup> Whybray argues that the idea of death is probably lacking, the phrase instead referring to writhing in agony on the ground.<sup>71</sup> Muilenburg thinks there is no reference to a place<sup>72</sup> but Duhm sees a clear reference to Gehenna, as in ch. 66.<sup>73</sup>

<sup>58</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 201.

<sup>59</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, pp. 201-202.

<sup>60</sup> Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 588.

<sup>61</sup> Westermann, p. 232, n. a.

<sup>62</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 205.

<sup>63</sup> ‘light’.

<sup>64</sup> Watts, p. 196.

<sup>65</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 205. Muilenburg too notes the perfect of certainty (p. 588).

<sup>66</sup> Cf. Gibson, §59, pp. 67-68.

<sup>67</sup> ‘in pain’.

<sup>68</sup> ‘in distress’.

<sup>69</sup> ‘to your stumbling you will return’.

<sup>70</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, pp. 205-206.

<sup>71</sup> Whybray, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 154.

<sup>72</sup> Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 588.

<sup>73</sup> B. Duhm, *Das Buch Jesaia*, 5th edn. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1968), p. 382 [Henceforth: Duhm].

## 6.3 The Rhetorical Structure of Isaiah 50.4-11

### 6.3.1 Delimitation

Before any study of the structure is undertaken it would be best to establish clearly the limitations of the poem. The songs previously studied could be tentatively and temporarily separated from their immediate context due to a number of features which are not present here.<sup>74</sup> Muilenburg takes all of chapter 50 as a poem for a number of reasons: it opens and closes with divine oracles, found in vv.1-3 and vv.10-11; questions appear in vv.1, 2, 8-10; and answers are introduced by  $\eta\eta$  in vv. 1fg, 2e-3, 9, 11. On a thematic level, he argues that the poem moves from God's continued faithfulness despite the apostasy of Israel to an emphasis on God's power. Then there is a confession of the faithful servant and the poem ends with an exhortation and threat. He also suggests that the faithful servant of vv.4-9 contrasts with the faithless described in vv.1-3. He divides ch. 50 into four strophes, comprised of vv. 1-3; 4-6; 7-9; 10-11.<sup>75</sup> Clifford interprets 50.1-51.8 as a unit, noting a number of connections between the different sections.<sup>76</sup> Oswalt interprets 50.4-9 as a section but places 50.10-11 with 51.1-8.<sup>77</sup> Watts argues that 50.4-51.8 is a section chiasmatically centred on 51.2b-3a, within which 50.4-9 and 10-11 form smaller sections.<sup>78</sup> North discusses 50.4-9 (11) as a unit and has suggested that no amount of analysis of stylistic features, such as those forwarded by Muilenburg, can establish any convincing substantive relationship between vv. 4-9(11) and vv. 1-3. "DI's style is so distinctive that we might almost expect to find common stylistic features between any two widely separate pieces".<sup>79</sup> North further argues that vv.10-11 have little to do with the songs in general or the

<sup>74</sup> The  $\eta\eta$  of 42.1 and the  $\eta\eta$  of 42.5 provide possible delimitation marks for 42.1-4; the call to the peoples in 49. 1 separates it from the call to those in Babylon to come out (48.20-22) and the  $\eta\eta$  of 49.7 might suggest a break at this verse. Clines' delimitation of Isa. 52.13-53.12 was accepted, one which meets with agreement from most scholars.

<sup>75</sup> Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, pp. 579-588.

<sup>76</sup> He notes the ideas of nearness (50.8; 51.5), the reference to wearing out like a garment (50.9; 51.6, 8) and argues that a single train of thought runs through the unit (R. J. Clifford, *Fair Spoken and Persuading: An Interpretation of Second Isaiah* (New York: Paulist Press, 1984), p. 160 [Henceforth: Clifford]).

<sup>77</sup> J. N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 40-66* (NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), pp. 18; 320-330 [Henceforth: Oswalt].

<sup>78</sup> Watts, pp. 193-197.

<sup>79</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 202-203.



prophecy of DI. They are a loosely knit unity if in fact they are a unity.<sup>80</sup> Westermann sees so little connection between vv.4-9 and vv. 10-11 that he inserted the latter after Isa. 51.1a.<sup>81</sup> Other scholars have argued that vv.10-11 are a later addition.<sup>82</sup>

North unfortunately provides no particular reasons why vv.4-9 (11) should be separated from vv. 1-3 but sufficient arguments can be forwarded which might justify the delimitation of 50.4-11. 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> indicates significant divisions between 50.3, 4 and 50.11, 51.1.<sup>83</sup> Scharbert suggests that 50.4-11 can form a unity: he notes that 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> contains paragraph markers before v.4 and after v.11, as does the Leningrad Codex.<sup>84</sup> Korpel and de Moor take 50.1-51.8 as a canto, within which 50.4-11 comprises a sub-canto. They note strong versional evidence for a break between 50.3 and 4 as well as a break between 50.11 and 51.1. This evidence is comparable, though perhaps not quite as strong, to that which supports a break between 49.26/50.1 and 51.8/51.9.<sup>85</sup> Although they take 50.4-11 as a sub-canto within a larger canto, their observations do suggest that 50.4-11 is a distinct section within the longer poetic unit. It contains five canticles formed by vv.4-5; 6-8a; 8b-9; 10a-c; and 11a-c.<sup>86</sup>

A number of characteristics might argue for the division between vv.1-3 and vv.4-9 and the inclusion of vv.10-11 with vv.4-9. A sharp shift occurs in the movement from the oracle of Yahweh in vv. 1-3 to the first person voice of v.4, and the interaction moves from a focus on Yahweh and the 2mpl entity to one between the servant, Yahweh and two sets of plural figures. Furthermore, the connections between vv.4-9 and vv.10-11 are strong enough that even a change of addressee and speaker does not definitively

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<sup>80</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 202.

<sup>81</sup> Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66*, pp. 232-235.

<sup>82</sup> Cf. Duhm, p. 379. Elliger assigns vv.4-9 to DI, v.10 to TI and v.11 to a glossator (K. Elliger, *Deuterijosaja in seinem Verhältnis zu Tritijosaja* (BWANT 63; Stuttgart:Kohlhammer, 1933), pp. 33-37).

<sup>83</sup> Cf. F. M. Cross et al., eds., *Scrolls from Qumran Cave I: The Great Isaiah Scroll, The Order of the Community and the Peshet to Habakkuk, from Photographs by J. C. Trever* (Jerusalem: The Albright Institute of Archaeological Research and The Shrine of the Book, 1972), pp. 98-99 [pl. XLII] [Henceforth, Cross et al.] and the discussion provided by Olley (J. W. Olley, "'Hear the Word of YHWH": The Structure of the Book of Isaiah in 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>', *VT* 43 (1993), pp. 19-49 (p. 47) [Henceforth: Olley]).

<sup>84</sup> J. Scharbert, *Deuterijosaja-der 'Knecht Jahwes'?* (Hamburg: Verlag Dr. Kovač, 1995) p. 41.

<sup>85</sup> M. C. A. Korpel and J. de Moor, *The Structure of Classical Hebrew Poetry: Isaiah 40-55* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), pp. 447-449; 485-486 [Henceforth: Korpel and de Moor, *Isaiah 40-55*].

<sup>86</sup> Korpel and de Moor, *Isaiah 40-55*, pp. 447-489.

prove that vv.4-11 is not a poetic unit. The **מי**, found in vv.8-10 and **הן**, found in vv.9 and 11, provide a connection between the two sections;<sup>87</sup> v.10c-e, which may refer directly or obliquely to the servant,<sup>88</sup> offers a summary of vv.5-7;<sup>89</sup> and the **הן כלכם** of v.11a echoes the **הן כלם** of v.9a. Other connections will be mentioned below.

Thus, numerous threads connect vv.1-3, 4-9 and 10-11. The relationship between vv.4-9 and 10-11 is justifiable and possibly more conspicuous than that between vv.1-3 and 4-9 due to the ties mentioned above. Because of these connections the poem studied here will be 50.4-11 with due recognition that solid arguments could be forwarded for more restricted boundaries or extended boundaries.

### 6.3.2 The Rhetorical Structure of Isa. 50.4-11

Muilenburg divides vv.4-11 into three strophes consisting of vv.4-6, 7-9 and 10-11. The repetition of **יהוה אדני יהוה** in v.4a and 5a mark the two sections of the first strophe; the repetition of **יהוה יעזר לי** in vv.7a and 9a mark the introduction and conclusion of this strophe; and the shift from the first person to the third, characteristic of prophetic style, is part of an “excellent transition from vs.9cd to vss.10-11”.<sup>90</sup> Clifford discusses vv.4-11 as a whole but accepts a shift between vv.4-9 and 10-11.<sup>91</sup> van der Lugt has divided 50.4-11 into three strophes composed of vv.4-6; 7-9; and 10-11.<sup>92</sup> Korpel and de Moor divide into 10 strophes composed of vv.4; 5; 6; 7-8a; 8b; 9; 10a; 10b-c; 11a-b; and 11c.<sup>93</sup> Their canticles, mentioned in the preceding paragraph, are analogous to the strophes proposed by Muilenburg.

Useful though the observations made by the scholars may be, they are not without some weaknesses. One might wonder why the phrases mentioned by

<sup>87</sup> This connection could, of course, argue for the inclusion of vv. 1-3 as well.

<sup>88</sup> This difficult verse will be studied in detail below.

<sup>89</sup> Cf. Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 588.

<sup>90</sup> Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, pp. 582-587.

<sup>91</sup> Clifford, p.161.

<sup>92</sup> P. van der Lugt, ‘De strofische structuur van het derde knechtslied (Jes. 50.4-11)’ in *De Knecht: Studies rondom Deutero-Jesaja. Aangeleden aan Prof. Dr. J. L. Koole* (Kampen: J. H. Kok, 1978), pp. 102-117 (cf. esp. pp. 106-107).

<sup>93</sup> V. 8a by their reckoning consists of the first two words of v.8; v.8b is formed by the remainder of v.8; v.10a is formed by the first two cola of v.10; and v.11c is formed by the final two cola of v.11(Korpel

Muilenburg, אדני יהוה and אדני יהוה יעזר-לי, could not mark new strophes, which might provide balance and symmetry in the poem. Indeed, the cola each of these phrases precede seem to introduce different thoughts and themes.<sup>94</sup> van der Lugt too has subsumed the repeated phrases within two distinct strophes. Korpel and de Moor provide good arguments for their strophic divisions but some questions could be raised. They place the קרוב מצדיקי of v.8a with v.7 due to the testimony of the Greek and Syriac rather than the evidence of the MT and 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>. The discussion below will suggest that this phrase may function like אדני יהוה and אדני יהוה יעזר-לי. Their separation of v.10ab from 10c-f depends upon an interpretation of אשר which cannot be presumed.<sup>95</sup> They separate v.11a-d from 11ef because a single sentence is found in v.11a-d and the parallelism within v.11a-d is stronger than that found between v.11cd and v.11ef.<sup>96</sup> It is a fair point, but it could similarly be proposed that v.11ef continues the same line of thought with a climactic and culminating judgment. Indeed, the לכם of v.11e contains a 2mpl pronominal which may act as a thread connecting the introductory colon of each bicolon in v.11.<sup>97</sup>

Because no unequivocal poetic structure exists some additional observations are required. Muilenburg mentioned the אדני יהוה found in vv. 4a, 5a, 7a and 9a. Repetitions are essential to Hebrew poetry and it is worthwhile noting that יהוה appears six times in 50.4-11, more frequently than any other word in the poem. Four of these occur in conjunction with אדני. Only two other words appear more frequently than אדני: לי and לא, found five times each. מי, like אדני, appears four times. Four of the five appearances of לי occur alongside the collocation יהוה אדני, and it thus seems that the poem contains within it a refrain which includes the לי and the אדני יהוה. Watson defines a refrain as “a block of verse which recurs more than once within a poem” and

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and de Moor, *Isaiah 40-55*, pp. 477-481).

<sup>94</sup> V.4a introduces the preparation of the servant while v.5 describes a faithful reaction; v. 7a introduces the confidence of the servant and his lack of shame while v.9a introduces judgment of those who opposed the servant.

<sup>95</sup> They note the change in subject matter when in fact the relative marker could continue a reference to the servant.

<sup>96</sup> Korpel and de Moor, *Isaiah 40-55*, pp. 479-480.

<sup>97</sup> לכם is found in v.11a; אשכם in v.11c; and לכם in v.11e.

can “comprise a single word, a line of poetry or even a complete strophe”.<sup>98</sup> The appearance of this phrase in vv. 4a, 5a, 7a and 9a certainly suggests that such a definition might apply here. Muilenburg argues that refrains can introduce strophes<sup>99</sup> and thus one might suggest that the phrases mentioned above are refrains initiating strophes.

The demarcation of the poem according to such refrains would combine vv.7-8 in one strophe. These two might justifiably be unified in terms of content, but formal, structural markers might suggest two separate strophes. Though the legal challenge of v.8 is related to the servant’s preceding claims that he was not shamed or humiliated, more differentiates the verses on a formal level. Verse 8 contains no repetitions or echoes of words found earlier in the poem, a fact which does not apply to vv. 5, 6, or 7, and cannot apply to v.4, and thus a gap exists between v.8 and those which precede. The verse similarly begins with an introductory pair of words, **קָרוֹב מִצְדִּיקִי**, which conveys information similar to that presented in the refrain and thus functions analogously. The refrain describes the close relationship between Yahweh and the servant centred on the activity of Yahweh on the servant: Yahweh gives, opens and helps. Here, the adjective **קָרוֹב** suggests the divine proximity; the hiphil participle **מִצְדִּיקִי** describes the divine action; and the 1s pronominal suffix reflects the ubiquitous **לִי**. The division of vv. 7 and 8 into two strophes contravenes the markers established by the refrains but the lack of formal links between vv.7 and 8 and the clear echo of the refrain in v.8a strongly supports the separation.

The last theoretical strophe would be formed by vv.9-11. Though the connections between the verses are not negligible, as discussed below, the change of addressee in v.10, signified by the **בַּכֶּם**, warrants a division between v.9 and vv.10-11.

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<sup>98</sup> W. G. E. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry: A Guide to its Techniques*, 2nd edn. (JSOTSup. 26; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1995), p. 295 [Henceforth: Watson]. However, cf. P. R. Raabe, who argues that a refrain is a verse repeated at regular intervals in a poem and must be distinguished from a ‘repetend’, a recurring phrase which occurs regularly in a poem but carries less weight in determining the poem’s formal structure (P. R. Raabe, *Psalms Structures: A Study of Psalms with Refrains* (JSOTSup. 104; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990), p. 164).

<sup>99</sup> J. Muilenburg, ‘A Study in Hebrew Rhetoric: Repetition and Style’ in *Congress Volume: Copenhagen 1953* (VTSup. 1; Leiden: Brill, 1953), pp. 97-111 (p. 104). [Henceforth: Muilenburg, Rhetoric].

In fact, a change of audience commonly signifies a new strophe.<sup>100</sup> This division does not necessarily indicate, however, that vv.10-11 form one strophe simply because the poem now addresses the 2mpl persona. Though the references to *you*,<sup>101</sup> the concentration of participles<sup>102</sup> and the theme of light and darkness bind the two verses, the structure of the verses indicate that each could stand independently as a strophe. The **מִי בָכֶם** of v.10 precedes a series of parallel lines and v.11 begins with the phrase **הֵן כָּלְכֶם** prior to another series of parallel lines. The emphatic nature of the pairs suggests introductory expressions, and, if so, they may accentuate the distinction between the figure portrayed in v.10c-f and *you* in v.11. Therefore, vv. 10 and 11 will be tentatively considered two strophes due to the introductory phrases and the apparent contrast of personae portrayed within. It must be acknowledged that much nevertheless binds the two together.

In summary, this discussion has suggested that the poem is composed of seven strophes delineated by a refrain (vv.4a, 5a, 7a, 9a) and other introductory phrases (vv.8a, 10a, 11a). This proposal does not assume that the units are unrelated, and in fact the following paragraphs will reveal the close connections which exist within the poem. Such a division has simply attempted to follow the contours of the poem in an effort to study its structure and indeed some of the versional evidence supports this structure. In a helpful discussion of divisions within 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> Olley has argued that it contains divisions between vv.4, 5-9 and 10-11, with a number of smaller divisions before vv. 6, 7, 7b, 9 and 9b,<sup>103</sup> and Korpel and de Moor have suggested that it contains small setuma marking the ends of strophes after nearly every verse.<sup>104</sup> The differences between the

<sup>100</sup> J. Muilenburg, 'Form Criticism and Beyond', *JBL* 88 (1969), pp. 1-18 (p. 13).

<sup>101</sup> The personae known only by pronouns will be italicised in order to differentiate them from those pronouns not referring to the personae.

<sup>102</sup> Four of the poem's seven participles occur in these two verses.

<sup>103</sup> Olley, p. 47. An examination of the text itself might cause one to wonder if, for example, it is appropriate to equate the division between v.9 and 9b because the size of the gaps are noticeably different and the space between v.7b and the remainder of the verse is virtually non-existent (cf. Cross et al., p. 98, pl. XLII).

<sup>104</sup> Cf. Korpel and de Moor, *Isaiah 40-55*, pp. 455-459; 477-479. Like Olley, they see a small setuma after v.9b, but they think that this marker as a possible sign of strophic division is unlikely because of the attested strophe parallelism between the two **הֵן**'s in v.9. In this instance, an examination of the text does suggest a division here but their point concerning parallelism is well taken.

scholars notwithstanding, which is not surprising given the difficulties in deciding the division of this text,<sup>105</sup> 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> essentially supports the proposal that the poem can be divided into short strophic units on the basis of a rhetorical analysis.

If the poem is formed by seven strophes, then the central stophe is v.8. This strophe functions quite appropriately as a centre because of its expression of the faith and confidence of the servant. This is not to say that the same attitude does not appear earlier, as suggested by v.7a, but it describes a direct challenge to the abusers of the servant and it introduces a legal setting which initiates the reversal of fortunes. In addition, **משפט** is once again central to a servant song or within a song. Isa. 42.1-4 was clearly concerned with **משפט** and it was suggested that the events of the central strophe helped to define **משפט** although the word did not in fact appear in the strophe. Isa. 49.1-6 lacked a single central strophe due to its two-fold division and the presence of 6 strophes, but it was noted that **משפט** occurred within the central colon. In Isa. 50.8, the servant challenges his adversary, the 'lord of my justice', to draw near him and the poem clearly indicates that the 'justice' of the servant is in fact with Yahweh.<sup>106</sup> It could further be noted that v.8bc are the central cola of the 38 found in the poem.<sup>107</sup> These depict the first appearance of the transitional **מי**, the servant's first challenge to his adversaries and the call to his adversaries to stand together with him. This centrality is supplemented by a verb which includes both the servant and his opponents, the only 1pl verb in the poem. Both the central strophe and colon might function adequately as centres of the poem and possible turning points in the description of events.

<sup>105</sup> Cf. the discussion provided by Olley.

<sup>106</sup> Landy notes the possible connection between Isa. 49.4 and 50.8 in passing: in "50.8, the litigant, **בעל משפטי**, is dared to appear; in 49.4...this judgment is referred to Yahweh" (F. Landy, 'The Construction of the Subject and the Symbolic Order: A Reading of the Last Three Suffering Servant Songs', in *Among the Prophets: Language, Image and Structure in the Prophetic Writings*, ed. by P. R. Davies and D. J. A. Clines (JSOTSup.144; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), pp. 60-71 (p. 68) [Henceforth: Landy].

<sup>107</sup> **קרוּב מצדיקי** is taken as a separate colon rather than a phrase within a longer colon ending with **אתי**. Such a division permits a stronger parallelism in the remaining cola, follows the MT **זקעף קטון** and the **קרוּב מצדיקי** as a result parallels the other refrains, which are found in separate cola. Korpel and de Moor agree that **קרוּב מצדיקי** is a separate colon. However, they divide the poem into 35 cola but their divisions are not wholly convincing. The first colon they propose for v.4 is quite long, as discussed below, and the three cola which constitute v.8 might be taken as five cola, giving a sharp staccato effect appropriate to this challenge (cf. Korpel and de Moor, *Isaiah 40-55*, pp. 454-459).

## 6.4 Empathy within Isa. 50.4-11

### 6.4.1 The Yahweh/Servant Relationship

Shared verbs have initiated previous discussions of this relationship and though the same procedure will be followed here, the refrains mentioned above provide a better starting point for the study of the relationship. The servant and Yahweh share only one verb, **נָתַן**: in v.4a the servant reports that Yahweh gave him a tongue of disciples and then in v.6a the servant reports that he gave his back to those who smite. Though the actions may suggest a parallel activity by the two personae, little else can be gained from pursuing this line of thought. However, the refrains provide far more insight. Four of the five finite verbs of which Yahweh is subject occur in the refrains of vv.4a, 5a, 7a and 9a. The fifth appears in v.4e, a colon which resembles the refrain with a combination of a verb with Yahweh as subject and the **לִי**. Yahweh is also the subject of a participle in v.8a and it has been suggested above that the clause **קָרוּב מִצַּדִּיקִי** functions in a manner analogous to that of the more frequently repeated refrain. As a result, it seems that vv.4-9 are virtually constructed on a scaffolding which depicts Yahweh's preparation of the servant, the help given to the servant and the vindication of the servant. It is also interesting to note that Yahweh works directly on the servant in each and every verb of which Yahweh is the subject. Five times the verb is followed by **לִי**, and the participle in v.8a contains the 1 singular pronominal suffix referring to the servant. Like the other songs, Yahweh works directly and primarily on the servant and thus intimations of continuity are evident.

Verse 4 provides useful insights into the relationship relevant to the present discussion but a more thorough examination of this difficult verse than that provided in the translation must precede any observations drawn from it. One must first decide whether to retain the actual Hebrew words found in the MT. BHS advises the deletion of the **יַעִיר** in v.4d but the evidence of the versions recommends that it be maintained.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> The LXX reads *ἔθηκέν μοι πρῶτ, προσέθηκέν μοι ὄτιον ἀκουεῖν* (he gave to me in the morning, he conferred to me a little ear to hear); Vulgate reads *erigit mane mane erigit* (he will arouse in the morning, in the morning he will arouse ...); Syriac reads **ܐܘܪܝܢܐ ܕܝܘܡܐ ܕܝܘܡܐ** (I will wake

The removal of one **בבקר** from v.4e, also proposed by BHS, finds more agreement amongst the versions,<sup>109</sup> but it is by no means a move unanimously accepted. Repetition is an important poetic technique in Hebrew, as mentioned above, and Muilenburg judges this one to be “effective”.<sup>110</sup> Because the versions are divided and the repetition could represent a rhetorical move meant for effectiveness, the two appearances of **בבקר** will be retained.

The division of the lines is still problematic even if no words are deleted. Scholars group the words differently and therefore offer a number of translations,<sup>111</sup> none of which are unequivocally correct. Korpel and de Moor have recently offered a division of the verse into five cola which retains all of the words in the MT. They take **אדני...למודים** as the first colon; the next colon ends with the **דבר**, thus accepting the athnah of the MT; the next colon reads **יעיר בבקר בבקר**; the fourth reads **לי און**; and the final colon is composed of the final two words of the verse.<sup>112</sup> This division has some weaknesses: the first colon is unusually long, as they admit, and their divisions create a great variety of stresses within the verse.<sup>113</sup> In the first instance, then, it is better and more symmetrical to divide their first colon into two, the first formed by **לי יהוה נתן לי אדני יהוה נתן לי** and the second by **למודים לשון למודים**. Such a division would provide a better balance in terms of the stresses counted by Korpel and de Moor and it would also place the repeated **למודים** in two short cola, thus creating a more conspicuous echo of the first in the second.

Korpel and de Moor also retain the athnah of the MT under the **דבר** of v.4d, reading ‘morning by morning he wakens’ for the following colon. They thus keep the two appearances of **בבקר** together. Indeed, **בבקר בבקר** appears 13 times in the Hebrew

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up in the morning. In the morning he will make for me); and 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> reads **ויעיר בבוקר בבוקר ויעיר**.

<sup>109</sup> Cf. BHS note and A. Laato, *The Servant of Yahweh and Cyrus: A Reinterpretation of the Exilic Messianic Programme in Isaiah 40-55* (CB 35; Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell), p. 123 [Henceforth: Laato, *Servant and Cyrus*].

<sup>110</sup> Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 583.

<sup>111</sup> Contrast, for example, Laato (*Servant and Cyrus*, p. 122) and North (*Second Isaiah*, p. 58).

<sup>112</sup> Korpel and de Moor, *Isaiah 40-55*, pp. 454-455.

<sup>113</sup> Korpel and de Moor, *Isaiah 40-55*, p. 454; 466-467.



Bible<sup>114</sup> and each of these may connote continuity, with an action performed daily or consistently.<sup>115</sup> If Korpel and de Moor are followed, then the verb יָעִיר introduces two consecutive cola and creates a regularity and rhythm which is compatible with the proposed repetition of the phrases that introduce strophes. In sum, then, the following may be proposed for v.4:

Adonai Yahweh gave me  
 A tongue of disciples  
 To know (how) to support the weary with a word.  
 He awakens morning by morning,  
 He awakens my ear  
 To hear like disciples.

Some time has been spent on this verse because of the importance of דָּבָר. In the first instance one could note that the word in DI is usually associated with Yahweh. The noun occurs eight times in DI, of which five refer to Yahweh's word;<sup>116</sup> one refers to Yahweh 'raising up the word of his servant';<sup>117</sup> one is used to describe the lack of response to Yahweh;<sup>118</sup> and here it supports the weary. Melugin argues that the word of 40.1-11 and its efficacy "is again and again at issue in Isa. 40-48"<sup>119</sup> and, as this poem indicates, it is present in the later chapters too. DI, from the opening chapter, is concerned with the word of Yahweh,<sup>120</sup> and Isa. 40.6-8 and 55.11 are the most notable

<sup>114</sup> Ex. 16.21; 30.7; 36.3; Lev.6.5; 2Sam.13.4; Isa.28.19; 50.4; Ez. 46.13, 14, 15; Zeph. 3.5; 1Chr.23.30; 2Chr.13.11.

<sup>115</sup> Barth has suggested that the collocation can be translated 'morning by morning, every morning' (C. Barth, 'בָּקֵר', in *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, vol. 2, rev. edn., ed. by G. J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren, trans. by J. T. Willis (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), pp. 219-228 (p. 221)) and Konkel, who proposes 'each morning', notes that the phrase is often associated with regular activities related to the cult (A. H. Konkel, 'בָּקֵר', *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, vol. 1, ed. by W. A. VanGemeren (Carlisle: Paternoster, 1996), pp. 710-720 (p. 711)).

<sup>116</sup> 40.8; 42.16 (closer to 'things' here); 45.23; 51.16; 55.11.

<sup>117</sup> 44.26, reading the singular with the MT.

<sup>118</sup> 41.28.

<sup>119</sup> Cf. R. F. Melugin, 'The Servant, God's Call, and the Structure of Isaiah 40-48', in *SBL 1991 Seminar Papers* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991), pp. 21-30 (pp. 24, 30). Zimmerli too has offered a helpful discussion of the word in DI (W. Zimmerli, 'Jahwes wort bei Deuterocesaja', *VT* 32 (1982), pp. 104-124).

<sup>120</sup> For a discussion of the importance of the word in DI, particularly in relation to the entire corpus, cf. C. R. Seitz, 'How is the Prophet Isaiah Present in the Latter Half of the Book?: The Logic of Chapters 40-66 within the Book of Isaiah', *JBL* 115 (1996), pp. 219-240 (esp. pp. 231-232; 236).

examples supporting this focus on the word. Within this poem, the tongue is supplied by Yahweh and Yahweh awakens the servant's ear to hear like those who are taught. It is on one level the word of Yahweh. However, one could suggest that this word is actually spoken by the servant: he is given a tongue to support the weary. The word is the servant's on an immediate, literal level but it is in essence Yahweh's. The connection between Yahweh and the servant in and through the word is transparent and indeed scholars have noted the connection. Whybray has argued that the servant refers to himself as Yahweh's pupil "in order to emphasise that his words are not his own but those of his divine 'teacher'".<sup>121</sup> In his discussion of the concept of reward for the servant, Hermisson has suggested that this poem makes clear that the word is not that of the servant but a gift of Yahweh, owed to the initiative of Yahweh.<sup>122</sup> The word, then, is Yahweh's but is also that given to the servant to support the weary and it is spoken by the servant. Thus, one might suggest that v.4, and in particular v.4c, blurs the boundaries between the servant and Yahweh due to the word supplied by Yahweh but uttered by the servant.

Previous discussions have suggested that an intimacy exists between Yahweh and the servant. It is conveyed by the presentation in 42.1-4, a presentation echoed in 52.13, and the combination of maternal and formative images in 49.1-6. As Yahweh called the servant in the womb in 49.1 and then shaped him, here Yahweh gives the servant a tongue of disciples, an act reminiscent of the forming of 49.5, and awakens the servant's ear in order that he might hear like a disciple. This direct intervention of Yahweh on organs of verbal communication is nothing if not personal and certainly suggests an intimacy between the two characters. The action of Yahweh on the servant in v.4 is therefore continuous with the close connection established through a word that virtually dissolves the boundaries between the two.

The use of first person references draws further connections between the two personae. One of the unmistakable characteristics of this poem is the constant reference

<sup>121</sup> Whybray, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 151.

<sup>122</sup> H.-J. Hermisson, 'Der Lohn des Knechts' in *Die Botschaft und die Boten: Festschrift für Hans Walter Wolff zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. by J. Jeremias and L. Perlitt (Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1981), pp. 269-287 (p. 279).

to the 'I' of the servant: eight first person verbs refer to him<sup>123</sup> and 15 first person pronouns or pronominal suffixes similarly refer to him.<sup>124</sup> No first person verb occurs in the poem which does not refer to the servant and only one 1s pronominal may not refer to him. This pronominal is found in the **מִיָּדִי** of v.11e. There has been some discussion of this verse and v.10 because the identity of the speaker is not clear. Muilenburg argues that the speaker of vv.10-11 is Yahweh<sup>125</sup> and the reference to 'my hand' would be Yahweh's self-reference. Beuken thinks that the last colon of v.11 is the word of God and he suggests that Yahweh confirms the punishment announcement by expressing it himself.<sup>126</sup> North too suggests that the speaker of v.11 is Yahweh.<sup>127</sup> Because a number of scholars have suggested that Yahweh speaks in v.11ef at the very minimum and a change of speakers is intimated by the third person reference to the servant in v.10b, it will be assumed for the present discussion that 'my hand' refers to Yahweh. If so, **מִיָּדִי** draws the two together. It is the only first person pronominal suffix which does not refer to the servant and its use in a judgment context by Yahweh echoes the servant's announcement of judgment in v. 9cd.

This discussion can be extended to include other pronominal references in the poem. Apart from the first person suffix in **מִיָּדִי**, only one other pronominal suffix refers to Yahweh, the third person suffix on the **עַבְדֶּךָ** of v.10b. The noun **עַבְד** occurs only here in vv.4-11 and on this one occasion the relationship between the two is stressed: the servant is Yahweh's servant. The two pronominals referring to Yahweh are therefore intimately connected with the servant. One echoes the servant through judgment and the other is 'attached' to the servant, as it were. This poetic feature reflects the verbal patterns in which Yahweh always acts directly on the servant and the close connection between the two through **דָּבַר**.

<sup>123</sup> אבוש, ואדע, שמת, נכלמתי (v.6); הסתרתי, נתתי (v. 5); נסוגתי, מריתי (v.7).

<sup>124</sup> לִי (2x) (v.4); לִי, אֲנֹכִי (v.5); גֹּי, לַחַיִּי, פָּנֵי (v.6); לִי, פָּנֵי (v.7); מִצְדִּיקִי, אֲתִי, מִשְׁפָּטִי, אֱלֹהֵי (v.8); לִי, יִרְשִׁיעֵנִי (v.9).

<sup>125</sup> Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 587.

<sup>126</sup> W. A. M. Beuken, 'Jes 50. 10-11: Eine kultische Paränese zur dritten Ebedprophetie', *ZAW* 85 (1973), pp. 168-182 (pp. 175, 180) [Henceforth: Beuken, *Eine kultische Paränese*].

<sup>127</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 202.

To shift the focus of the discussion slightly, it could be noted that the poem only contains three 3ms pronominals, the one mentioned above and two others in v.10, the לּו of v.10d and the אלהיו of v.10f. These may further indicate the close relationship between Yahweh and the servant but unfortunately the reference is not clear due to the ambiguity of the relative marker. Beuken has offered a detailed examination of v.10 and argues that אשר should be rendered by a conditional particle or an indefinite pronoun. He argues that vv.10-11 exhort both the wicked and the righteous, two different classes of people, to learn lessons from the experience of the servant.<sup>128</sup> Westermann argues that the relative marker refers to the ‘you’ of v.10a and translates ‘he who’.<sup>129</sup> Within vv.10-11 he distinguishes between the promise made to those who fear Yahweh (v.10) and the judgment passed on the transgressors (v.11).<sup>130</sup> Laato’s translation echoes that of Westermann, in which he favours ‘which of you?’.<sup>131</sup> North notes that the מי of v.10a could be either the interrogative ‘who’, which raises difficulties in establishing the end of the question, or the indefinite ‘whoever’. He favours the indefinite ‘anyone who’ for מי, followed by the translation ‘that’ for the אשר.<sup>132</sup> Whybray follows the RV, in which the question ends with ‘his servant’ and the remainder refers to the people addressed.<sup>133</sup> Korpel and de Moor follow the Greek manuscript *Sinaiticus*, arguing for a strophe initiated by the אשר. They translate אשר הלך ‘Let he who walks’.<sup>134</sup> Muilenburg takes the אשר as a reference to the servant,<sup>135</sup> following the translation of the RSV, and Willey too translates it as a reference to the servant.<sup>136</sup>

This sampling of opinions suggests that no unequivocal choice can be made and as a result a stand will be taken which will be tentative but supported. אשר can connect

<sup>128</sup> Beuken, *Eine kultische Paränese*, pp. 171, 174, 179, 181-182.

<sup>129</sup> Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66*, pp. 232, 234. In the German edition, he translates ‘Wer’ (C. Westermann, *Das Buch Jesaja: Kapitel 40-66* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1966), p. 188).

<sup>130</sup> Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66*, pp. 234-235.

<sup>131</sup> Laato, *Servant and Cyrus*, p. 122.

<sup>132</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, pp. 204-205.

<sup>133</sup> Whybray, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 153.

<sup>134</sup> Korpel and de Moor, *Isaiah 40-55*, pp. 458; 480. They date *Sinaiticus* in the 4th century (p. 5). One might also wonder whether their translation should read ‘let him’ or ‘may he’.

<sup>135</sup> Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, pp. 587-588.

<sup>136</sup> P. T. Willey, *Remember the Former Things: The Recollection of Previous Texts in Second Isaiah* (SBLDS 161; Atlanta: Scholars Press), p. 212.

an antecedent to the relative clause,<sup>137</sup> and Muilenburg<sup>138</sup> and North<sup>139</sup> have both argued that v.10 summarises the events depicted in vv.4-9. A past reference might therefore be suitable from their point of view but the yiqtol of v.10ef may indicate otherwise.<sup>140</sup> Gibson has suggested, however, that yiqtol can refer to past actions which are iterative or customary, and he also suggests that the yiqtol could describe typical conduct within the present time frame.<sup>141</sup> Either could be relevant to the servant's action as described in vv.4-9. If v.10 summarises vv.4-9 and if the **וַיִּשְׁעַן** and **יִבְטַח** could be taken as a reference to the past but not limited to the past, then a translation in the English present might be possible. The servant who 'trusts' did so previously and continues to do so. Thus, it will be assumed that the **אֲשֶׁר** refers to the servant.

If, then, the **אֲשֶׁר** may introduce a reference to the servant and the **יִבְטַח** may have the servant as a subject, then the two 3ms pronominal suffixes of v.10df refer to the servant. The first simply indicates that there was no light for him and the second makes clear that the servant leans on his God. A certain parallelism appears. The lone 3ms pronominal suffix which refers to Yahweh occurs with reference to the servant, and one of the two 3ms suffixes referring to the servant stresses that Yahweh is the servant's god. Moreover, all three of these suffixes occur in the final word of the final cola of the three bicola of v.10. The strophe therefore achieves a sense of movement through the pronominal suffixes and a symmetry in which 'his servant' is balanced by 'his God'. The two references surround the description of a servant without light, thus enclosing him in his darkness with descriptions emphasising his relationship with the one who is his light. The poem therefore provides yet another subtle reminder of the close connection between the two.

It was noted above that the central strophe of the poem is formed by v.8, the central cola are found in v.8bc and the first two words of v.8 function in a manner similar to the refrain. Despite appearances to the contrary, Yahweh is near the servant

<sup>137</sup> Cf. Gibson, §9, pp. 9-10.

<sup>138</sup> Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 588.

<sup>139</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 205.

<sup>140</sup> Cf. Beuken, *Eine kultische Paränese*, pp. 169-170.

<sup>141</sup> Gibson, §63a-b, pp. 73-74.

and he is the one who vindicates the servant. The subtle connections drawn between the servant and Yahweh are therefore underscored by the centrality of the assertion and the distinct manner of interaction. Yahweh not only prepares the servant by giving, awakening, opening or helping, but in fact is the one who vindicates the servant. It is an expression consonant with the close connections drawn between the two through repetitions and poetic technique.

Indeed, the poem intimates that Yahweh will assist or assists in the alleviation of the difficulties in which the servant finds himself. Two of the refrains read יהוה יעזור-לי (ו)אדני, found in vv. 7a and 9a. Landy has noted that the phrase is ambiguous and could mean ‘he helps’ or ‘he will help’. He argues that it seems to be both: “the help is trust that he [God] *will* help, taking vengeance on the prophet’s enemies”.<sup>142</sup> Steck has proposed that the confidence of the servant is emphasised by the repeated imperfects of vv.7 and 9, which indicate the constant actuality of the help of Yahweh.<sup>143</sup> Gibson, as mentioned above, notes that yiqtoles can refer to a range of actions in the present. These might describe typical conduct or “actions repeated or continued over a longer or shorter period”.<sup>144</sup> Thus, a present translation of this verb as ‘helps’ might denote an action which could theoretically apply in the past, present and future and indicates that Yahweh’s help is continuous.

This possible continuity of assistance strengthens the servant’s assertion that Yahweh, the one who vindicates him, is near and that all of his oppressors will be destroyed. The correctness of his assertions is confirmed in v.11ef, in which Yahweh announces the destruction of those who light their own fires, a probable reference to the oppressors of vv.4-9, as argued below. Thus, Yahweh’s intervention destroys, or will destroy, the oppressors and he thus saves the servant from his dreadful suffering. One could therefore suggest that Yahweh sees the straits in which the servant finds himself and punishes those who had not heeded the servant and caused his suffering.

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<sup>142</sup> Landy, p. 67; author’s italics.

<sup>143</sup> O. H. Steck, ‘Aspekte des Gottesknechts in Deuteriosajas »Ebed-Jahwe-Liedern«’, *ZAW* 96 (1984), pp. 372-390 (pp. 386-387) [Henceforth: Steck, *Aspekte*].

<sup>144</sup> Gibson, §63b, pp. 74-75.

Once again, no explicit description of empathy can be posited but the combination of a number of factors implies that empathy may exist within this relationship. Yahweh acts primarily on the servant; the word spoken by the servant dissolves the boundaries between the two; the provision of the tongue and the arousing of the ear suggest an intimacy; the pronouns stress the connection between the two; the central strophe emphasises the proximity of Yahweh, the one who vindicates; and Yahweh helps the servant in his distress. The combination of these elements suggests that Yahweh empathises with the servant: the poem provides an array of clues and hints that render it a possible suggestion. If the servant suffers at the hands of oppressors and he lives in such an intimate relationship with Yahweh, then Yahweh empathises with him in his sufferings.

#### 6.4.2 The Servant/Others Relationship

Before this discussion can proceed a decision needs to be taken concerning the relationship between the 3mpl entity of vv.4-9 and the 2mpl entity of vv.10-11. For the sake of brevity and following Clines' example, these two will be dealt with as *personae* and will be named *you* and *them*. Beuken and Westermann, as mentioned previously, had suggested that two groups are being addressed in vv.10-11 and it is a comment which is implicitly accepted by Hanson.<sup>145</sup> Muilenburg argues that those addressed in vv.10-11 are fellow Israelites, "the unfaithful and those who have lost their roots in the covenant people". He similarly proposes that the weary of v.4 probably designates fellow Israelites and those who oppose the servant in v.6 are also fellow countrymen.<sup>146</sup> North argues that the audience of vv.4-9 is not stated. It may be the *you* of vv.10-11 but had this been the case it might have been made more specific.<sup>147</sup> Steck contends that vv.4-9 focus on the work on Israel and that a consideration of the peoples is lacking.<sup>148</sup> Laato interprets the weary of v.4 as Israel; the ideal Israel, which is the servant, suffers in vv. 6-7 at the hands of the Babylonians; the group described in 50.10 are the faithful

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<sup>145</sup> Hanson, pp. 141-142.

<sup>146</sup> Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, pp. 584, 587.

<sup>147</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 202.

<sup>148</sup> Steck, *Aspekte*, pp. 385, 388.

of 51.1,7; and 50.11 refers to the enemies of 50.6-7.<sup>149</sup> The examinations of the servant songs undertaken thus far have attempted to avoid definitions of personae which rely upon references external to the poem. A study of the relationships depicted in the poem is instead attempted, a move consciously adopted from Clines. The audience(s) may be faithful or unfaithful Israelites or the poem may refer to Babylonians. Within the limits set for the present discussion, the relationship between the *them* of vv.4-9 and the *you* of vv.10-11 as presented within the poem deserves primary focus.

Firstly, the weary whom the servant is to support are presumably the plural entity of vv.4-9: Yahweh sets a task in v.4 and the abuse received in vv.6-7 most likely results from this mission to the weary. More difficult is the nature of the relationship between the plural entities of vv.4-9 and 10-11. It was argued above that v.10c-f refers to the servant and not to a separate *you*. If so, the *you* of v.10 is probably the *you* of v.11. Vv. 10-11 therefore refer to those who have lit their own fires and thus suffer the judgment of Yahweh depicted in v.11. It is no large leap, then, to suggest that the *you* described in vv.10-11 is in fact the same persona as the *they* of vv.4-9. A number of rhetorical devices can be offered to support this proposal. The **הן כלכם** of v.11a quite clearly echoes the **הן כלם** of v.9c and both phrases introduce judgment on the respective personae. The judgments passed on the two personae apparently arise out of an opposition to the servant and in fact the two descriptions of opposition complement each other. *They* opposed the servant and exhibited *their* rejection of him through a physical abuse; the rejection is implicit in vv.10-11, but here *you* are described as kindling their own light rather than physically abusing the servant. One could argue that the two forms of rejection are supplementary: the first describes rejection as physical abuse and the second rejection is the search for an alternative light. The poem thus moves forward in intensification. The first simply describes abuse and rejection and the latter supplements it with overtones of hubris.

Muilenburg had suggested that there was an “excellent transition” from v.9cd to vv.10-11<sup>150</sup> and indeed it is the smoothness of this transition which further suggests that

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<sup>149</sup> Laato, *Servant and Cyrus*, pp. 125-128.

<sup>150</sup> Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 587.



the two personae can be interpreted as one and the same. This shift is most carefully conveyed and brought about through the poet's use of מִי. This interrogative, which first appears in v.8 (2x) and then once in vv.9 and 10, spans the divide between the verses which refer to *them* and *you*. The answer to the first three questions initiated by מִי is quite obviously 'nobody'. Because Yahweh is nearby and is the one who vindicates the servant, then it seems most unlikely that anyone will contend with the servant (v.8a), will be the adversary of the servant (v.8c) or will condemn him (v.9b). If this pattern of answers is extended to the next question, then one could suggest that no one amongst *you* fears Yahweh or listens to the voice of his servant (v.10ab). This rhetorical question, apparently so because the answer is known by the speaker and audience,<sup>151</sup> moves the poem forward quite subtly. The poem provides a description of the suffering of the servant at the hands of others; then these opponents are challenged in a legal setting, addressed with a rhetorical question that begins to draw them into the poem; and then v.10a makes explicit the implicit address found in vv.8-9 by asking 'who amongst you?'. The poem therefore moves slowly from a description of the suffering of the servant at the hands of smiters and beard pluckers through a section in which these enemies are referred to as *them* but only implicitly addressed, and ends with the actual address to *you*.

One final linguistic echo in this poem provides further support to the association of *them* with *you*. The two participles of v. 11, describing those who kindle fire and gird brands, hearken back to the two participles of v.6, which portrayed the ones who smite the back and pluck the beard. The poem seems to emphasise the opponents not through their identity but through their actions, and in both cases the participles are used. This implicit comparison between *you* and *them* is further supported by the

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<sup>151</sup> This comment is based on the definition of rhetorical questions provided by Watson, who further suggests that they emphasise an assertion and command attention (Watson, p. 338). de Regt provides further comments concerning rhetorical questions. They imply an identification between audience and speaker because the latter knows the audience well enough to assume that they will be cognisant of the implications of the question even if they do not agree with the presumed answer (L. J. de Regt, 'Discourse Implications of Rhetorical Questions in Job, Deuteronomy and the Minor Prophets', in *Literary Structure and Rhetorical Strategies in the Hebrew Bible*, ed. by L. J. de Regt, J. de Waard and J. P. Fokkelman (Assen: Van Gorcum & Co., 1996), pp. 51-78 (p. 52)).

similarity of their fates. Both are consumed, to use an English translation suitable for both, either by the moth (v.9) or by fire (v.11).

If, then, it is reasonable to suggest that the two plural entities are in fact the same persona, then a less unwieldy term to describe it might be helpful. This persona will henceforth be referred to as 'the others' and will not be italicised because no distinction between it and widely used pronouns is required.

The verbs shared by the two personae will be considered presently, but verse 4 provided rich material for the discussion of the interaction between the servant and Yahweh, and the same applies here. If Yahweh gives the servant a tongue of disciples in order to know how to support the weary, the image conveyed is similar to that found in Isa. 42.1-4. There, the servant does not break the broken reed or extinguish the dim wick. To support the weary suggests a compassion for those with whom the servant will work. Indeed, the structure of v.4 provides a helpful illustration of this compassion. V.4ab describes Yahweh giving the servant a tongue of disciples and v.4ef describes Yahweh arousing the ear of the servant in order to hear like the disciples. The two bicola are syntactically similar, both end with reference to the **למורדים** and both focus primarily on the relationship between Yahweh and the servant. Verse 4d is connected with v.4ef through the repetition of the verb **יעיר** and it too describes the interaction between Yahweh and the servant. Between these cola is the depiction of the servant's interaction with the weary in v.4c, a colon which is emphasised through the description of the interaction and its comparative length. Yahweh's interaction with the servant therefore surrounds and encloses the weary. The compassion which is a part of the task is supplemented by structural envelopment of the weary.

This is not to say that the servant is necessarily able to bring this compassion for the weary to a successful, practical end because of the resistance. The compassion, it seems, is found primarily in the proposed task and the intention of the servant. One could justifiably assume, then, that compassion was intended to inform the relationship between the servant and the others, and indeed it may have done so, but the poem only describes the rejection of the servant. The relationship is therefore marked by a rejected or unsuccessful compassion.

If this point is examined more closely, another connection may be implied by the poet. The task on which the servant is sent is not received with any enthusiasm: he is subjected to no small amount of abuse. It has been suggested that the phrase **בבקר בבקר** may connote ideas of continuity and it has similarly been suggested that the **אשר** of v.10c refers to the servant, introducing a description of his suffering from vv.4-9. If this be the case, then the poem may suggest that it is not only the word of the servant which is to arouse the weary but, through comparison, the word of Yahweh may be necessary to awaken and sustain a weary servant who experiences rejection from those with whom he interacts. Indeed, a comparison may be made between the support the servant attempts to provide the weary and the help granted to the servant by Yahweh. Thus, the poem through repetition and ellipsis may provide a subtle connection between the servant and those with whom he interacts.

This possible connection is supported by the comparison drawn through a shared verb, **הלך**. It was tentatively suggested that the one who walked in darkness in v.10c-f was the servant and this darkness was a reference to his suffering depicted in vv. 6-7. In v.11c the others are commanded by a voice which is taken to be Yahweh's to 'go in the light of your fire', a fire that leads to their burning. On one level this repetition suggests not a connection between the two personae but a contrast. The others lit their own fires and brands while the servant relied not on a light that led to destruction but the light that was a trust in and reliance on Yahweh. This light led to vindication. The poem implies, however, that both personae had experienced a darkness that requires light. The servant is explicitly described as one who walks in darkness without light. The others are not described as walking in darkness but the apparent need to light fires suggests that they were in fact in some sort of darkness. Thus, in the midst of the contrast is a continuity between the personae. Both had shared a darkness.

It cannot necessarily be assumed, however, that the servant experienced precisely the same weariness or suffering that the others experienced. He too may have felt a weariness but the poem does not provide the information by which it can be posited that the servant was necessarily one amongst the weary who was called out of them. The poem does suggest that any weariness would have resulted from his

interaction with the others. The darkness in which the servant walks may refer to the suffering in vv.6-7 and the servant's darkness therefore results from the others' recalcitrance. The darkness in which they walked, however, is not necessarily the same as the darkness in which the servant walked. This is not to say that the servant did not walk in the same darkness as the others but once again the poem does not grant enough evidence that he did.

If it cannot be posited that the servant necessarily experienced the same suffering that the others suffered and if he did not experience the same weariness, an analogy nevertheless holds. Both encountered a darkness which required light. The others were weary and required support by Yahweh through the servant and the servant's interaction with the weary implicitly required the light of Yahweh. Thus, it might be best to suggest that both personae experienced a form of darkness. The darkness and the possible concomitant weariness are not necessarily the same and elicited different responses.

Indeed, a contrast between the two is highlighted by the other verb which the two personae share. The verb *שמע* occurs for the first time in v.4f describing the action by which Yahweh awakens the ear of the servant. That the servant responded positively in v.5 indicates that he had listened and heeded. Verse 10ab asks 'who amongst you fears Yahweh, heeding the voice of his servant?' The previous discussion has argued that the answer 'nobody' would be appropriate and it therefore indicates that those with whom the servant worked did not in fact heed the voice of the servant. The servant listened to Yahweh, the others did not listen to the servant and by extension did not heed Yahweh. Thus, the two verbs which are shared by the two personae point primarily to the contrast between the two.

In sum, then, the poem suggests that the opponents of vv.4-9 are the same as those of vv.10-11. The proposed task for the servant seemed to be informed by a compassion for the weary. It is a compassion which ultimately proves unsuccessful because the others refuse to hear and light their own fires. Similarities in experience may draw the two personae together, in which both may have felt a weariness and walked in darkness. Both needed assistance, in the form of support or help. The poem does not provide the data by which it could be suggested that the two experienced the

same weariness or darkness. Nevertheless, an analogy between the two sets of experiences can be drawn. The contrast between the two is clearly highlighted by the shared root שָׁמַע, which suggests that the servant listened to Yahweh but the others chose not to listen to the servant.

If empathy could be said to exist between the two personae, it would be an empathy which is not sustained. The compassion evident in v.4 and the connections between the two personae rhetorically introduces the poem and provides strong indications of the possibility of a relationship based on empathy. The servant is to undertake a task of supporting the weary but it is an unsuccessful task. Compassion gives way to confrontation, abuse and judgment. It might be best to suggest, then, that the poem depicts the failure of a task based on compassion, in which the possible empathy from the servant for the others proves to be insufficient to clear away their darkness.

#### **6.4.3 The Yahweh/Others Relationship**

Clines had argued in his discussion of Isa. 53 that Yahweh is connected to the other personae primarily through the servant. In this poem, two observations can be made concerning the relationship between Yahweh and the others. In the first instance, it has been suggested that Yahweh speaks the condemnatory words of v.11ef. If so, then Yahweh interacts directly with the others, condemning them to death in a tone similar to that expressed by the servant in v.9cd. That he condemns in such a manner is consonant with the previous verses, in which the servant has asserted that Yahweh is the vindicator of the servant and was in fact near to the servant despite appearances. Verses 8 and 9 are rich in legal terminology and thus one can note that the relationship between the Yahweh and the others may be that of judge with guilty defendant.

But, it was argued in v.4 that the word which ties the servant and Yahweh so closely together originated with Yahweh. He clearly commissions the servant to help the weary with a word and thus Yahweh is the ultimate motivator of the task of the servant. It is in essence Yahweh's word, spoken through the servant, which is to support the weary in v.4c. One might suggest that the poem conveys a relationship in which

Yahweh manifests compassion and perhaps sympathy for the others through his interaction with the servant. Yahweh attempts to support them in their weariness. This connection with the others does not seem to extend to empathy, however, because the two personae do not seem to share any kind of continuity in the manner depicted in the other relationships.

Thus, Yahweh implicitly expresses a compassion for the others through the commission to the servant but acts directly on them in judgment and condemnation. Empathy does not seem to be present in this relationship.

### **6.5 Reader Empathy for the Personae in Isa. 50.4-11**

A number of features may serve to elicit empathy from the reader. In the first instance, v.4 lacks any reference to an audience and the reader could therefore be that audience as easily as any personae in the poem. In addition, it was tentatively proposed that the opponents of vv.4-9 are the same as those described in vv.10-11, and the transition from the references to *them* in vv.4-9 to the *you* of vv.10-11 was smoothed by the rhetorical ׀. These very questions may invite participation in the poem. The rhetorical questions of vv.8-9 implicitly involve the reader because he or she must answer the question with a 'nobody' and then the address is specifically directed towards *you* in v.10. It may be spoken to the opponents of the servant depicted in the world of the text, but the lack of a specific audience for vv.4-9 makes it possible that reader is also addressed. The reader becomes the 'you' explicitly addressed. The poem therefore moves from the lack of an addressee through the rhetorical questions to a direct address: in none of these is the reader not involved.

The first person language has been noted in relation to Isa. 53 and 49.1-6, and it has been suggested that it is not unimportant in drawing the reader into the world of the poem. The speaker of the first six verses here presents his case in first person singular language and as a result the reader is granted an immediate insight into the thoughts and feelings of this persona. Such a presentation provides an immediacy to which the lack of a specified audience contributes. Thus, the poem provides the formal criteria which asks the reader as addressee to focus on the speaking servant and the foundation is laid

for the possible identification with the servant, an identification which may contribute to empathy.

In addition, the servant is never explicitly named. In the discussion of Isa. 53 and 42.1-4 it has been suggested that anonymity can contribute to the creation of an empathetic relationship between the reader and the persona. No name exists which marks the persona as distinct and different from the reader and thus the reader is better able to read himself or herself into the place and position of the persona.

The description of the servant is quite physical and may help to elicit empathy for the servant. The poem uses language which is concrete, appealing to the senses and making the experience of the servant accessible. Muilenburg comments that “the references to the various bodily organs are quite remarkable”<sup>152</sup> and he notes those that are found in the poem: tongue, ear, back, cheeks and face. It is not only the references to the body which contribute to the concreteness of the language, however, but the concomitant actions. Yahweh gives him a tongue of disciples and awakens or opens his ear. It is a tangible means of conveying the interaction which initiates the task of the servant and thus allows the reader to envisage and perhaps participate in the servant’s description of the preparation for the task. His suffering too involves a physical depiction which allows the reader to visualise readily that which the servant encountered. He is smitten, his beard is plucked and he is spat on. Such details create an image of suffering and may be of great importance in the elicitation of empathy for a suffering servant.

One side note might deserve mention here. It has been argued that the experiences of the servant or the servant himself have been depicted through metaphorical language. The metaphorical description of suffering in Isa. 53, the comparison between the servant and the reed and wick in Isa. 42.1-4 and the metaphors and similes describing the servant as sword, arrow and light in Isa. 49.1-6 contribute to the proposals that empathy is elicited from the reader through imagery. In this poem, metaphorical language is similarly used in order to convey the suffering of the servant and his reaction. It is not beyond possibility that the servant gave his back to smiters or

his cheeks to beard pullers, or that he did not hide his face from spit. It is more figurative, however, to suggest that he made his face like flint, to suggest that this suffering was walking through darkness without light or, through suggestion, that Yahweh was the light of the servant in his suffering. It seems, then, that this poem recalls the others in its use of figurative language in the depiction of the experience of the servant.

Other features of the poem may contribute to the elicitation of empathy. It was suggested previously that the task of the servant was informed by a compassion for the weary, one which may have been empathetic. The reader who is asked to focus on and identify with the servant is thus invited to participate with the servant in the task of helping the weary. On one level, then, the poem may ask the reader to empathise with the weary through the participation with the servant. The placement of the reference to the compassionate task at the introduction of the poem virtually sets the tone for the poem. The obduracy of the others, however, might cancel any incipient empathy because they are unwilling to listen or respond to the servant. Such a response might as a result facilitate an empathy with the servant. He had been given a task to assist those who were weary, but he is rejected in this compassionate attempt and suffers as a result. This spurned endeavour may thus contribute to an empathy from the reader.

These observations nevertheless deserve some qualification. Verse 5bc describes the positive reaction of the servant to his task and betokens a confidence which informs the entire poem, including the description of the suffering. He insistently claims that Yahweh helps him, Muilenburg argues that the 'I know' of v.7d is a sign of the "absolute assurance" of the servant<sup>153</sup> and he confronts his suffering with a confidence which virtually renders the suffering as a description of some type of inconvenience. The poem therefore seems to work on two levels in its description of suffering. On one level, the abuse might elicit empathy but the confident attitude might mitigate an empathy based upon the suffering of the servant. This balance echoes that depicted in the other songs. Each of them contained concrete descriptions of suffering but these

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<sup>152</sup> Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 583.

<sup>153</sup> Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 586.



sufferings were contained within a context that placed them in a wider perspective. The suffering existed alongside intimations of success (42.1-4), implicit votes of confidence (49.1-6) or an exaltation which precedes and thus contains the subsequent description of suffering (52.13-53.12). It seems that the poems furnish the formal criteria for an empathy with the servant but simultaneously provide a resolution of the suffering that prevents it from becoming dark, pointless and macabre.

The poem is also rich in affect, which might facilitate an empathy from the reader. The servant's description of v.4 is imbued with a tone of compassion; the description of his suffering and the 'trial' scene suggests a confidence in the face of suffering, a confidence based on Yahweh's proximity; and the judgment of the others is expressed with a tone of revenge and vengeance on those who spurned his compassion. The servant expresses these feelings in first person language directly to the reader and as a result they are palpable, accessible to the reader who feels his or her way into the text. Thus, the reader may feel alongside the servant as he describes the events in visual, accessible language and accompanies the depiction of the events with intimations of the relevant emotions.

Lastly, it remains to be asked whether empathy might be elicited for either Yahweh or the others. The latter exhibit an obduracy and hubris which might obstruct any empathy from the reader despite the judgment, suffering and lack of a specified identity. Yahweh too is presented in such a manner that empathy is not readily elicited. Certainly, Yahweh manifests some compassion for the weary, to be effected by the servant, and speaks in the first person. But, Yahweh's utterances in the first person reveal little of his inner workings and these words end in an imperious judgment on the others. Also, the depiction of his interactions, although they do suggest the divine character, lack the roundedness, three-dimensionality and complexity of the interactions of the servant: Yahweh arouses, opens, acts as judge/vindicator and condemns. These all seem to be at some remove from the physical and emotional complexities inherent in the servant's interaction with the others. This comparative distance does not facilitate an empathy with Yahweh.

## 6.6 Conclusions

Isa. 50.4-11 contains suggestions of empathy in the Yahweh/servant relationship, empathy which is implied through a number of features taken together. The two personae with whom the servant interacts were interpreted as one persona and though the relationship is first depicted with the possibility of empathy, it is an empathy and compassion which ultimately fails. Analogies may be drawn between the experience of the servant and the experience of the others but it cannot be presumed that these are the same experiences nor that they necessarily contribute to empathy. Like the preceding songs, this poem contains a number of formal elements through which empathy from the reader might be elicited.

If empathy informs relationships portrayed within the poems and is elicited from the reader for personae in the poems, then the role played by empathy in the wider literary context merits attention. This task will be undertaken in the following chapter.

## Chapter 7

### Empathy: A Tie between the Songs and Context

#### 7.1 Introduction

The preceding chapters have examined the songs in some detail, using Clines as a starting point, and have found characteristics that suggest the presence of empathy amongst the personae and features that might elicit empathy from the reader. In the introductory chapter it was noted that many scholars favour an interpretation of the servant songs within the DI context and thus the next stage of the enquiry would most logically attempt to explain adequately the relationship between the songs and their DI context. Much attention has been given to the form and structure of the individual poems and this chapter will examine possible structures for DI within which the songs and their interest in empathy would fit. After this study, empathy as a thread which ties the servant songs to their context will be considered.

Before such an examination can begin, however, the study of chapters 40-55 as a unit within the Book of Isaiah must be justified. Coggins' observations concerning the place of DI in the wider corpus were presented in the introductory chapter.<sup>1</sup> He had noted that literary and theological features differentiate 40-55 from most that precedes but he unfortunately does not describe these features.<sup>2</sup> Several scholars have offered arguments which might suggest that DI can be studied as a unit within the Book of Isaiah despite the many connections between it and its wider context. Brueggemann mentions these connections but nevertheless describes the shifts between chs. 39 and 40.<sup>3</sup> Westermann sees a correspondence between the word described in 40.1-11 and that found in 55.6-11, one which provides a framework for the chapters in which the word of God is first and last.<sup>4</sup> Muilenburg discusses formal similarities between 56.1-8 and DI

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Chapter 1, Sec. 1.2.

<sup>2</sup> R. J. Coggins, 'Do We Still Need Deutero-Isaiah?', *JSOT* 80 (1998), pp. 77-92 (p. 86).

<sup>3</sup> W. Brueggemann, *Isaiah 40-66* (Westminster Bible Companion; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1998), pp. 8-11.

<sup>4</sup> C. Westermann, *Sprache und Struktur der Prophetie Deuterocesajas* (Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 1981), p. 81 [Henceforth: Westermann, *Sprache und Struktur*].

but argues that mood and emphasis differentiates the former from the latter;<sup>5</sup> Spykerboer suggests that 55.1-5 is a climax to 40-55 with an invitation to the new Jerusalem;<sup>6</sup> and Rendtorff has noted that 56.1 reflects a combination of the use of *צדקה*//*משפט* found in chs.1-39 and the *צדקה*//*ישועה* found in chs. 40-55.<sup>7</sup> These are just a few of the observations which suggest that chs. 40-55 may be distinguished within the Book of Isaiah despite the connections which are of such interest to the contemporary study of Isaiah.

## 7.2 Structure and DI

### 7.2.1 Some Previous Proposals

Numerous scholars have put forward structures for DI or large swathes of text within DI. Muilenburg, Gitay and Clifford provide helpful discussions of the structures of the individual sections within DI but S. Lee has recently suggested that their work lacks a presentation of an overall structure of the poems in Isa. 40-55.<sup>8</sup> His is an astute observation. Though all three delineate structures for DI, they are in essence linear in nature and do not provide any insight into the possible correspondences which a more sophisticated structure might suggest. Due to the perceived weaknesses in Muilenburg, Gitay and Clifford, Lee focusses on the work of Laato<sup>9</sup> and Goldingay<sup>10</sup> before

<sup>5</sup> J. Muilenburg, 'Isaiah: Chapters 40-66' in *The Interpreter's Bible*, vol. 5, ed. by G.A. Buttrick (New York: Abingdon Press, 1956), pp. 381-773 (p. 653) [Henceforth: Muilenburg, Isaiah 40-66].

<sup>6</sup> H. C. Spykerboer, 'Isaiah 55.1-5: The Climax of Deutero-Isaiah', in *The Book of Isaiah/Le livre d'Isaïe*, ed. by J. Vermeulen (BETL 81; Leuven: University Press, 1989), pp. 357-359 (p. 359).

<sup>7</sup> R. Rendtorff, 'Zur Komposition des Buches Jesaja', *VT* 34 (1984), pp. 295-320 (p. 314).

<sup>8</sup> S. S. K. Lee, 'Creation and Redemption in Isaiah 40-55' (doctoral thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1993), p. 296 (incl. f.n. 2) [Henceforth, Lee]. This work has recently been published in Hong Kong but was unavailable.

<sup>9</sup> Laato argues that Isa. 40-53 contains a chiasmic macrostructure of five cycles structured A-B-A'-B'-A", in which the 'A' sections are chiasmically arranged and the 'B' sections parallel. The Cyrus passages (44.24-28; 45.1-7) form the centre of the central chiasmic unit and Laato therefore suggests that "the composer's main purpose was to argue in Isaiah 40-53 that Yahweh will create a new future for his people through Cyrus" (A. Laato, 'The Composition of Isaiah 40-55', *JBL* 109 (1990), pp. 207-228 [Henceforth: Laato, Composition]).

<sup>10</sup> Goldingay divides chapters 41-45 into two parallel sequences of 41.1-42.17 (divided into 41.1-20 and 41.21-42.17) and 42.18-45.7(8) (divided into 42.18-43.21 and 43.22-45.7(8)). He concludes that Israel requires two types of deliverance to fulfill the servant role: Cyrus will release Israel from the bondage of Babylon, and Israel too must be released from a bondage which is the resistance to Yahweh, manifested through a rejection of the prophet's message (J. Goldingay, 'The Arrangement of Isaiah xli-xlv', *VT* 29 (1979), pp. 289-99 [Henceforth: Goldingay]).

proposing his own palistrophic structure.<sup>11</sup> Unfortunately, none of these proposals is entirely convincing. Lee offers perceptive criticisms of Laato's work and concludes that the difficulties "cast doubt on the validity for the proposed structure as a whole".<sup>12</sup> Lee therefore consciously builds on Goldingay, though he notes that the concentration on the first and second servant passages is a major weakness in Goldingay's presentation.<sup>13</sup> A more substantive criticism could be levelled in Goldingay's grouping of texts. For example, he draws a parallel between the trial speeches in 43.8-13 and the lengthy passage in 44.6-22(23).<sup>14</sup> To place all of the elements of 44.6-22 (23) under the heading 'trial speech' obscures the discernible differences between vv.6-8, 9-20, and 21-22(23).<sup>15</sup> Lee himself offers excellent insights into the structure of DI and yet his discussion reflects weaknesses not dissimilar to those found in Goldingay's work. At the very centre, for example, Lee places 44.24-45.17 and 45.18-46.13. The juxtaposition of these central sections of the palistrophe is not entirely convincing<sup>16</sup> and thus one must wonder if Lee has provided a structure any more reliable than that offered by Goldingay and Laato.

Mettinger has recently proposed a structure for DI which quite consciously attempts to integrate the songs with their context.<sup>17</sup> He builds his discussion on Westermann's work in general and his specific arguments concerning the hymns of

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<sup>11</sup> Lee, pp. 301-333.

<sup>12</sup> The parallel units proposed by Laato often focus on elements common but "may not be essential"; the pairings are often inconsistent (Lee quite rightly asks why such contrasting passages as 40.1-2 and 52.13-53.12 are considered the prologue and epilogue); and Laato focusses only on 40-53 and does not explain the manner in which the final two summarising chapters are related to the preceding chapters (Lee, pp. 296-299).

<sup>13</sup> Lee, p. 302.

<sup>14</sup> The nations and gods are addressed in the third person; Israel is summoned as a witness; and there are parallels in words and images.

<sup>15</sup> Goldingay accepts that the parallels between the two sections derive primarily from 44.6-8. He suggests that vv.9-20 amplify vv.6-8 and he notes that vv.21-22(23) extend the line of thinking in vv.6-8 (Goldingay, p. 296). He nevertheless downplays the sarcasm and satire against the idols and obscures the vividness and intricacies of this section.

<sup>16</sup> The entire 16 chapters turns on these two hinges but the most surprising and important passages seem to appear in the first hinge. Only 44.24-28 and 45.1-8 specifically name the lone historical figure in DI and their designation of Cyrus as a shepherd like Yahweh (cf. 40.10) and as Yahweh's anointed is daring. Furthermore, the smaller pericope on which the 16 chapters turn are 45.14-17 and 45.18-19, passages which are not nearly so momentous as 44.24-28 and 45.1-7, which Laato places at the centre of the structure of DI.

<sup>17</sup> T. N. D. Mettinger, *A Farewell to the Servant Songs: A Critical Examination of an Exegetical Axiom*

praise.<sup>18</sup> Mettinger accepts Westermann's definition of the hymns of praise with some reservations<sup>19</sup> and then notes that 49.1-12; 44.26-45.7 and 52.13-53.12, bracketed by hymns, are emphasised in the compositional structure. Isa. 49.1-12 is placed in the middle of the corpus and the two halves are thus divided by the Cyrus passage and the last servant poem. Mettinger then argues that 49.1-12 acts as a bridge between the two sections of the book and as a result the focus on Cyrus and his role in the fall of Babylon is balanced by the man of sorrows in 52.13-53.12 and the subsequent glorification of Zion. Within these chapters 42.1-9 functions as a companion piece to 41.8-13, the election of the servant Israel, but the study has no implication for the third servant song, 50.4-11. In sum, the first, second and fourth songs

exhibit a *variety* of different and clearly definable functions within the wider structure of the book. As a result, they can hardly be described as a special *Schicht* or secondary series of *Fremdkörper*.<sup>20</sup>

Insightful as Mettinger's arguments may be, they are not without weaknesses. Emerton<sup>21</sup> and Hermisson<sup>22</sup> have offered some insightful comments concerning the arguments of Mettinger.

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(Lund: CWK Gleerup, 1983) [Henceforth: Mettinger].

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Westermann, *Sprache und Struktur*, esp. pp. 74-80. These hymns are found in (40.9-11); 42.10-13; 44.23; 45.8; 48.20-21; 49.13; 51.3 (? frag.); 52.9-10; (54.1-2). Mettinger's list is similar, but he takes 54.1-3 as a hymn rather than 54.1-2, 55.12-13 as an epilogue and 40.9-11 as a prologue.

<sup>19</sup> He asks how we can be sure that 42.10-13, 49.13 and 51.3, which Westermann suggests were not original, are not likewise original, and he further argues that within the four original hymns (44.23; 45.8; 48.20-21; 52.9-10), 45.8 concludes a short section and the others a longer section (Mettinger, p. 19).

<sup>20</sup> Mettinger, pp. 18-28.

<sup>21</sup> He wonders if it is legitimate to postulate such a careful arrangement of material; Mettinger's definitions of the songs differ from Duhm's; connections are not always convincing; the purpose of 42.10-13 and 51.3 is not adequately explained; and one would expect Cyrus to have more prominence (J. A. Emerton, 'Review of T. N. D. Mettinger's "Farewell to the Servant Songs"', *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 48 (1991), pp. 626-632).

<sup>22</sup> The use of hymns of praise as compositional guideposts is particularly criticised (H.-J. Hermisson, 'Voreiliger Abschied von den Gottesknechtliedern', *Theologische Rundschau* 49 (1984), pp. 209-222 (pp. 213-214) [Henceforth: Hermisson, Abschied]. For another discussion of Mettinger's work, see A. Laato, *The Servant of Yahweh and Cyrus: A Reinterpretation of the Exilic Messianic Programme in*

### 7.2.2 Are Structures Appropriate?

A number of structures have been proposed for DI and the placement of the songs therein, and it might therefore be appropriate to put forward a literary form for DI which avoids the weaknesses mentioned above. While this venture might provide useful and helpful insights into the literary arrangement of DI and the possible place of the songs within it, some considerations might suggest both caution and perhaps a reticence to argue for another configuration of the constituent pericope.

On one level, the variety of proposals suggests that the task is by no means straightforward and thus deserves great care. The reluctance to posit a structure, however, cannot be fairly justified because of the lack of consensus, but may be understandable due to the very language of DI. No consensus has been reached concerning the extent of the units of speech, in which some scholars posit relatively short units<sup>23</sup> whilst others prefer longer speeches.<sup>24</sup> Oswalt has commented that “any outline that goes farther than the grossest divisions seems to represent a good deal of subjective judgment about what constitutes an opening or a closing of a segment”.<sup>25</sup> Korpel and de Moor admit that the delimitation of larger textual units are “less reliable” though nevertheless worth presenting.<sup>26</sup> Thus the delimitations on which some of the proposed structures depend are equivocal.

Moreover, the language is of great complexity, weaving and interweaving numerous images and themes over the course of its 16 chapters. Ackroyd has summarised this characteristic beautifully:

Any attempt at dealing with the richness of the thought of these chapters of Deutero-Isaiah immediately comes up against the difficulty of finding an entirely satisfactory method of analysing their contents. It is not that the

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*Isaiah 40-55* (CB 35; Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell, 1992) (pp. 20-21).

<sup>23</sup> Cf. C. Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66: A Commentary*, trans. by D.M.G. Stalker (London: SCM Press, 1969) [Henceforth: Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66*] as an example.

<sup>24</sup> Muilenburg (*Isaiah 40-66*) and Clifford (R. J. Clifford, *Fair Spoken and Persuading: An Interpretation of Second Isaiah* (New York: Paulist Press, 1984) [Henceforth: Clifford]) represent an approach favouring longer units.

<sup>25</sup> J. N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 40-66* (NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), p. 14 [Henceforth: Oswalt].

<sup>26</sup> M. C. A. Korpel and J. C. de Moor, *The Structure of Classical Hebrew Poetry: Isaiah 40-55* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), p. 16 [Henceforth: Korpel and de Moor, *Isaiah 40-55*].

main themes cannot be readily discerned in spite of the uncertainties which arise in regard to the detail of the text and interpretation. It is that any attempt at producing a logical exposition is frustrated by the complexity of thought. For the various themes run so closely to one another that at almost any point several themes are present at once, and to quote a particular passage as exemplifying one aspect of the prophet's thought is immediately to discover that, in fact, it exemplifies various other aspects as well. The whole complex is so interwoven and its richness of thought so abundant that any presentation suffers from being a less than poetic statement of what is here set out with such fervour.<sup>27</sup>

His observation is further strengthened by the quantity of poetry: 16 chapters of such rich poetic language do not lend themselves readily to an unequivocal structure.

To study Isa. 40-55 as a literary unit suggests that it is unified in some manner and thus it may seem inappropriate to defer any attempt to define a literary structure. The structures set out by the scholars above are fascinating and perhaps defensible, but it was noted that they are not entirely convincing. The difficulties may arise from presumptions which are not necessarily relevant to such an extensive collection of interwoven poetry. Perhaps, then, the search for a structure into which the songs might be placed should be set aside for the present.

### 7.3 Empathy amongst the Personae in DI

The preceding chapters have proposed that the songs intimate empathy within some of the relationships between personae and elicit empathy from the reader. If this thread is present within the songs and if Ackroyd is correct in his suggestion that the thought of DI is richly interwoven, perhaps it would be more fruitful in light of the foregoing discussion to consider the presence of empathy within the wider context of DI.

Suggestions of empathy can in fact be found in the first words of DI. Yahweh commands a masculine plural 'you', frequently taken as members of the heavenly court,<sup>28</sup> to 'comfort, comfort my people'. The Hebrew root translated 'comfort' is נחם

<sup>27</sup> P. R. Ackroyd, *Exile and Restoration: A Study of Hebrew Thought of the Sixth Century B. C.* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1968), pp. 120-121.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. K. Elliger, *Deuterocesaja* (BKAT XI/I; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1978), pp. 12-13; F. M. Cross, 'The Council of Yahweh in Second Isaiah', *JNES* 12 (1953), pp. 274-277; Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 422. Oswalt notes that the LXX interprets the initial call of 40.1 as directed to priests



and the strategic placement of some of its nine occurrences in DI indicates its importance. That it introduces the 16 chapters and is twice repeated sets a tone and perhaps a purpose for all that follows. Muilenburg has suggested that comfort not only pervades many poems<sup>29</sup> but “is consistent with the poet’s message of imminent redemption”,<sup>30</sup> and Westermann has argued that the words set the pattern for the prologue.<sup>31</sup> Landy has commented that comfort is “the great theme of Second Isaiah”.<sup>32</sup> In 40.1, the comfort is the assurance that Jerusalem has filled her servitude and her punishment, which was double for all her sins, is accepted. The next appearance of the root is found in 49.13 and here Yahweh leads his previously imprisoned people from far away places. Its appearance here strongly suggests a strategic placement. Though Zion and Jerusalem appear in 40.1-11 and are mentioned briefly in the following chapters,<sup>33</sup> 49.14 initiates that portion of the book which extensively depicts the interaction of Zion/Jerusalem with Yahweh. Thus, references to נחם surround and enclose the section of the book which deals primarily with Jacob/Israel, structurally enfolding an entity that requires comfort.<sup>34</sup> The lack of the root in 40.2-49.12 is perhaps balanced by the structure.

The root next appears twice in 51.3. Here, Yahweh comforts Zion with the assertion that he will make her desert like Eden and her steppes like a garden of Yahweh. Then, in 51.12, Yahweh claims that he is the one who comforts a ‘you’ which the MT presents as a masculine plural, but a masculine singular or feminine singular might be possible.<sup>35</sup> The MT will be accepted. Yahweh comforts through the assurance

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and the Targums to the prophets. He argues that it seems ‘more likely that it is addressed to any and all human speakers who might have reason to speak for God to Jerusalem’ (Oswalt, p. 50).

<sup>29</sup> 40.13; 51.6, 12, 19; 52.9; 54.11.

<sup>30</sup> Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 424.

<sup>31</sup> Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66*, pp. 32-34.

<sup>32</sup> F. Landy, ‘The Construction of the Subject and the Symbolic Order: A Reading of the Last Three Suffering Servant Songs’, in *Among the Prophets: Language, Image and Structure in the Prophetic Writings*, ed. by P. R. Davies and D. J. A. Clines (JSOTSup.144; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), pp. 60-71 (p. 61).

<sup>33</sup> ירושלם is found in 40.2, 9; 41.27; 44.26, 28; 51.17; 52. 1, 2, 9 (2x) and ציון in 40.9; 41.27; 46.13; 49.14; 51.3, 11, 16; 52.1, 2, 7, 8.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. esp. 40.27-31.

<sup>35</sup> Isa. 51.11 might suggest that the masculine plural should be accepted, referring to the ransomed of Yahweh; vv.13 and 15-16 might support the 2ms; and the following words, which read גי-את ותיראי

that men die, the recollection of his creative power and the confirmation that the one who is to be released will not die in the pit. In 51.19 Yahweh asks, after a description of the disaster which befell Zion, ‘who (but) I will comfort you?’.<sup>36</sup> Even if the 3ms verb is taken,<sup>37</sup> it is still evident that Yahweh will comfort Jerusalem. Here, Yahweh removes the cup of suffering from Jerusalem and gives it to those who made her suffer. In 52.9 Yahweh comforts his people with his return to Zion (v.8) and the redemption of Jerusalem. Lastly, in 54.11, Yahweh refers to Zion/Jerusalem, who is not explicitly named in the chapter, as one ‘not comforted’ and proceeds to do so by promising that the city will be rebuilt in a glorious fashion. In sum, then, Yahweh is the subject of six of the eight piel appearances of נחם. Although Yahweh is not the subject of the two in 40.1, the comforting undoubtedly originates with him, and it is Yahweh who comforts Zion after the lone pual of 54.11.

Stoebe has argued that the meaning of נחם in the piel approaches that of רחם in the piel when נחם describes the (re)establishment of a social relationship. The use of נחם in DI indicates God’s renewal of the grace relationship with those whom he had rejected in wrath. Isa. 49.13 shows that the two are not necessarily synonymous and that a “nuance of support is always involved” in the piel of נחם.<sup>38</sup> The possible difference notwithstanding, Stoebe’s observations suggest that רחם may legitimately be studied alongside נחם. The root first appears as רָחַם in 46.3, referring to the carrying by Yahweh of Jacob/Israel in the womb, and then the form רָחַמִּים, referring to Babylon’s lack of compassion, is found in 47.6. The piel participle appears in 49.10, a verse which asserts that Yahweh will have compassion or mercy on a plural entity, presumably the prisoners and those in darkness described in v.9. Compassion here involves a leading from darkness and bondage to light and freedom. This context probably refers to the people of Israel. The next appearance, in 49.13, presumably refers to the same action.

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and the wider context, in which Yahweh comforts Zion/Jerusalem in 51.3 and 19, might favour the 2fs.

<sup>36</sup> For a discussion of the phrase מִי־אֲנַחֵםךָ, cf. Oswalt (p. 350, n.81) and Korpel and de Moor (*Isaiah 40-55*, p. 492, n. 15).

<sup>37</sup> Cf. BHS note a.

<sup>38</sup> H. J. Stoebe, ‘נחם’ in *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament*, vol. 2, ed. by E. Jenni and C. Westermann, trans. by M. E. Biddle (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1997), pp. 734-739 (p. 736).

Here it occurs in parallel with נחם and it is the only appearance of the two in parallel in the Hebrew Bible.<sup>39</sup> This verse directly precedes the first of the Zion passages in chs. 49-55 and their parallelism at this transitional point signifies the importance of the concepts involved. The root is then found in 49.15, in essence referring to the compassion shown on Zion.<sup>40</sup> In this verse it alludes to the compassion shown by a mother to her sucking child and contrasts the possibility of her forgetfulness with Yahweh's reliability. The following verses describe Yahweh's continuing consideration of her, the exit of those who overthrew her and destroyed her and the return of her sons. In 54.7 Yahweh admits that he abandoned Zion, but will gather her with great mercies, the noun רַחֲמִים used on this occasion. In the following verse he affirms this statement, stating that he has compassion on her 'with eternal loving-kindness'. In v. 10 a piel participle describes Yahweh as the one who has compassion on Zion, manifested by the promise that his loving-kindness will not depart from her and the 'covenant of my peace' will not totter. Finally, 55.7 asserts that Yahweh will have compassion on the evil-doer who abandons his ways. This statement occurs in a context contrasting the thoughts and ways of Yahweh with those of humans. Thus, the root is used primarily to describe the compassion Yahweh has on his people and/or Zion.

Many of Yahweh's activities in DI which are not explicitly described with נחם or רחם could nevertheless contribute to comfort or manifest divine compassion. He takes the people in his arms like a shepherd his sheep;<sup>41</sup> his creative power,<sup>42</sup> greater than the 'power' of the idols,<sup>43</sup> cannot but be reassuring; he has raised Cyrus;<sup>44</sup> he exhorts Zion and Israel not to fear<sup>45</sup> and promises help<sup>46</sup> and strength;<sup>47</sup> enemies will be

<sup>39</sup> Cf. H. Simian-Yofre, 'רחם', *ThWAT*, vol. 7, pp. 460-476 (p. 463) [Henceforth: Simian-Yofre, רחם].

<sup>40</sup> For a discussion of the difficult form מְרַחֵם see Oswalt, p. 301, n. 53 and North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 193, who prefers to re-point to a piel participle.

<sup>41</sup> 40.11.

<sup>42</sup> 40.12-26; 51.9-16.

<sup>43</sup> 41.21-24; 44.6-8; 9-20.

<sup>44</sup> The root עור describes the raising of Cyrus in 41.2, 25 and 45.13.

<sup>45</sup> 41.10, 13, 14; 43.1, 5; 44.2; 51. 7; 54.4, 14.

<sup>46</sup> 41.10, 13, 14; 44. 2; 49. 8; 50.7, 9.

<sup>47</sup> 41.9, 13; 42.6; 51.18.

defeated;<sup>48</sup> he answers his people;<sup>49</sup> he provides rain to those who need it;<sup>50</sup> he brings the people/sons back;<sup>51</sup> he provides a path for those who require it;<sup>52</sup> he forgives<sup>53</sup> and redeems,<sup>54</sup> and he rebuilds Jerusalem.<sup>55</sup>

While the promises, reassurances and actions of Yahweh may signify compassion and comfort, empathy might not necessarily be present. The *OED* suggests that comfort can be defined as follows: to “soothe in grief or trouble; to relieve of mental distress; to console, solace”<sup>56</sup> and to “lend support or countenance to; to support, assist, aid; to abet, countenance, ‘back up’”. Physical and mental support are implied and these are certainly present in DI. For compassion, the *OED* first presents an apparently obsolete definition: suffering “together with another, participation in suffering; fellow-feeling, sympathy”. It then offers other possible definitions, one of which is the “feeling or emotion, when a person is moved by the suffering or distress of another, and by the desire to relieve it; pity that inclines one to spare or succour”. In this definition compassion is held towards a person in distress by one free from it and the concept of sympathy seems to be just below the surface of the definition. Wispé, in his discussion of the history of the concept of empathy, notes that Kohut had closely linked compassion and empathy. The latter is a necessary precondition to experience compassion and compassionate acts must be guided by accurate empathy to be effective.<sup>57</sup>

Simian-Yofre has wondered whether the translations for נחם provided by the dictionaries and commentaries necessarily reflect the meaning of the Hebrew<sup>58</sup> and thus one cannot but wonder whether reference to the *OED* definition is suitable. He

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<sup>48</sup> 41.8-13; 14-16; 43.14-15; 45.14-25; 51.1-8.

<sup>49</sup> 41.17-20; 49.7-13.

<sup>50</sup> 41.17-20; 44.1-5; 48.20-22.

<sup>51</sup> 43.6; 49.22-26; 51.9-16; ch.54.

<sup>52</sup> 43.16-21; 48.17-19; 49.7-13; 51.9-16; 52.11-12.

<sup>53</sup> 43.22-28; 44.21-23.

<sup>54</sup> 48.20-22; 51.9-16.

<sup>55</sup> 44.24-28; 45.9-13; 54.11-17.

<sup>56</sup> This definition is the ordinary current sense.

<sup>57</sup> L. Wispé, ‘History of the Concept of Empathy’, in *Empathy and Its Development*, ed. by N. Eisenberg and J. Strayer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 17-37. The reference to Kohut is found in H. Kohut, ‘Reflections’, in A. Goldberg, ed., *Advances in Self Psychology* (New York: International Universities Press, 1980), pp. 473-554 (p. 483).

<sup>58</sup> H. Simian-Yofre, ‘נחם’ in *ThWAT*, vol. 5, pp. 366-384 (pp. 368-369) [Henceforth: Simian-Yofre, נחם].

nevertheless offers a summary of the meaning of the root which is compatible with the definition mentioned above. The root includes both an active element, in which one attempts to change the course of things, and an emotional element often motivated by a prick of conscience or interest in the subject of the comfort.<sup>59</sup> The presence of action for the one comforted has been described above and empathy may be implied by Yahweh's interest in the plight of Zion/Jerusalem and Israel/Jacob. Parunak offers a summary of the meaning of the piel of נחם, however, which is infused with the concept of empathy. The 53 uses of the piel or pual often occur in contexts suggesting calamity. It occurs most commonly in parallel with the root נגח, which can convey the idea of comfort or showing sympathy (cf. Jer. 15.5), or lament, mourn or grieve (cf. Jer. 16.5; 22.10).<sup>60</sup> He argues "that there is no real tension between comforting a mourner and mourning along with". He then suggests that it

is the nature of comfort that the pain felt by the one who is comforted is shared by the one who comforts. Comforters undertake their work because they sense the bereavement suffered by the mourner. And they lighten his burden by taking on themselves part of his sorrow. This sympathetic pain, or 'compassion', lies at the heart of the biblical concept of comfort.<sup>61</sup>

Though he uses the phrase 'sympathetic', the sensing of bereavement and the sharing of sorrow intimate empathy. Indeed, the discussion of empathy in chapter 3 noted that some see sympathy as a result of empathy.<sup>62</sup>

Trible has provided a fascinating study of the root רחם as it relates to God, and this study too suggests the presence of empathy. The semantic field of רחם, she argues, moved from a reference to the wombs of women to the compassion of God.<sup>63</sup> Within her discussion of Jer. 31.15-22, she suggests that "Yahweh speaks here [v.20] of the divine inner-parts trembling for Ephraim the child". The word for inner parts, מַעֵה, can

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<sup>59</sup> Simian-Yofre, נחם, p. 369.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. Isa. 51.19.

<sup>61</sup> H. van Dyke Parunak, 'A Semantic Survey of NHM', *Biblica* 56 (1975), pp. 512-532 (pp. 516-517).

<sup>62</sup> Cf. Chapter 3, Sec. 3.4.2.

<sup>63</sup> P. Tribble, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality* (OBT; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1978), pp. 33, 56 [Henceforth: Tribble, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*].

parallel womb in a number of texts in the Hebrew Bible<sup>64</sup> and in Jer. 31.20 it stands in parallel with the phrase **רַחֵם אֶרְחַמְנוּ**.<sup>65</sup> She thus draws an implicit parallel between divine compassion, described with the root **רַחֵם**, and an empathy whereby Yahweh feels the compassion to such an extent that a physical response is elicited.<sup>66</sup> Her discussion immediately precedes her comments on the appearances of the root in Isa. 49.10-15. Those found in vv. 10, 13 and 15 indicate divine compassion for the exiles and Zion, but it is v.15 that provides a twist. Here, the metaphor based upon the similarity between the womb of a woman and the compassion of Yahweh is extended: “now the metaphor suggests the limitations of this compassion in order to show the unfathomable depths and integrity of divine love”. With the juxtaposition of divine compassion and “one supreme expression of human love, the poetry creates a new presence of Yahweh among the exiles”.<sup>67</sup> Her comments strongly suggest the presence of empathy in **רַחֵם** and indeed these observations are corroborated by the remarks of Darr on the same passage. She has proposed that Yahweh addresses personified Jerusalem as a mother in this poem and thus the poet invites the reader “to perceive Yahweh’s tender compassion”.<sup>68</sup> A ‘tender compassion’ for Jerusalem coupled with reassurances drawn from, and expanding beyond, the intimacy and power of the mother/child relationship, strongly suggests empathy. It might therefore be argued that **רַחֵם** may include within its common translation ‘compassion’ intimations of empathy.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>64</sup> Gen. 25.23; Ps. 71.6; Isa. 49.1. Tribble notes that **בֶּטֶן** is the word for womb in these passages (Tribble, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, p. 45).

<sup>65</sup> Tribble translates this phrase ‘I will truly show motherly-compassion upon him’.

<sup>66</sup> Carroll offers some comments concerning the interpretation of this Jeremiah passage which support Tribble. He refers to “the representation of Yahweh’s very emotional involvement with the community...as a mother the diety’s innards heave with maternal feelings whenever she considers her son” (R. P. Carroll, *Jeremiah* (OTL; Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1986), p. 598).

<sup>67</sup> Tribble, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, p. 52. Her association of **רַחֵם** with love finds support in comments made by Schmuttermayr (G. Schmuttermayr, ‘RḤM- Eine lexikalische Studie’, *Biblica* 51 (1970), pp. 499-525) and Denton, who argues that the intensive stem of **רַחֵם** ‘carries strong overtones of the meaning “to love”’ (R. C. Dentan, ‘The Literary Affinities of Exodus XXXIV 6f’, *VT* 13 (1963), pp. 35-51 (p. 40) [Henceforth: Dentan]).

<sup>68</sup> K. P. Darr, *Isaiah’s Vision and the Family of God* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1994), p. 175 [Henceforth: Darr].

<sup>69</sup> Note that Simian-Yofre has argued that **רַחֵם** belongs to the description of Yahweh’s nature (H. Simian-Yofre, **רַחֵם**, p. 475; cf. his discussion of Ex. 33.19 for the description of **רַחֵם** as an integral part of Yahweh (p. 464)). In his examination of Ex. 34.6, Dentan too has argued that **רַחֵם** (here **רַחֵם**) is

If, then, נחם and רחם may indicate empathy, then it is not surprising that it is evident elsewhere in DI. In the first instance, Yahweh quite clearly expresses a pain that is not precisely parallel to that experienced by the human personae but is closely related. In 42.14ab he exclaims that ‘I have been silent for a long time; I have been quiet, I have restrained myself’. He then contrasts this self-control with another action: ‘like a woman giving birth I will groan, I will pant and I will gasp together’. The preceding verse depicts Yahweh as a warrior and that which follows describe dramatic divine actions in the sphere of creation. Then, in v.16, the centre of the passage 42.14-17,<sup>70</sup> Yahweh describes his leading of the blind. On one level, the human characters suffered as a result of their transgressions and now Yahweh will suffer as he leads them out of their darkness. On a metaphorical level, the comparison with Zion is transparent. Frequent references are made to Zion’s children<sup>71</sup> and one can therefore suggest that both personae have experienced similar pain of childbirth and may experience a similar joy in the return of children.<sup>72</sup>

Indeed, this metaphor can be extended in order to suggest an empathy with Israel. In 48.18, Yahweh interjects ‘Oh that you had paid attention to my commandments’ and then suggests that the inability to do so prevented the establishment of peace, righteousness and the possibility of numerous descendants. Yahweh elsewhere consistently assures Israel that its seed would flourish,<sup>73</sup> suggesting that the prospect of a lack of descendants weighed heavily on them. The people of Israel had been referred to as the sons of Yahweh and had been carried in the womb,<sup>74</sup> and thus the remorse expressed by Yahweh for the seed cannot but parallel that felt by his sons. Two metaphors, then, provide the images and ground for the suggestion that Yahweh may indeed have empathised with Zion and Israel.

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a permanent element in the divine character (Dentan, p. 41).

<sup>70</sup> The passage contains 18 cola of which v.16ab are central.

<sup>71</sup> 49.17 (taking MT), 20, 22, 25; 51.18, 20; 54.1, 13.

<sup>72</sup> Note, however, that Darr has argued that the point of this passage is not Yahweh’s experience of childbirth but the blowing and gasping which desiccates vegetation and dries up pools of water (Darr, p. 105).

<sup>73</sup> 41.8; 43.5; 44.3; 54.3; 55.10.

<sup>74</sup> 43.6, 45.11 and 46.3.

This discussion suggests that familial metaphors contribute to the possible sense of empathy and indeed Darr has provided an excellent study of the role of familial imagery in the Book of Isaiah. She argues that the authors of Isaiah did not attempt to analyse the relationships between Yahweh, Israel and Jerusalem but employed terms from everyday familial roles (husband/wife; parent/child) and experiences (marriage; labour and delivery) “to shed light on the powerful bonds they believed existed between Israel and its God.”<sup>75</sup> She similarly notes the following:

the familial models of Isaiah 40-55...are aptly suited to convey a sense of the pain, anger, and shame that Israel, Yahweh, its divine father, and Jerusalem, its mother, have experienced, and also to express how it is possible that those relationships can survive and be healed in the aftermath of calamity.<sup>76</sup>

Imagery drawn from family life can thus express emotions and feelings which exist between personae within these chapters and particular passages intimate empathy. In Isa. 43.6, Yahweh commands the north and south to bring back ‘my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth’. This metaphor is expanded in 46.3, in which Yahweh claims that he had carried Jacob and Israel from the womb, emphasising not just their status as children but the very oneness which exists between pregnant mother and developing child. Ackerman has offered an interpretation of 46.3-4 which partially supports this proposal. She thinks that the conjunction of the verb ‘to make’ and the noun ‘womb’ suggests an allusion to God as mother. But she thinks that the image of Yahweh, depicted here as Israel’s nurse and midwife, is even more vivid. Yahweh, like a midwife, has lifted Israel from the womb and like a nurse carried the people from the day of birth. Within this scenario, “the loyalty of God the nurse will not falter”.<sup>77</sup> It is therefore of no surprise that Yahweh assures Jacob/Israel in 41.8 that it is descended from ‘my beloved’ Abraham, indicating the love of Yahweh for his people,<sup>78</sup> and explicitly states his love for Jacob/Israel in 43.4. In 54.5-8 Yahweh asserts that he is in

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<sup>75</sup> Darr, p. 35.

<sup>76</sup> Darr, p. 62.

<sup>77</sup> S. Ackerman, ‘Isaiah’ in *The Women’s Bible Commentary*, ed. by C. A. Newsom and S. H. Ringe (London: SPCK, 1992), pp. 161-181 (p. 168).



fact the husband of Zion, who had forsaken her for a short time but now has compassion on her. Sawyer has noted that Yahweh is depicted here like “a remorseful husband, pleading with his wife to trust him and take him back”,<sup>79</sup> thus injecting a flavour of contrition and a possible request for compassion as Yahweh asks for reconciliation. To this example it could be noted that Zion is seen as the mother of the people. They are called the sons of Zion in several verses, as mentioned above; Zion is implicitly compared to their mother in 50.1-2; she is assured that her children will be numerous in 54.1; and all of her sons will be taught about Yahweh, as described in 54.13. These metaphors create a continuity of matrimony and blood between Yahweh, Jacob/Israel and Zion which binds them together, and thus all are part of one metaphorical family. These images help to explain the compassion exhibited by Yahweh for his wife and their children and intimate empathy.

Other characteristics found in the text may suggest empathy. Yahweh frequently names and describes the situation in which Israel or Zion find themselves or conveys an understanding of their feelings. To name these feelings does not necessarily indicate an empathy with the personae. When placed alongside the actions and assurances by which Yahweh comforts his people, the familial metaphors and the declarations of love, these divine observations strongly suggest that the Yahweh who groans in pain and experiences remorse empathises with his people. Muilenburg implies that 40.27 is uttered by Yahweh,<sup>80</sup> an assertion which is not unequivocally accepted.<sup>81</sup> If Yahweh does speak these words, then he has heard the despair and despondency of Jacob and Israel. Even if it is not Yahweh but the poet who utters them, the description in vv.28-31 indicates that Yahweh will provide precisely that which Jacob/Israel lack, signifying an understanding if not empathy. Much the same could be suggested for the constant calls that Jacob/Israel should not fear,<sup>82</sup> that Yahweh will help<sup>83</sup> and

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<sup>78</sup> Cf. Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 455.

<sup>79</sup> J. F. A. Sawyer, ‘Daughter of Zion and Servant of the Lord in Isaiah: A Comparison’, *JSOT* 44 (1989), pp. 89-107 (p. 95) [Henceforth: Sawyer].

<sup>80</sup> Cf. Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, pp. 442-444. If 40.25-27 form a strophe beginning with the words of Yahweh and 40.28 introduces the prophet uttering his final words, then Yahweh may report 40.27.

<sup>81</sup> Cf. Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66*, pp. 58-60.

<sup>82</sup> 41.10, 13, 14; 43.1, 5; 44.2.

<sup>83</sup> 41.10, 13, 14; 44.2; 49.8.

strengthen<sup>84</sup> them, that he will answer<sup>85</sup> and lead them<sup>86</sup> or that he will bear them until old age.<sup>87</sup> The response of Yahweh in each case indicates that he has understood sufficiently in order to respond appropriately.

Yahweh's empathy for Zion/Jerusalem, like that for Jacob/Israel, is strongly implied through divine responses and the recognition of her situation. In 49.14 the feelings of Zion describing the pain that she has been abandoned and forgotten by Yahweh are expressed by Yahweh. He answers with the analogy discussed above, by which his dedication surpasses that of a mother for her suckling child. The strength of the response and the very nature of the analogy chosen manifests a depth of understanding which may only arise through empathy. Sawyer has further noted that the comparison between Zion and prey/captives in 49.24-25, which is found just after 49.14-21, indicates Zion's feelings of powerlessness.<sup>88</sup> Thus Yahweh expresses and answers vividly and poignantly the concerns of Zion. Yahweh similarly names and describes the situation of Zion/Jerusalem in other pericopae: she was a mother sent away because of the transgression of her sons;<sup>89</sup> she has drunk thoroughly from the cup of suffering;<sup>90</sup> she was abandoned, grieved of spirit, rejected and forsaken;<sup>91</sup> and she has felt afflicted, storm-tossed and uncomforted.<sup>92</sup> The abundance of descriptions, the emotion of the statements, the familial metaphors and Yahweh's activities combine to suggest the presence of empathy.

Indications of empathy are not restricted to Yahweh, and in fact one of the clearest expressions of empathy occurs soon after the divine command to comfort the people. In Isa. 40.6b a voice responds to the command to cry with the question 'what will I cry?'.<sup>93</sup> It then describes in vivid detail a despair based on the fleeting nature of

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<sup>84</sup> 41.9, 13; 42.6.

<sup>85</sup> 41.17; 49.8.

<sup>86</sup> 49.10.

<sup>87</sup> 46.4.

<sup>88</sup> Sawyer, p. 92.

<sup>89</sup> 50.1-3.

<sup>90</sup> 51.17-23.

<sup>91</sup> 54.1-10.

<sup>92</sup> 54.11-17.

<sup>93</sup> The translation of the MT *ואמר* in the first person is widely but not universally accepted. For a discussion, cf. Oswalt (p. 44, n.7) and Korpel and de Moor (*Isaiah 40-55*, p. 18, n. 3).

existence. Numerous commentators take this 'I' as that of the prophet<sup>94</sup> and are quick to note the parallels between the emotion expressed by this voice and emotions expressed elsewhere in DI. In the following quotes, presented at length in order to convey the texture of the thoughts of other scholars, empathy is palpable.

When he demurs with his counter-cry, 'What shall I preach?', he is only 'one of the people', and he speaks as one whose own thoughts are those of the vanquished nation that no longer believes in the possibility of any new beginning.<sup>95</sup>

The prologue already reflects the deep pessimism which appears again and again in the poems (cf., eg., 40:27). The prophet is here expressing the despondency of his contemporaries.<sup>96</sup>

Melugin carries the discussion to its logical conclusion. The similarities between 40.1-8 and Isa. 6 suggest the prophetic voice but the language of doubt "reminds us of Israel's complaints (40,27; 49,14)". He then continues, writing that

the ambiguity of the "I" is bound up with the lack of clear setting which characterizes the entire corpus and makes the problem of the "servant songs" so difficult. We must eventually ask why the prologue does not provide us with a concrete setting to give a well-defined context for interpretation. For the moment we content ourselves with the recognition that the poet uses the images of a prophetic commissioning but that the identity of the *personae* is ambiguous. The equivocation, doubtless, is intentional: the "I" is at once prophet and people.<sup>97</sup>

This utterance expresses precisely the emotions manifested in the words spoken by Jacob/Israel in 40.27 and Zion in 49.14. If the 'I' of 40.6 is the prophet, then an empathy between him and those to whom he is sent introduces the depiction of the relationships and thus infuses the conception of them. If the 'I' connotes the people, then despondency is the emotion firstly and primarily attributed to them, one presented in starkly individualistic terms. The context of 40.1-11, however, certainly suggests that is

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<sup>94</sup> Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 429; Clifford, p. 75; Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 40.

<sup>95</sup> Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 41. He later argues that these are the only words in the book where we hear DI. It is therefore touching that 'in the one place where we do catch a glimpse of him, he proclaims his solidarity with his fellow-countryment in their suffering and despair' (p. 43).

<sup>96</sup> Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 429.

is the people who are to be comforted. Whether individual or corporate, it might be best to suggest that the 'I' reflects and expresses emotions uttered by Jacob/Israel and Zion/Jerusalem, and presumably empathises deeply with the people.

In sum, then, empathy can be found amongst personae in DI. Yahweh's words and actions reflect an empathy for both Jacob/Israel and Zion/Jerusalem, and the expression of doubt found in 40.6b argues for an important empathy between the mediator of Yahweh's word and these two personae. These examples do not necessarily comprise all that may be found in DI but they do suggest that the empathy which is implied within the songs is present in the DI context.

#### 7.4 Reader Empathy for the Personae in DI

Much that might elicit a reader's empathy for personae in the text has been mentioned. In general terms, DI portrays Jacob/Israel, Zion/Jerusalem and other voices in such a manner that the audience may empathise with their suffering or joy. Jacob/Israel is depicted in a number of verses as suffering physically or emotionally, sometimes to an extreme. The despondency of Isa.40.27-31 has been mentioned and may draw the audience into the emotional state of this persona. Other descriptions of the state of Jacob/Israel too may elicit empathy: it is a people obviously afraid, requiring help and feeling weak, as indicated by Yahweh's many assurances; it has been spoiled, plundered and exposed to the heat of Yahweh's anger;<sup>98</sup> it was sent to a Babylon which maltreated it;<sup>99</sup> it was burned in the furnace of affliction;<sup>100</sup> and it has been despised and considered an abomination of nations.<sup>101</sup> On the positive side, Yahweh continually promises to grant aid, lead it, wreak vengeance on enemies, redeem it and forgive it. An audience may readily empathise with the suffering and share in the infectious, joyful emotions.

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<sup>97</sup> Melugin, *Formation*, p. 84.

<sup>98</sup> 41.22-25.

<sup>99</sup> 47.6.

<sup>100</sup> 48.10.

<sup>101</sup> 49.7.

Jerusalem suffered double for her sins, according to 40.2,<sup>102</sup> and thus the excess of punishment may immediately sensitise the reader to her suffering. Isa. 49.14 conveys her inner state, and a despair and despondency first introduced in 40.6 and 40.27-31 is once again portrayed with empathy possibly evoked. Much that was mentioned above may function similarly: mother Zion was sent away for the sins of her sons;<sup>103</sup> she became drunk with suffering and was accordingly humiliated;<sup>104</sup> she was abandoned, rejected and forsaken;<sup>105</sup> and she was afflicted, storm-tossed and uncomforted.<sup>106</sup> Sawyer has similarly noted the fragility of Zion's position: Zion as wife is weaker than Yahweh, socially dependant and potentially subject to a power that can provide happiness, dignity and freedom or punishment, humiliation and abuse.<sup>107</sup> This tension, one in which Zion must make a difficult choice, too might elicit empathy and indeed Sawyer provides an excellent and relevant observation: "the physical weakness of a woman, her vulnerability and her dependence on another person give the Zion poems a special poignancy",<sup>108</sup> a poignancy which can evoke empathy. So too, much is depicted positively: her sons return; Yahweh takes away the cup of suffering and gives it to her enemies; she is taken back by Yahweh; and she is rebuilt. Suffering and joy are interwoven and with both the reader may identify.

Other speaking voices may similarly elicit empathy. The 'I' of 40.6-8 expresses a despondency and fear alongside a conviction that God's word stands forever, both of which may elicit similar emotions from the audience. A first person plural confesses wrongdoing in 42.24 and thus the reader may empathise with the confessor who has sinned, recognised it and admitted it. Yahweh too may elicit empathy. As mentioned above, he exhibits a pain akin to childbirth. Darr has argued that within the ancient near east "references to labor were employed figuratively to awaken sympathy...and to illumine experiences of anguish"<sup>109</sup> and this experience may thus

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<sup>102</sup> There is some discussion of the meaning of this phrase. For a helpful summary, cf. Oswalt, p. 43, n.5.

<sup>103</sup> 50.1-3.

<sup>104</sup> 51.17-23.

<sup>105</sup> 54.1-10.

<sup>106</sup> 54.11-17.

<sup>107</sup> Sawyer, p. 95.

<sup>108</sup> Sawyer, p. 104.

<sup>109</sup> Darr, p. 109.

elicit a sympathy based on empathy. Yahweh expresses remorse that his people did not heed his commandments and as husband he faithfully takes back Zion after regretfully forsaking her for a short time. The observations made by Sawyer, who likens Yahweh to the pleading and apologetic husband seeking reconciliation,<sup>110</sup> lends an air of pathos which too might raise feelings of empathy. The exuberance of Yahweh's comforting words, the endless encouragement and the assurances concerning his word, particularly in 40.8 and 55.10-11, may similarly evoke an analogous feeling in the reader or audience.

Thus, the personae depicted in DI are presented in such a manner that they may elicit empathy from the reader resulting from both suffering and joy.

## 7.5 Conclusions

It has been proposed in this chapter that a search for a formal literary structure of DI may not be fruitful or even suitable due to the difficulties in the delimitation of passages and the complexity of the poetic language, which contains a host of possible themes and references at every turn. DI was examined for indications of empathy and it was proposed that the descriptions of comfort and compassion connote empathy, that many of the actions of Yahweh reflect empathy and the familial metaphors contribute to a sense of empathy. The parallels between 40.6, 40.27 and 49.14 similarly depict a congruency of despondency amongst personae. The sufferings of Jacob/Israel, Zion/Jerusalem and Yahweh, the expression of despair found in 40.6 and the confession of 42.24 may also elicit empathy from the reader.

This chapter has not attempted to exhaust the possibilities of empathy but has instead attempted to note its presence in DI. It might therefore be justifiable to suggest that the songs are connected to their context through empathy, and in fact one could further argue that the songs participate fully in the overarching task of DI, the comforting of Yahweh's people. Such comforting may not succeed in each individual song, as seen in 49.1-6 and 50.4-11, but within the span of 40-55 the attempts of the servant are consonant with the task set by Yahweh.

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<sup>110</sup> Sawyer, pp. 95-98.

Though the songs may be connected to their context through empathy, scholars have offered arguments by which the songs might be distinguished from their DI context.<sup>111</sup> One recent proposal in support of a distinction between the songs and their context has centred on the first and third person language used in the songs. Because the first person language has been of some importance in the elicitation of empathy from the reader in the final three songs, this proposal deserves some attention and will be examined in the next chapter.

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<sup>111</sup> See Westermann for a good example (*Isaiah 40-66*, pp. 20-21; 206-212).

## Chapter 8

### The Songs as Focal Points for Empathy

#### 8.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter has proposed that the search for a formal structure in DI has not produced any unequivocal results and in fact may not necessarily be appropriate to the nature of the text. This point notwithstanding, it was argued that the servant songs might be connected to their context through the presence of empathy and the elicitation of empathy. Within the discussions of the individual songs, it was noted that first person language is important in the facilitation of reader empathy for personae within the poem, and first person language was also useful in the description of the relationships within the poems. This chapter will examine an article by M. Weippert which has focussed on the first and third person language of the servant songs. His observations provide some nuance to, and perhaps qualification of, the preceding discussion.

#### 8.2 M. Weippert: 'Third Person Songs' and 'First Person Songs'

Weippert has argued that nowhere else in DI does a human character speak in the first person about himself in the manner found in Isa. 49.1-6 and 50.4-9. He similarly asserts that nowhere else does Yahweh or a third person talk about the servant in the third person so concentratedly and exclusively as in the songs of Isa. 42.1-4 and 52.13-53.12.<sup>1</sup> Weippert views DI as a collection of texts, and he thinks that the one who revised DI identified the servant as Cyrus in 42.1-4, Israel in 49.1-6 and the prophet in 50.4-9 (11).<sup>2</sup> Isa. 53 is an insertion which does not belong to the original collection. He thinks that the redactional identifications do not necessarily correspond to the original intention of the songs. He then divides the songs into the 'he-songs' and the 'I-songs' for analysis. Israel, he concludes, is described in 42.1-4 and in Isa. 53; and 49.1-6 and

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<sup>1</sup> M. Weippert, 'Die »Konfessionen« Deuterocesajas' in *Schöpfung und Befreiung: Für Claus Westermann zum 80. Geburtstag*, ed. by R. Albertz, F. W. Golka and J. Kegler (Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 1989), pp. 104-115 (p. 107) [Henceforth: Weippert].

<sup>2</sup> Weippert, pp. 107-109.



50.4-9 are the words of the prophet DI describing his own experiences.<sup>3</sup> The latter two can therefore be compared with the confessions of Jeremiah.<sup>4</sup>

His discussion is of great interest but it possesses weaknesses. The equating of the 'I' of a poem and the poet cannot be so easily presumed, as discussed below, and he provides no textual study to support his claims concerning the concentrations of language. This latter weakness may provide the means through which a better understanding of the songs within their context might be gained.

### 8.3 First and Third Person Language of the Songs

#### 8.3.1 First Person Singular

Even a cursory reading of DI indicates the prevalence of the first person language spoken by Yahweh. Personae apart from Yahweh obviously speak in the first person and it might therefore be of some use to chart the appearances of the first person singular as indicated by verbs, pronouns and pronominal suffixes. These will be attributed insofar as possible to the personae who utter the words. In the first instance the servant of 49.1-6 and 50.4-11 will be distinguished from other references: he may indeed be the Jacob/Israel outside the songs but the difficulties in precise attribution make this assumption hasty. In addition, it should be noted that Isa. 50.4-11 will be taken as a unit here rather than Weippert's 50.4-9. Preceding discussions have suggested that 50.4-11 can legitimately be studied as a single poetic unit.

<u>Persona</u>	<u>No. of 'I' References</u>
Yahweh	431
Servant of 49/50	44
Artificers <sup>5</sup>	11
Babylon <sup>6</sup>	8
Jacob/Israel <sup>7</sup>	7
Zion/Jerusalem <sup>8</sup>	7
Anonymous <sup>9</sup>	3

<sup>3</sup> Weippert, pp. 110-112. He assumes the 'Israel' of 49.3 is not original (p. 105).

<sup>4</sup> Weippert, p. 112.

<sup>5</sup> 44.16 (2x), 17 (2x), 19 (6x), 20 (1x).

<sup>6</sup> 47.7 (1x), 8 (4x), 10 (3x).

<sup>7</sup> 40.27 (3x); 48.5 (3x), 7 (1x).

<sup>8</sup> 49.14 (2x), 21 (5x).

Sons of Zion <sup>10</sup>	3
Seed of Jacob/Israel <sup>11</sup>	1

Some of these attributions are only tentative. The sons of Zion or the seed of Jacob/Israel could be considered one group and could furthermore be defined as an 'Israel' equivalent to the 2mpl found throughout the book.<sup>12</sup> Because their immediate contexts define the personae as listed above, these attributions will remain at present.

Yahweh's prominence as the primary speaker is clearly confirmed by the table, but three criteria isolate 49.1-6 and 50.4-11. The 44 instances of the singular 'I' reference in these poems significantly outnumber those of any other persona except Yahweh. They also outnumber the combined total of 40 for the other human personae. These references are also more concentrated than anywhere else if passages lengthier than one verse are considered. In 49.1-6, 21 occur in 6 verses;<sup>13</sup> in 50.4-11, 23 occur within 8 verses;<sup>14</sup> in 44.16-20, 11 appear in 5 verses;<sup>15</sup> in 47.7-10, 8 appear in 4 verses;<sup>16</sup> and in 49.14-21, 7 occur within 8 verses.<sup>17</sup> The distinctiveness of 49.1-6 and 50.4-11 is further confirmed by the directness of these first person utterances. In these two songs, 40.6 and 48.16 the 'I' references are spoken directly by the servant or the anonymous speaker, whereas the other first person singulars always occur within the context of quoted or reported language.<sup>18</sup>

These observations have at least two ramifications. Weippert is not alone in his suggestion or assumption that the first person singular of 49.1-6 and 50.4-9 depict the word of the prophet DI. Whybray writes the following:

<sup>9</sup> 40.6 (2x, if *וְאִמְרָה* is read); 48.16 (1x). The possible association between these 'I' utterances and those found in 49.1-6 and 50.4-11 will be discussed presently.

<sup>10</sup> 49.20 (3x).

<sup>11</sup> 44.5.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Willey's discussion of the 2mpl (P. T. Willey, *Remember the Former Things: The Recollection of Previous Texts in Second Isaiah* (SBLDS 161; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997), pp. 175-181). This 2mpl will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 10, Sec. 10.3.

<sup>13</sup> 3.5/verse.

<sup>14</sup> 2.875/verse.

<sup>15</sup> 2.2/verse.

<sup>16</sup> 2/verse.

<sup>17</sup> .875/verse.

<sup>18</sup> Reported speech with 'I' references obviously appears within 49.1-6, but the entire poem is uttered directly by the servant and not reported by another.

In the prophetic books it may be assumed that speech in the first person singular other than that of Yahweh is that of the prophet himself, unless the contrary is specifically indicated by the naming of another speaker in an introductory phrase...or in the body of the speech, or by the context.<sup>19</sup>

Such presumptions are not necessarily valid. Melugin, discussing 50.4-11, argues that DI's experience coloured the portrayal of the servant but one cannot assume that the servant is the prophet.<sup>20</sup> Several scholars have also recently noted the problematic relationship which exists between poetry and history. Alter questions the ability to recover the historical circumstance behind the poetic prophetic texts. Prophetic poetry, he suggests, is often presented as divine, represented speech and not historical speech. He uses Isa. 49.14-23 as an example. The "historical landscape is transfigured--almost displaced-- by the metaphorical scene that represents it" and he argues elsewhere that the power of the prophets can be partly explained by an "imaginative authority with which history was turned into a theatre of timeless hopes and fears".<sup>21</sup> Within a discussion of the weaknesses of the historical critical school, Melugin has later suggested that the metaphorical character of many prophetic texts often obscures the actual historical situation.

Poetic language creates its own world. Like a self-contained work of sculpture poetic discourse seems to shape a world of its own which can be strikingly independent of its referential function.<sup>22</sup>

He similarly notes that much of the Book of Isaiah is concerned with history and yet it is "difficult to correlate precisely with actual historical events".<sup>23</sup> Within a complex poetic text with as few historical references as Isa. 40-55, his observations are well taken.

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<sup>19</sup> R. N. Whybray, *The Second Isaiah* (OTG; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1983), pp. 70-71. Scharbert too thinks the speaking 'I' is DI (J. Scharbert, *Deuterocesaja-der 'Knecht Jawes'?* (Hamburg: Verlag Dr. Kovač, 1995), p. 22).

<sup>20</sup> R. F. Melugin, *The Formation of Isaiah 40-55* (BZAW 141; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1976) p. 154; cf. too p. 155 and p. 72 [Henceforth: Melugin, *Formation*].

<sup>21</sup> R. Alter, *The Art of Biblical Poetry* (New York: Basic Books, 1985), pp. 141, 162.

<sup>22</sup> R. F. Melugin, 'Prophetic Books and the Problem of Historical Reconstruction', in *Prophets and Paradigms: Essays in Honour of Gene M. Tucker*, ed. by S. B. Reid (JSOTSup. 229; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), pp. 63-78 (p. 71) [Henceforth: Melugin, *Prophetic Books*].

<sup>23</sup> Melugin, *Prophetic Books*, p. 72.

The comments of R. C. Elliott, writing in a different context, may contribute to Melugin's suggestions. Elliott notes that actual events experienced by the poet and the poet's portrayal of these events in a poem can be distinct.

To make this contradiction an issue, however, is to assume that the identification between the 'I' of the poem and the historical person of the poem is unequivocal. Given the nature of language, however, and given the conventions governing literary discourse, equivocation in identifications of that kind is necessary.<sup>24</sup>

The assertion that "the poetic 'I' and the empirical 'I' are, and are not, truly one is not an irresponsible play with language".<sup>25</sup> Both are necessary and he quotes Spitzer in support of his argument. The poet on the one hand

must transcend the limitations of individuality in order to gain an experience of universal experience; on the other, an individual eye is necessary to perceive and to fix the matter of experience.<sup>26</sup>

The 'I' may reflect the personal but goes beyond it in order to express the ideas of the poet. It is, on one level, a literary device. It might therefore be best to note that the first singular references in 49.1-6 and 50.4-11 may reflect the experience of the poet or prophet but cannot necessarily be *equated* with the *actual* life story of the poet. It might be further suggested that the 'I' may not be the 'I' of the poet but simply a poet's means of expressing a particular theme or idea. It need not be assumed, therefore, that the 'I' is the historical prophet or that the poems necessarily describe the actual historical events experienced by the poet.

Secondly, North has referred to Isa. 50.4-9 as a soliloquy.<sup>27</sup> Abrams argues that a soliloquy is the act of talking to oneself silently or aloud, and in drama it is the convention by which a character utters his or her thoughts aloud when alone on a stage. Playwrights "use this device as a convenient way to convey to the audience information

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<sup>24</sup> R. C. Elliott, *The Literary Persona* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), p. 80 [Henceforth: Elliott].

<sup>25</sup> Elliott, p. 165.

<sup>26</sup> Elliott, p. 5. The quote is taken from L. Spitzer, 'Note on the Poetic and Empirical 'I' in Medieval Authors', *Traditio* 4 (1946), pp. 414-422 (p. 416). The quote refers to Dante.

<sup>27</sup> North, *Second Isaiah*, p. 202.

about a character's thoughts, motives, and state of mind, as well as for purposes of general exposition".<sup>28</sup> The servant speaking in 50.4-9 does not address anyone directly and thus vv.4-9 could be considered a soliloquy. If Isa. 50.4-11 is taken as a poetic unit, with an address to *you* in 50.10-11, then it may not be a soliloquy in the strictest sense but a soliloquy followed by a monologue or two monologues. Abrams defines a monologue as "a long speech by a single person", of which the soliloquy is a subset.<sup>29</sup> Dramatic monologues, according to Abrams, are uttered by a single person who is not the poet, addressing others known only through clues in the poem. In these, the speaker unintentionally reveals "his or her temperament and character".<sup>30</sup> One might further suggest that Isa. 49.1-6 is a monologue rather than a soliloquy because it is addressed to the nations.

Soliloquies and monologues are closely related: according to Abrams, the soliloquy is a subset of the monologue and both function to provide insight into the interior of a character. Work that has been done on soliloquies and monologues in the Hebrew Bible confirm the close connection between the two<sup>31</sup> and the same passage has been defined as monologue and soliloquy by different scholars.<sup>32</sup> The disclosure of the inner thoughts and feelings of a character through soliloquy or monologue have similarly been noted.<sup>33</sup> Thus, one might study 49.1-6 and 50.4-11 as monologues if the definition is precisely followed. Or, they could be examined as soliloquies for a number

<sup>28</sup> M. H. Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 5th ed. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1988), p. 175 [Henceforth: Abrams].

<sup>29</sup> Abrams, p. 45.

<sup>30</sup> Abrams, pp. 45-46. For a more detailed discussion of the dramatic monologue cf. R. W. Rader, 'The Dramatic Monologue and Related Lyric Forms' in *Critical Inquiry* 3 (1976), pp. 131-151 [Henceforth: Rader].

<sup>31</sup> Bratsiotis in essence equates the inner monologue, one in which the speaker addresses himself rather than someone or something exterior, with the soliloquy (N. P. Bratsiotis, 'Der Monolog im Alten Testament' *ZAW* 73 (1961), pp. 30-70 (pp. 38-39) [Henceforth: Bratsiotis]; Lapointe argues similarly (R. Lapointe, 'The Divine Monologue as a Channel of Revelation, *CBQ* 32 (1970), pp. 161-181 (pp. 163-164)) [Henceforth: Lapointe]; and Niehoff uses the two terms interchangeably (M. Niehoff, 'Do Biblical Characters Talk to Themselves? Narrative Modes of Representing Inner Speech in Early Biblical Fiction', *JBL* 111 (1992), pp. 577-595 (p. 577)).

<sup>32</sup> For example, Clines argues that Job 3.1-26 draws on the form of a monologue (D. J. A. Clines, *Job 1-20* (WBC 17; Dallas: Word Books, 1989), p. 77 [Henceforth: Clines, *Job*]) whereas Moore describes it as a soliloquy (R. D. Moore, 'The Integrity of Job', *CBQ* 45 (1983), pp. 17-31).

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Clines, *Job*, p. 77; Bratsiotis, pp. 60, 70; Lapointe, pp. 179-180; R. A. F. MacKenzie, 'The Divine Soliloquies in Genesis', *CBQ* 17 (1955), pp. 277-286 (p. 286).

of reasons: the soliloquy is closely related to the monologue; 50.4-9 bears the hallmarks of a soliloquy because it has no audience; and the servant makes no overtures towards the nations after 49.1ab and he is in essence soliloquising. W. Clemen has recently examined Shakespearean soliloquies<sup>34</sup> and his observations resonate with much that has already been noted in the rhetorical study of the songs. While the specifics of his analysis cannot be applied directly to the poems, his general insights might throw previously disregarded features into relief.

Clemen argues that soliloquies appeal to the language of the senses. In the concrete details taken from everyday life, which one can hear, see and feel, the abstract and the concrete can blend.<sup>35</sup> These observations echo characteristics noted previously. Much of the language of the songs depends upon images, similes and metaphors which appeal to the senses and permit an access to the reader. The servant as arrow, sword or light and the despondency in Isa. 49.1-6, as well as the beating, spitting, light and darkness of Isa. 50.4-11, all depend upon language appealing to the senses. This does not mean to say that such language is absent in DI as a whole, but it does suggest at least one correspondence between these poems and soliloquies.

A number of the other observations made by Clemen focus on the relationship between the audience and actor, and while it is not assumed that DI is presented as a play, it is not a large leap to draw an analogy between the audience/actor relationship and that between reader/text.<sup>36</sup> Clemen has noted that in times past soliloquies were seen to possess a higher objective validity than the speeches made between characters. Interaction with other characters only gives an inadequate knowledge of them, and only in the soliloquies does the person behind the shell become better known.<sup>37</sup> One might therefore suggest that the depicted persona becomes better known in these soliloquies,

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<sup>34</sup> W. Clemen, *Shakespeare's Soliloquies*, trans. by C. S. Stokes (London: Methuen, 1987) [Henceforth: Clemen]. For comments on his work, cf. J. A. Bryant, Jr., 'Review of W. Clemen Shakespeare's Soliloquies', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 43 (1992), pp. 100-101.

<sup>35</sup> Clemen, p. 181.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. the discussion in Chapter 3, Sec. 3.2.2.3. Note also that J. D. W. Watts has presented an interpretation of the Book of Isaiah based upon the precepts of drama (J. D. W. Watts, *Isaiah 34-66* (WBC 25; Waco: Word, 1987)) and more recently Baltzer has presented an interpretation of DI as a liturgical drama (K. Baltzer, *Deutero-Jesaja* (KAT Band 10/2; Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlag, 1999).

<sup>37</sup> Clemen, pp. 5, 9.

but within the context of DI some difficulties nevertheless remain. The 'I' may provide a glimpse into the inner workings of the servant persona who appears elsewhere in the text. The 'I' may indeed be Israel speaking, but there are well-rehearsed difficulties with this proposition. It may similarly be the 'I' that surfaces in Isa. 40.6 and 48.16. The speeches in 49.1-6 and 50.4-11 might therefore provide an extended view into the thoughts of this persona if indeed they are equivalent. Once again this identification cannot be assumed. The prophet or poet cannot be assumed to be the 'I' of the two passages though this 'I' may nevertheless reflect, no matter how richly refracted, the thoughts and experiences of the writer. In essence, it might be suggested that these soliloquies offer an insight into the inner workings of a persona but difficulties in identification prevent any precise correlation between the thoughts and the particular persona speaking.

More of a character is disclosed through a soliloquy, according to Clemen, and thus the audience is taken into the confidence of the speaker. The audience might therefore experience sympathy, withdrawal and doubt in its relationship with the character.<sup>38</sup> Withdrawal and doubt do not seem to inform the poems which have been studied thus far but sympathy is not irrelevant to the discussion at hand. It was noted in Chapter 3<sup>39</sup> that some scholars argue that sympathy is based in empathy. Extending the observation made by Clemen, the proposals that the songs describe and elicit empathy and the concentration of first person language which does not originate with Yahweh, one might therefore suggest that within the framework of DI, these two poems might *particularly* elicit the empathy of the audience. Indeed, the close relationship between soliloquies and monologues has been mentioned and arguments provided by those who have discussed monologues further suggest that these might elicit empathy. R. Rader has argued that dramatic monologues are built on an empathy and sympathy which may lead to understanding;<sup>40</sup> Clines emphasises the participation necessary to understand the monologue found in Job 3;<sup>41</sup> and Bratsiotis has asserted that the reader of biblical

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<sup>38</sup> Clemen, p. 136.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Sec. 3.4.2.

<sup>40</sup> Rader, p. 135.

<sup>41</sup> Here "we are invited to view the man Job in the violence of his grief. Unless we encounter this man

monologues participates involuntarily in the mental condition and the general circumstances of the speaker.<sup>42</sup> If these observations are accepted, then it might be suggested that within the context of DI, these poems in particular elicit empathy.

According to Clemen, soliloquies allow the audience to see with the speaker's eyes and thereby discern more clearly that which is to be seen on stage,<sup>43</sup> and the comments of Rader and Clines just above suggest a relationship between understanding and empathy. Such empathy might therefore lead to a greater understanding of the events in DI because the events are seen from within the eyes of one who is participating in that world. This possibility resonates quite strongly with the previous suggestions made by Lada, who stresses the close relationship between empathy and cognition.<sup>44</sup>

Clemen further asserts that soliloquies may have a particularly strong effect when a process of transformation or reversal, a 'self-contained drama', is presented, in which the attitude of the character at the end is quite different from that at the beginning.<sup>45</sup> Clemen also argues that soliloquies almost always provide a new or altered perspective<sup>46</sup> and the audience sympathising with the character or seeing through his or her eyes may have their experiences changed.<sup>47</sup> Once again, the parallels with Isa. 49.1-6 and 50.4-11 are transparent. In Isa. 49.1-6, the dramatic shifts from excited hope through despondency and then to reassurance and the willing acceptance of the new task might constitute a 'self-contained drama'; in Isa. 50.4-11, the poem moves from a compassionate task through the unjust suffering of the servant to a conclusion in which the servant, whose God seemed so far away, is justified and the others are punished. The reader empathising with the servant follows him through these twists and turns and arrives at a new perspective.

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with these feelings we have no right to listen in on the debates that follow; with this speech before us we...must always be reading it [the book] as the drama of a human soul" (Clines, *Job*, p. 104).

<sup>42</sup> Bratsiotis, p. 70.

<sup>43</sup> Clemen, p. 152.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Chapter 3, Section 3.4.2. Lada writes that "empathy itself is the sole avenue which leads to a deeper understanding of people's minds, motives and actions" (I. Lada, "Empathic Understanding": Emotion and Cognition in Classical Dramatic Audience-Response', *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society* 39 (1994), pp. 94-140 (p. 124)).

<sup>45</sup> Clemen, p. 182.

<sup>46</sup> Clemen, p. 186.

<sup>47</sup> Clemen, p. 155.



Thus, Isa. 49-1-6 and 50.4-11 are distinct from the DI context by virtue of the concentration of first person singular language which does not originate from the mouth of Yahweh. Clemen has provided some observations concerning the nature of language which may be involved in soliloquies and the possible function of the soliloquies. Most importantly, his discussion and comments made by others indicate that these poems may especially function to elicit empathy.

### 8.3.2 First Person Plural

Weippert suggested that a focus on Isa. 53 and 42.1-4 was justified due to the third person description of the servant, which will be studied below. The *we* of Isa.53, however, may be considered in a manner analogous to the first person singular: DI contains few examples of first person plural language. Those which appear are presented in the following chart.

<u>Persona</u>	<u>No. of References</u>
Isa. 53	16
Heavenly Council <sup>48</sup>	13
Anonymous (outside Isa. 53) <sup>49</sup>	4
Peoples <sup>50</sup>	1
Those who trust in idols <sup>51</sup>	1
Yahweh and Jacob/Israel <sup>52</sup>	1
Yahweh and idols/gods <sup>53</sup>	1
Servant and others <sup>54</sup>	1

Isa. 53, and particularly 53.1-6, possess an unusually high concentration of first plural references, with 16 in the space of the 15 verses.<sup>55</sup> This concentration is surpassed only by 41.22-26, in which 10 references occur within 5 verses.<sup>56</sup> Two considerations might nevertheless warrant a focus on Isa. 53. If the wider pericope within which 41.22-26

<sup>48</sup> 40.3, 8; 41.22 (5x), 23 (3x), 26 (2x); 43.9.

<sup>49</sup> 42.24; 47.4; 52.10; 55.7.

<sup>50</sup> 41.1.

<sup>51</sup> 42.17.

<sup>52</sup> 43.26.

<sup>53</sup> 46.5.

<sup>54</sup> 50.8.

<sup>55</sup> Approx. 1.1/verse.

<sup>56</sup> 2/verse.

occurs is considered, possibly delimited as 41.21-29<sup>57</sup> or 41.21-24 and 41.25-29,<sup>58</sup> then 10 references appear in the space of 9 verses,<sup>59</sup> a concentration similar to that found in 52.13-53.12. Or, if the references found in Isa. 53 are studied only in the immediately relevant verses, then the 16 in the 6 verses of 53.1-6<sup>60</sup> is greater than the 10 in the 5 verses of 41.22-26. Secondly, the previous section noted that Yahweh dominates DI with the divine first singular. The unusually high concentration of first singular references in 49.1-6 and 50.4-11 not uttered by Yahweh therefore deserved some focus. If the *we* references in 41.22-26 include the ever-present Yahweh while those in Isa. 53 manifestly do not, then it would not be unjustifiable to suggest that the non-divine references similarly merit attention.

Clemen was used as a model in the previous section in an effort to study the first singular appearances. An analogy between the first person singular soliloquies and this concentration of first person plural references. The first person speaks in Isa. 53 and thus much that Clemen posited concerning the first person singular may apply. He suggested that language appealing to the senses was common in soliloquies and *our* language is nothing if not physical, appealing to the senses in the description of the suffering of the servant, the servant as root and suckling or the sheep similes. Soliloquies also provide a more objective view of the persona behind the shell and this assertion may not be irrelevant in DI. The *we* could be the nations of 52.13-15, thus echoing the *we* of 41.1; or *we* could be Israel or some section thereof, possibly reflecting the *we* of 42.24, 52.10 and 55.7. Clines had noted the difficulties in identifying the *we* and thus these possibilities will be noted here but no identification will be offered here: the reader is provided access to *our* thoughts, whoever *we* may be. Clemen had similarly argued that more of a character is disclosed through soliloquies, and the audience, which is taken into the confidence of the speaker, may experience sympathy,

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<sup>57</sup> Cf. C. Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66: A Commentary*, trans. by D.M.G. Stalker (London: SCM Press, 1969), pp. 81-91 [Henceforth: Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66*].

<sup>58</sup> Cf. J. Muilenburg, 'Isaiah: Chapters 40-66' in *The Interpreter's Bible*, vol. 5, ed. by G.A. Buttrick (New York: Abingdon Press, 1956), pp. 381-773 (pp. 460-463) [Henceforth: Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*].

<sup>59</sup> Approx. 1.1.

<sup>60</sup> Approx. 2.67/verse.

withdrawal and doubt. Much is seen of *our* character within the poem, and the first person language and the centrality of *our* confession elicited empathy.

The other criteria isolated by Clemen are similarly relevant. The audience, through an empathy with *us*, may be allowed to see through *our* eyes and understand *our* initial rejection of the servant and the emotions felt with the recognition of the true status of the servant. The importance of a ‘self-contained drama’ mentioned by Clemen is similarly present. *We* move from a rejection or even physical abuse of the servant to a surprising realisation that the servant is the servant of Yahweh; the servant moves from humiliation to exaltation. Soliloquies similarly provide the audience with an altered perspective, according to Clemen, and in Isa. 53 the audience sees the servant in a new light due to *our* experience.

In sum, then, the criteria forwarded by Clemen are relevant. The language associated with *us* depends on the senses and is accessible to the audience. The audience may be granted an insight behind *our* shell and an empathy may be elicited as a result of the language and the confession. The audience therefore sees through the eyes of the speaker, participates in the transformation of perception and thus sees the servant as *we* see him.

### 8.3.3 Third Person References

Weippert suggested that Isa. 42.1-4 and 53 merit attention due to the concentration of third person references to the servant, but he provided no substantiation of this claim. The noun עֶבֶד appears 21 times in DI in 14 separate pericopae. If the third person singular references to the servant<sup>61</sup> made by verbs,<sup>62</sup> pronouns and pronominal suffixes are listed, then Weippert’s appears to be a valid observation, as shown in the chart below. The third person singular references to the servant and those in the second singular, however, could be distinguished. Yahweh frequently addresses the servant directly in DI and as a result one could theoretically argue that the third person may be granted too much prominence by Weippert in the DI context. Some

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<sup>61</sup> Which thus excludes the plural servants described in 54.17.

<sup>62</sup> The finite verbs and imperatives will be studied here because they indicate person by their form.

passages similarly include plural references which may relate to the servant and these too will be included. If these references are placed in a chart, the following is found:

<u>Pericope</u>	<u>3ms References</u>	<u>3mpl References</u>	<u>2ms References</u>	<u>2mpl References</u>
41.8-13 <sup>63</sup>			26	
42.1-4 <sup>64</sup>	14			
42.18-25 <sup>65</sup>	6 <sup>66</sup>	6 <sup>67</sup>	1 <sup>68</sup>	3
43.8-13 <sup>69</sup>	1			7 <sup>70</sup>
44.1-5 <sup>71</sup>	2 <sup>72</sup>		7	
44.21-23 <sup>73</sup>			9	
44.24-28 <sup>74</sup>			2	
45.1-8 <sup>75</sup>				
48.20-22 <sup>76</sup>		3 <sup>77</sup>		6
49.1-6 <sup>78</sup>			4	

<sup>63</sup> עֶבֶד is found in 41.8, 9.

<sup>64</sup> עֶבֶד is found in 42.1.

<sup>65</sup> עֶבֶד is found twice in 42.19. This is an unusually difficult passage in which the number changes frequently and the references are not clearly spelt out. Thus, any numbers offered here can only be done so tentatively. It is assumed that the blind servant of v.19 is also the people apparently described in both the singular and plural throughout the passage.

<sup>66</sup> The תשמר of v.20 is taken as ישמר.

<sup>67</sup> The הפח of v. 22 is taken as הפחו.

<sup>68</sup> The qere of ראיית is taken.

<sup>69</sup> עֶבֶד is found in 43.10.

<sup>70</sup> The MT הוציא is taken rather than הוציא.

<sup>71</sup> עֶבֶד is found in 44.1, 2.

<sup>72</sup> This number does not include three instances of הוּ which refer to one amongst the seed of Jacob and Israel, four corresponding verbs and one pronominal suffix. These do not specifically refer to the servant Jacob/Israel and have thus not been included. If, however, they were, then the passage would contain ten 3ms and one 3mpl references. These numbers would not affect the course of the argument.

<sup>73</sup> עֶבֶד is found twice in 44.21.

<sup>74</sup> עֶבֶד is found in 44.26. Although some witnesses (cf. BHS note a) and Westermann (*Isaiah 40-66*) take the plural עבדיו the MT will be followed. The reference is not entirely clear. Muilenburg thinks it is prophetic Israel (*Isaiah 40-66*, p. 518); North favours the prophet DI if it is taken in the singular (*Second Isaiah*, p. 147); and Oswalt too takes the servant as the prophet (J. N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 40-66* (NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), p. 190, n. 80). Fokkelman has recently offered a discussion which could support a reference to Cyrus (J. P. Fokkelman 'The Cyrus Oracle in Isaiah 44,24-45,7 from the Perspectives of Syntax, Versification and Structure' in *Studies in the Book of Isaiah: Festschrift for W. A. M. Beuken*, ed. by J. van Ruiten and M. Vervenne (BETL 132; Leuven: University Press, 1997), pp. 303-323). It will tentatively be taken as a reference to Jacob/Israel but it should be noted that none of the choices alters the main thrust of the discussion.

<sup>75</sup> עֶבֶד is found in 45.4.

<sup>76</sup> עֶבֶד is found in 48.20.

<sup>77</sup> It is assumed here that those who come out from Babylon are the servant Jacob.

<sup>78</sup> עֶבֶד is found in vv.3, 5, 6.

49.7-12 (13) <sup>79</sup>			5	
50.4-11 <sup>80</sup>	5			
52.13- 53.12 <sup>81</sup>	57 <sup>82</sup>			

Isa. 53 undoubtedly deserves attention by the sheer number of third person references to the servant within a pericope.<sup>83</sup> Isa. 42.1-4 contains an unusually high concentration of third person references, slightly more than that found in 44.1-5. Otherwise, Isa. 41.8-13 contains an unusually high number of 2ms references to the servant, slightly more concentrated than the 3ms references found in 42.1-4.<sup>84</sup>

It might be fair to suggest, then, that DI focusses on the action of the servant and the servant himself in Isa. 42.1-4 and 53 through the use of the 3ms. It might be countered that the focus on 42.1-4 is overshadowed by the concentration of the 2ms references in 41.8-13 and the very fact that it is a direct address to 'you'. However, other characteristics might distinguish 42.1-4 and 53. Yahweh is addressing an entity in the text in 41.8-13 but in 42.1-4 and 53 no addressee is explicitly mentioned. In light of the preceding discussion, in which it was proposed that the first person language of 49.1-6, 50.4-11 and 53 might elicit empathy, it might be argued that the lack of an addressee involves the reader. Furthermore, the focus in 41.8-13 and the numerous references to 'you' result from a concentration not on the servant Jacob/Israel *per se* but on the action which Yahweh performs on it. Three of the five 2ms verbs in 41.8-13 are negative commands to Jacob/Israel from Yahweh and the two imperfects describe a seeking of enemies that will not be successful. While it cannot be denied that Yahweh acts on the servant in 42.1-4 and 52.13-53.12, the servant there is also described as doing something for others.<sup>85</sup> One might therefore suggest, then, that the combination of high

<sup>79</sup> עָבַד is found in 49.7.

<sup>80</sup> עָבַד is found in 50.10.

<sup>81</sup> עָבַד is found in 52.13 and 53.11.

<sup>82</sup> This number includes the עָלִי in 52.14 and עָמַד in 53.8. The verb תָּשִׂים in 53.10 may be a reference to the servant with נִפְשׁוֹ as subject but has not been included because it is not 3ms.

<sup>83</sup> There are an average of 3.9 references per verse.

<sup>84</sup> Isa. 41.8-13 contains 4.33 references to the 2ms per verse and 42.1-4 contains 3.5 references per verse.

<sup>85</sup> This observation reflects the long-standing suggestion that the servant of the songs is active rather than passive, as is often predicated of Israel outside the songs. North has argued that there "seems no

concentrations of 3ms references, the lack of a specified addressee and the greater focus on the action of the servant distinguishes 42.1-4 and 52.13-53.12 from 41.8-13.

If so, then two comments should be added before proceeding with this discussion. Isa. 53 contained an unusually high concentration of first person plural references and third person singular references referring to the servant. It can be distinguished from the remainder of DI by virtue of a combination of two criteria and therefore may attract particular attention. Secondly, 42.1-4 contains no first person references which do not stem from the mouth of Yahweh and is therefore distinct from the other songs. This point notwithstanding, the concentration of third person language describing the servant suggests some distinction from the DI context and it contained strong suggestions of empathy within the description of the interaction of the personae. It is therefore justifiable to include it at least provisionally with Isa. 53 and 49.1-6 and 50.4-11.

#### **8.4 Conclusions**

Isa. 49.1-6 and 50.4-11 are unusual in their concentration of first person singular language that does not originate from Yahweh; Isa. 53 contained a collection of first person plural language which draws attention; and the focus on the servant through the 3ms in Isa. 53 and 42.1-4 highlights these passages. The first person language found in three of the four songs can be associated with soliloquies and these are of particular relevance in eliciting empathy. Although the first person language of Isa. 42.1-4 is Yahweh's, it may be grouped with the others through the third person focus on the servant, similar to that found in Isa. 53, and the strong suggestions of empathy.

In a sense, then, a tension is established between the observations made in the preceding chapter, which suggested that the songs are a part of the DI context through empathy, and the results of the study of this chapter, which indicate that within DI the songs can be distinguished through at least one set of criteria. This tension is partially mitigated through the concept of empathy. The poems elicit an empathy which bind

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escape from the conclusion that outside the Songs the Servant Israel is always passive, while in the Songs the title has an 'active' signification" (C. R. North, *The Suffering Servant in Deutero-Isaiah*,

them with the DI context and all of the poems contain suggestions of empathy. One might therefore suggest that within the context of DI the poems are *particularly* interested in the elicitation of empathy and the depiction of empathy. They seem to be focal points for this emotion.

It is this tension that has contributed to the vexed question of the identity of the servant. On one level, the connection between the songs and the context might suggest that the servant is Israel but the distinction between the songs and the context might argue that the servant as portrayed in the songs may be another entity. Though Clines had questioned the ability or even suitability of pursuing an identity of the servant, it is an issue which cannot be justifiably ignored in a study of the songs and their context. The next chapter will introduce an approach to identification which is compatible with Clines' ideas and, as shown in Chapter 11, is closely linked with the concept of empathy.

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2nd edn. (London: Oxford University Press, 1956), p. 183).

## Chapter 9

### The Servant as Metaphor and Symbol

#### 9.1 Introduction

In the preceding chapter it was argued that the servant songs may be distinguished from their DI context due to the first person language used in the songs and third person language referring to the servant. This proposed distinction might assist in the elicitation of empathy from the reader, and in fact the first person language of the last three songs suggests that these may particularly elicit empathy. The first song may be included with the other three songs because of the third person references to the servant and the strong intimations of empathy. It might be proposed, then, that a tension is created between the songs and their context, one in which they fit into the context and yet are distinct from it. Through this distinction the songs might particularly evoke and/or describe empathy.

Clines had argued that identities for the personae in Isa. 53 could not be unequivocally asserted; and, in the study of the songs, identification of the personae drawn upon references external to the poems was avoided. The two preceding chapters have discussed the songs within their DI context and it would logically follow that the vexed question of the identity of the servant be addressed with reference to this context. Indeed, numerous scholars in recent years have offered proposals concerning the identity of the servant.<sup>1</sup> As mentioned in the first chapter, however, some scholars agree with Clines that a search for the identity of the servant may not be fruitful and indeed may not correspond to the intentions of the text.<sup>2</sup> Though a discussion of the possible identity of

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<sup>1</sup> A. Laato, *The Servant of Yahweh and Cyrus: A Reinterpretation of the Exilic Messianic Programme in Isaiah 40-55* (CB 35; Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell, 1992); T. N. D. Mettinger, 'In Search of the Hidden Structure: YHWH as King in Isaiah 40-55' in *Writing and Reading the Scroll of Isaiah: Studies of an Interpretive Tradition*, vol. 1, ed. by C. C. Broyles and C. A. Evans (FIOTL 1; Leiden: Brill, 1997), pp. 143-154; R. Abma, 'Travelling from Babylon to Zion: Location and its Function in Isaiah 49-55', *JSOT* 74 (1997), pp. 3-28; J. N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 40-66* (NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998); P. Wilcox and D. Paton-Williams, 'The Servant Songs in Deutero-Isaiah', *JSOT* 42 (1988), pp. 79-102; H.-J. Hermisson, 'Israel und der Gottesknecht bei Deuterojesaja', *ZThK* 79 (1982), pp. 1-24.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Sec. 1.5.3. Hanson too has argued that the matter of identity is 'confused as ever' despite the 'dozens of candidates' that have been advanced over the years. He therefore favours an inquiry into



the servant may not correspond precisely to Clines' ideas or his model of analysis, it would be inappropriate to ignore this topic altogether if the songs are discussed in their wider DI context.

Given the difficulties in identification it is not surprising that several scholars in recent years have attempted to interpret the servant in a manner which accounts for the numerous possibilities. Many have therefore used the language of metaphor and symbol in their discussions. Their observations are compatible with Clines' ideas concerning the multiplicity of identities<sup>3</sup> and the ideas concerning empathy forwarded in the preceding discussion, and may indeed contribute to a better understanding of the servant and the songs. Such proposals therefore warrant a closer look and thus the following chapter will examine the servant as metaphor and symbol.

## 9.2 Servant as Metaphor and Symbol

Sawyer focuses on the imagistic language of DI and argues that the Zion and servant figures are capable of various interpretations, collective and individual, though the former predominates.<sup>4</sup> Jeppesen proposes that the servant and Zion are both used in the same prophetic tradition as a metaphor for the people. Zion is viewed as a female figure in metaphorical language but the servant causes more difficulties.

Sometimes, when he [the servant] is identical with the people, one is tempted to understand him as a symbol of the same type as Zion. But when he has his job to do for the sake of Israel, one cannot avoid the feeling that Deutero-Isaiah still had a *person* in mind...<sup>5</sup>

Jeppeson therefore vacillates. The servant is a metaphor, a symbol and/or a real individual. Willey observes that inconsistency and paradox mark the presentation of

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the central themes of the servant passages and 'their relation to the overall message of Second Isaiah' (P. D. Hanson, *Isaiah 40-66* (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1995), p. 41 [Henceforth: Hanson]).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. D. J. A. Clines, *I, He, We, and They: A Literary Approach to Isaiah 53* (JSOTSup.1; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1976), pp. 26-27.

<sup>4</sup> J. F. A. Sawyer, 'Daughter of Zion and Servant of the Lord in Isaiah: A Comparison', *JSOT* 44 (1989), pp. 89-107 (pp. 101-102) [Henceforth: Sawyer].

<sup>5</sup> K. Jeppesen, 'Mother Zion, Father Servant: A Reading of Isaiah 49-55', in *Of Prophets' Visions and the Wisdom of Sages: Essays in Honour of R. Norman Whybray on his Seventieth Birthday*, ed. by H. A. McKay and D. J. A. Clines (JSOTSup. 162; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), pp. 109-125 (p. 125).

Zion and the servant. But, they “have the prerogative to shift roles” because they are “symbolic representations, metaphors for entities that are not necessarily and not even probably, individuals”.<sup>6</sup> Hanson stresses the poetic nature of the language in DI and argues that it is a “violation of the poetic tenor of the material to try to pin down the meaning of the Servant to one individual, one class, or, for that matter, one time”.<sup>7</sup> We are dealing with “poetic language, which through symbols, metaphors, and similes reveals something about God’s will”.<sup>8</sup> The poetic language leads him to propose that the servant “stands out as the most arresting metaphor of all for the individual and the community drawn into partnership with God”.<sup>9</sup> Thus,

a sharp distinction between individual and community is alien to Second Isaiah’s thought. The evidence when taken as a whole suggests that the Servant of Yahweh is a metaphor richly multivalent in meaning. At times the prophet whom we call Second Isaiah seems to identify with the Servant personally. At other times the lives of figures like Jeremiah and Elijah seem to add color to this mysterious figure. Israel in its rare times of obedience to God’s will, and especially the faithful remnant within the Israelite community, contributed features to the portrait of the Servant.<sup>10</sup>

He further writes that the “meaning of the Servant passages, far from being withheld from the reader by the opacity of symbolism, unfolds precisely within the multivalence of that symbolism”.<sup>11</sup> The role of Israel in God’s purpose “came to be depicted through the rich symbolism of the Servant”.<sup>12</sup> The servant is thus seen as both metaphor and symbol by Hanson and Willey, and Hanson too suggests that the songs could be read with an awareness of the symbolism contained within.

Landy’s reading of the final three servant songs provides a further example. He argues that the prophet speaks for Israel, just as he speaks for God, and is in fact identified with Israel.<sup>13</sup> The equation of prophet with Israel, however, he thinks is

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<sup>6</sup> P. T. Willey, *Remember the Former Things: Recollection of Previous Texts in Second Isaiah* (SBLDS 161; Atlanta: Scholars Press), p. 178 [Henceforth: Willey, *Remember the Former Things*].

<sup>7</sup> Hanson, p. 41.

<sup>8</sup> Hanson, p. 164.

<sup>9</sup> Hanson, p. 11.

<sup>10</sup> Hanson, p. 128.

<sup>11</sup> Hanson, p. 41.

<sup>12</sup> Hanson, p. 165.

<sup>13</sup> F. Landy, ‘The Construction of the Subject and the Symbolic Order: A Reading of the Last Three

“commonplace” and does not address the issue in any detail. In the abstract to his reading, Landy describes his attempt to study

the different ways the subject is constructed in these poems, the disjunction between extreme symbolization and disintegration, the impossibility of attaining any quiddity in the swirl of conflicting personae and explicative paradigms...[T]he subject tries different strategies for achieving coherence and an adequate relationship with the maternal/paternal symbolic order.<sup>14</sup>

Landy essentially argues that the texts resist interpretation<sup>15</sup> and implies that this difficulty is intimately associated with the inability of the servant to construct himself. His is a study rich with the language of symbols and metaphor. In his discussion of 49.1-6, he notes that even although the songs may offer the reality of an individual, the person when probed disappears. This difficulty produces the central problem, “the wish to identify myself with the symbolic order, flesh with word, to house and be contained by God--and our divergence, the collapse inwards when the effort fails”.<sup>16</sup> In his discussion of 50.4-9, he argues that “education is conservative, an induction into the old symbolic order”, whereas the speech in 50.4-9 is novel, in which symbolic language is “in a sense anti-symbolic, that which overturns old symbols or even all symbols”.<sup>17</sup> The body in 50.4-9 becomes a symbol of the rejection of God and the petrification implied by the face as flint is a symbol of passive resistance.<sup>18</sup> He similarly suggests that a crisis arises in the transition from the body’s kinesis “to the symbolic structure of the stable, formed, understood self”.<sup>19</sup> In his discussion of Isa. 53 he argues that what is important is not the question concerning the actual death of the servant but its symbolic enactment.<sup>20</sup> The sympathy of the *we* for the servant is at first metaphorical, displaced onto the sheep, and finally settles upon the soul of the servant. He notes the vindication

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Suffering Servant Songs’, in *Among the Prophets: Language, Image and Structure in the Prophetic Writings*, ed. by P. R. Davies and D. J. A. Clines (JSOTSup.144; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), pp. 60-71 (p. 64)[Henceforth: Landy].

<sup>14</sup> Landy, p. 60.

<sup>15</sup> Landy, p. 62.

<sup>16</sup> Landy, p. 66.

<sup>17</sup> Landy, p. 67.

<sup>18</sup> Landy, p. 67.

<sup>19</sup> Landy, p. 67.

<sup>20</sup> Landy, p. 69, n. 1.

of the servant beyond death and joyful mother Zion whose children return to her womb, and asks whether the two entities are “metaphors for each other, or the same”.<sup>21</sup>

The symbolic order to which he refers in the quote from the abstract presumably “assigns things their place”,<sup>22</sup> and the contrast between disintegration and symbolisation suggests a certain known reliability, a stability, informing his concept of symbolisation. Moreover, that which describes the servant can function in a symbolic manner: the body of the servant as symbol of the rejection of God; the face as symbol of passive resistance; and death is at least symbolically enacted. The servant himself may be a metaphor for Zion and *our* sympathy for the servant is metaphorical when displaced on the sheep. Thus, the servant is once again associated with a metaphor, albeit within a discussion that seems to see him primarily as a prophet speaking for and equal to Israel, and his discussion makes great use of the symbolic.

Several of the authors mentioned above study the servant in conjunction with Zion and the two characters are sometimes associated under the rubric of figurative language. Wilshire has argued that the servant of Yahweh is a metaphor symbolising the city of Zion and has supported his contention with parallels drawn from the Near Eastern context and the similarities evident between Zion and the servant.<sup>23</sup> Korpel echoes the suggestion of Wilshire: “the metaphors of lady Zion and the servant of YHWH are interchangeable in Deutero-Isaiah, and especially in Isaiah 54”.<sup>24</sup> She nevertheless argues that the prophet does not seek an identification between the male and female servants and the Israelites. The theory of the corporate personality, despite the disadvantages of the terminology, helps to explain the balance between identification

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<sup>21</sup> Landy, pp. 70-71.

<sup>22</sup> F. Landy, ‘Tracing the Voice of the Other: Isaiah 28 and the Covenant with Death’, in *The New Literary Criticism and the Hebrew Bible*, ed. by J. C. Exum and D.J.A. Clines (JSOTSup.143; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), pp. 140-162 (p. 152).

<sup>23</sup> L. E. Wilshire, ‘The Servant- City: A New Interpretation of the “Servant of the Lord” in the Servant Songs of Deutero-Isaiah’, *JBL* 94 (1975), pp. 356-367 (for the Near Eastern parallels, cf. pp. 357-358; for those which exist between the servant and Zion, cf. pp. 363-365).

<sup>24</sup> M. C. A. Korpel, ‘The Female Servant of the Lord in Isaiah 54’, in *On Reading Prophetic Texts: Gender Specific and Related Studies in Memory of Fokkelien van Dijk-Hemmes*, ed. by B. Becking and M. Dijkstra (BIS 18; Leiden: Brill, 1996), pp. 153-167 (p. 154) [Henceforth: Korpel, Female Servant].

and distinction.<sup>25</sup> A. Brenner argues that the speaker in 50. 4-9 (11) “is the metaphorical Jerusalem/Israel, in her function as bereaved wife and mother soon to be established”.<sup>26</sup> In response to such suggestions that the servant is in fact Zion, Willey has provided some astute observations which question the identification of one with the other.<sup>27</sup>

Thus, the use of symbol and metaphor is common in recent studies of the identity of the servant. However, some of the scholars have used metaphor and symbol almost interchangeably when they are in fact distinct terms, or they have not specified the relationship between the two. Heisig argues that a symbol should be a “clearly perceptible phenomenon” though the referent need not be. The more powerful symbols frequently maintain an unclear referent which resists “direct connection to a single definable referent”. Thus

the nature of the symbolic process consists in the fact that one thing, usually concrete and particular, stands for something else, usually abstract and generalized, and becomes a focal point for thoughts and emotions associated with that referent.<sup>28</sup>

Abrams argues that a symbol presents only one subject, the image referred to, whose reference is indefinite but richly suggestive.<sup>29</sup> In a metaphor, however,

a word or expression which in literal usage denotes one kind of thing or action is applied to a distinctly different kind of thing or action, without asserting a comparison.<sup>30</sup>

The one seems to point beyond itself to a referent which may be indefinite while the metaphor applies ideas related to one entity to another. Soskice has provided a useful distinction between the two. Metaphor, she states, “is that figure of speech whereby we

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<sup>25</sup> Korpel, *Female Servant*, p. 166.

<sup>26</sup> A. Brenner, ‘Identifying the Speaker-in-the-Text and the Reader’s Location in Prophetic Texts: The Case of Isaiah 50’, in *A Feminist Companion to Reading the Bible: Approaches, Methods and Strategies*, ed. by A. Brenner and C. Fontaine (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), pp. 136-150 (p. 147).

<sup>27</sup> Willey, *Remember the Former Things*, pp. 223-224.

<sup>28</sup> J. W. Heisig, ‘Symbolism’ in *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, vol. 14, ed. by M. Eliade (New York: Macmillan, 1987), pp. 198-208 (p. 204).

<sup>29</sup> M. H. Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 5th ed. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1988), p. 186 [Henceforth: Abrams].

<sup>30</sup> Abrams, p. 65.

speak about one thing in terms which are seen to be suggestive of another”.<sup>31</sup> She argues that physical objects or states of affairs are not in themselves metaphors because they are not linguistic. She uses the example of a daffodil, which cannot be a metaphor for rebirth because it is not linguistic. It could be a symbol of rebirth or provide an analogy for rebirth, because neither symbol or analogy are strictly linguistic. A metaphor could be constructed using a daffodil in order to describe rebirth but the daffodil itself is not a metaphor.<sup>32</sup>

By these arguments, one might suggest that the servant is not necessarily a metaphor if it stands alone, though it may be a symbol. As a symbol, the servant may stand for, refer to or suggest the people, Israel, a group within Israel or other figures in the Hebrew Bible: the referent is more suggested than definite. The assertion that ‘Israel is a servant’ is a metaphorical statement may be justified because it is described in terms of a servant when it is not *literally* a servant. The same would hold true if the servant were interpreted as a group within Israel. As the following discussion will intimate, one might further propose that the juxtaposition of the term ‘servant’ with the individual frequently posited in DI constitutes an association of terms that is metaphorical.

The figurative language of metaphor and symbol is appropriate if used in relation to the servant. This approach attempts to account for the qualities which suggest an individual and those which suggest the collective. An attempt to clarify the nature of metaphors and symbols and the relationship between them might be useful in order to understand the complexities of the servant and his relationship to the context of DI.

### 9.3 Definitions and Discussion of Metaphor and Symbol

#### 9.3.1 Metaphor

A. Ortony has argued that “any serious study of metaphors is almost obliged to start with the works of Aristotle”, which remain influential to this day,<sup>33</sup> and thus it might be wise to follow this good advice. Aristotle defined a metaphor as follows:

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<sup>31</sup> J. M. Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), p. 15 [Henceforth: Soskice]. She italicises the entire definition in her presentation for emphasis of definition. The italics have not been repeated here.

<sup>32</sup> Soskice, p. 17.

<sup>33</sup> A. Ortony, ‘Metaphor, Language, and Thought’ in *Metaphor and Thought*, 2nd ed., ed. by A.

A metaphor is the application of a word that belongs to another thing: either from genus to species,<sup>34</sup> species to genus,<sup>35</sup> species to species,<sup>36</sup> or by analogy.<sup>37</sup>

By Aristotle's reckoning, "to use metaphor well is to discern similarities" and for the poet "the greatest asset is a capacity for metaphor".<sup>38</sup>

According to Ricoeur, Aristotle's contemplation of the similarities within metaphors and the theories concerning proportional metaphors suggest that resemblance is more constructed than seen.<sup>39</sup> M. Black, he continues, captured this idea well with his own metaphor of a screen, lens or filter. Black argued that the substitution view of metaphor<sup>40</sup> and the comparison view<sup>41</sup> are ineffective because they simply formulate some similarity antecedently existing.<sup>42</sup> Building on the work of I. A. Richards,<sup>43</sup> Black extends the latter's work on interactive metaphors and suggests that the connection between two ideas emphasises an active, dynamic aspect. As such, it can actually organise the views held about the subject. In an interactive metaphor such as 'man is a wolf', the subsidiary subject is the wolf, or vehicle, and the man is the principal subject,

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Ortony (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 1-16 (p. 3).

<sup>34</sup> He later provides the example of 'my ship stands here'.

<sup>35</sup> Ex.: 'ten thousand noble deeds has Odysseus accomplished'. The poet has used 'ten thousand' instead of 'many'.

<sup>36</sup> Ex.: in the statement 'drawing off the life with bronze', which describes the killing of an animal, the poet has used 'drawing off' for 'cutting'. Likewise, in the statement 'cutting with slender-edged bronze', which refers to the filling of a bronze vessel with water, the 'cutting' is used rather than 'drawing off'.

<sup>37</sup> By analogy he means cases in which 'b' is to 'a' as 'd' is to 'c': thus one speaks of 'd' instead of 'b'. The wine bowl is to Dionysus as the shield to Ares and one calls the bowl 'Dionysus' shield' and the shield 'Ares' wine bowl' (Aristotle, *Poetics*, ed. and trans. by S. Halliwell (LCL; London: Cambridge University Press), ch. 21, 1457b7-25, pp. 105-107 [Henceforth: *Poetics*]).

<sup>38</sup> Aristotle, *Poetics*, 1459a1-10; ch. 22, p. 115.

<sup>39</sup> P. Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor*, trans. by R. Czerny (London & Henley: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978), p. 195 [Henceforth: Ricoeur, *Rule of Metaphor*]. The reference to Aristotle is found in *Poetics*, 1457b20; ch. 21, p. 105.

<sup>40</sup> "Any view which holds that a metaphorical expression is used in place of some *literal* expression"; M. Black, *Models and Metaphors: Studies in Language and Philosophy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1962), p. 31 (author's italics) [Henceforth: Black].

<sup>41</sup> A special case of the substitution view in which "a writer holds that a metaphor consists in the *presentation* of the underlying analogy or similarity" (Black, p. 31).

<sup>42</sup> Black, p. 37.

<sup>43</sup> I. A. Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1936) [Henceforth: Richards].

or tenor.<sup>44</sup> The interactive metaphor is a system of “associated commonplaces” and the common perception of wolves, for example, organises the view of man. Any

human traits that can without undue strain be talked about in “wolf-language” will be rendered prominent, and any that cannot will be pushed into the background. The wolf-metaphor suppresses some details, emphasises others-in short, organises our view of man.<sup>45</sup>

Black likens the metaphor to a screened glass with clear lines by which the stars of a night sky are organised by the screen’s structure, and by analogy “the principal subject is ‘seen through’ the metaphorical expression”.<sup>46</sup>

A writer of a poem or piece of prose can establish a novel pattern of implications for the literal uses of key expressions prior to using them as a vehicle:

metaphors can be supported by specially constructed systems of implications, as well as by accepted commonplaces; they can be made to measure and need not be hand-me-downs.<sup>47</sup>

Amongst these implications might exist a number of subordinate metaphors.<sup>48</sup>

Lakoff and Turner assert that “poetic metaphor, far from being ornamentation, deals with central and indispensable aspects of our conceptual systems”.<sup>49</sup> Lakoff defines a metaphor as “a cross-domain mapping in the conceptual system” and that which the older theory called a ‘metaphor’ is defined as a ‘metaphorical expression’. It is “a linguistic expression (a word, phrase, or sentence) that is the surface realization of such a cross-domain mapping”.<sup>50</sup> As an illustration of a conceptual metaphor he analyses ‘love is a journey’, in which ‘love’ is defined as the target domain and ‘journey’ the source domain. ‘Love is a journey’ thus involves a mapping across

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<sup>44</sup> Vehicle and tenor are preferred by Richards (Richards, p. 96).

<sup>45</sup> Black, p. 41.

<sup>46</sup> Black, p. 41.

<sup>47</sup> Black, p. 43.

<sup>48</sup> Black, p. 43.

<sup>49</sup> G. Lakoff and M. Turner, *More Than Cool Reason: A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1989), p. 215.

<sup>50</sup> G. Lakoff, ‘The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor’ in *Metaphor and Thought*, 2nd ed., ed. by A. Ortony (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993) pp. 202-251 (p. 203) [Henceforth: Lakoff, Contemporary Theory]. ‘Mapping’ is defined as the set of correspondences. In the metaphor ‘love is a journey’, the lovers are travellers or the relationship is a vehicle.



conceptual domains, from the source domain of journeys to the target domain of love.<sup>51</sup> He echoes Ricoeur's comment concerning the construction of resemblance when he argues that such "correspondences permit us to reason about love using the knowledge we use to reason about journeys".<sup>52</sup>

Soskice has presented a theory of metaphors based primarily on that of Richards but differing from Black due to perceived weaknesses. Black, she claims, misunderstands Richards<sup>53</sup> and does not adequately explain his idea of filtering, which conflicts with the idea of interaction. Filtering, she suggests, singles out what is already there but does not actually create similarity, and is a one-directional process rather than the double effect of interaction. His real failure, she suggests, is a continuing insistence that each metaphor has two distinct subjects and is thus vulnerable to the comparison theory.<sup>54</sup> She therefore favours Richards' interaction theory. Meaning is determined by complete utterances and the surrounding contexts, not just individual words in isolation,<sup>55</sup> and is the result of the interaction of two thoughts concerning different things made active together by a single word or phrase.<sup>56</sup> She states that it is

only by seeing that a metaphor has one true subject which tenor and vehicle conjointly depict and illumine that a full, interactive, or interanimative, theory is possible.<sup>57</sup>

The content and full meaning of a metaphor can only come from a complete unit of tenor and vehicle. The excellence of a good metaphor

is not that it is a new description of a previously discerned human condition but that *this* subject, this particular mental state, is only accessible through the metaphor. What is identified and described is identified and described uniquely by this metaphor. It is in this way that a metaphor is genuinely creative and says something that can be said adequately in no other way, not

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<sup>51</sup> Lakoff, *Contemporary Theory*, p. 208.

<sup>52</sup> Lakoff, *Contemporary Theory*, p. 207.

<sup>53</sup> Soskice, pp. 45-46. For example, Richards is interested in the complete utterance rather than the metaphorical use of words, as Black assumes, and Richards emphasises that the tenor and vehicle are not necessarily two terms in an utterance but thoughts.

<sup>54</sup> Soskice, pp. 39-43.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. Richards, p. 55.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. Richards, p. 93.

<sup>57</sup> Soskice, p. 47.

as an ornament to what we already know but as an embodiment of a new insight.<sup>58</sup>

Each metaphor involves at least two different networks of associations. The meaning of a metaphor is not the meaning of some words which in an utterance are used metaphorically or have metaphorical meaning, but is the meaning “of the complete utterance as construed in its context of uttering”. The metaphorical vehicle is used to describe the referent picked out by the speaker in making the utterance. It produces “a unity of subject-matter and a plurality of associative networks, and this is what we intended to mark by defining metaphor as a speaking about one thing or state of affairs in terms which are suggestive of another”.<sup>59</sup> This discussion provides a viewpoint and perhaps a sophistication which may enrich any study involving metaphors and will be of some use in the final chapter.

### 9.3.2 Symbol

K. M. A. Goldammer provides a useful introduction to symbols through his discussion of religious symbols. He notes that the symbol is, “in effect, the mediator, presence, and real (or intelligible) representation of the holy in certain conventional and standardised forms”.<sup>60</sup> In its original meaning the symbol “represented and communicated a coherent greater whole by means of a part” and the part guaranteed the presence of the whole. He further argues that almost every symbol is at first directly or indirectly connected with sense impressions and objects of man’s environment. Many derive from objects of nature and others “are artificially constructed in a process of intuitive perception, emotional experience, or rational reflection”. He similarly writes the following:

[t]he symbol object, the picture, the sign, the word, and the gesture require the association of certain conscious ideas in order to fully express what is meant by them. To this extent it [the symbol] has an esoteric and at the same time an exoteric, or a veiling and a revealing, function. The discovery of its

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<sup>58</sup> Soskice, p. 48; author’s italics.

<sup>59</sup> Soskice, p. 53.

<sup>60</sup> K. M. A. Goldammer, ‘Religious Symbolism and Iconography’, *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, vol. 17, pp. 900-909 [Henceforth: Goldammer].

meaning presupposes a certain amount of active cooperation. As a rule, it is based on the convention of a group that agrees upon its meaning. Symbols, however, may also be individually and subjectively constructed.<sup>61</sup>

It seems, then, that the meaning of the symbol is not always transparent, as Heisig and Abrams suggested, and does not precisely delineate that for which it stands. It may instead depend upon a cluster of images to provide meaning. Goldammer perceives a participatory aspect in the discovery of meaning, often the participation or cooperation of or within a group, and he allows individuality and subjectivity in construction.

He further argues that the religious symbol embraces a variety of types and meanings. Allegory, personification, analogies and metaphors are, amongst others, “categories of the symbolical”.<sup>62</sup> He therefore makes the following point:

[i]f one looks for a definable common denominator for the various types of symbols, one could perhaps choose the term ‘meaning picture’ or ‘meaning sign’ to best describe the revealing and at the same time concealing aspects of religious experience.<sup>63</sup>

A symbol can represent a reality or truth “either instantaneously or gradually”.

As for the relationship between symbols and metaphors, he writes that religious symbols and pictures “may be identical with, related to, or similar to those of language (metaphors) and to pictorial expressions in prose and poetry”.<sup>64</sup> As mentioned above, he suggests that the metaphor is a category of the symbol. It seems that metaphors can be seen either as a subgroup of symbols or roughly equivalent. He later notes that linguistic symbolism “generally is metaphorical...In a figurative, interpretive, and cryptic sense, names and metaphors denote the person or thing in question”. God, for example, is sometimes metaphorically referred to as a spring or rock.<sup>65</sup> Placing his observation in conjunction with those made by Soskice, it might be suggested that the phrase ‘God is a rock’ is the metaphorical expression. The ‘rock’ standing alone may be a symbol of God and in its function as symbol it depends upon a host of associations.

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<sup>61</sup> Goldammer, p. 900.

<sup>62</sup> Goldammer, p. 901.

<sup>63</sup> Goldammer, p. 901.

<sup>64</sup> Goldammer, p. 903.

<sup>65</sup> Goldammer, p. 905.

Fawcett argues that symbols are born out of life,<sup>66</sup> echoing Goldammer's reference to the sensual basis of symbols. Fawcett distinguishes between signs, which have a "one-to-one relationship", standing for or pointing to a specific object, event or person, and symbols, which have a "one-to-many relationship".<sup>67</sup> He sees a multiplicity of signification in symbols, thus echoing comments made by the scholars above, but the symbol is bounded by its natural qualities. For example, fire as a symbol may suggest cleansing, revelation or anger, but the use is restricted by the nature of fire.<sup>68</sup> Symbolic language

attempts to reach out to grasp that which is not immediately known. Symbols do not denote things which are already understood, but attempt to push forward the frontiers of knowledge and to grasp the reality of things, the real nature of life, the stuff of existence itself.<sup>69</sup>

This feature is similar to the new insight granted by the good metaphor. Symbols are inherently subjective, working "intuitively and directly out of man's experience of himself". Symbolic activity, the participation with the symbol and therefore with reality, results in an "attainment of emotionally experienced meaning".<sup>70</sup> This comment reflects an assertion made by Goldammer, who emphasised the participatory aspect of symbol as well as the possible subjectivity of the individual symbol.

Fawcett further notes that metaphors help to "sharpen our perception in a vivid way and enable us to share in the vision of the user". In the last supper, Jesus identified his body with the bread and his blood with the wine in order to "create a revolution in understanding" for the disciples. The bread and wine were symbols rich in connotations for the Jews and the application of these symbols to Jesus "was a startling innovation which opened up an entirely new range of meaning".<sup>71</sup> The metaphor thus uses symbols in order to grant new understanding.

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<sup>66</sup> T. Fawcett, *The Symbolic Language of Religion* (London: SCM Press, 1970), p. 27 [Henceforth: Fawcett].

<sup>67</sup> Fawcett, pp. 14, 28.

<sup>68</sup> Fawcett, p. 29.

<sup>69</sup> Fawcett, p. 30.

<sup>70</sup> Fawcett, pp. 33-34.

<sup>71</sup> Fawcett, p. 53.

Langer argues that a basic need of man is the need of symbolisation.<sup>72</sup> Symbols are “*vehicles for the conception of objects*”, not proxy for their objects in the manner of signs. “In talking *about* things we have conceptions of them, not the things themselves; and *it is the conceptions, not the things, that symbols directly ‘mean’*”. Symbols lead others “*to conceive their objects*”<sup>73</sup> and in fact “a concept is all that a symbol really conveys”.<sup>74</sup>

Langer provides a useful discussion of the relationship between metaphor and symbols. Language, Langer argues, is in the strict sense essentially discursive and thus differs from wordless symbolism, which is non discursive.<sup>75</sup> Meanings given through language are successively understood and gathered into a whole through a process called discourse. Meanings

of all other symbolic elements that compose a larger, articulate symbol are understood only through the meaning of the whole, through their relations within the total structure. Their very functioning as symbols depends on the fact that they are involved in a simultaneous, integral presentation. This kind of semantic may be called ‘presentational symbolism’, to characterise its essential distinction from discourse symbolism, or ‘language’ proper.<sup>76</sup>

She argues that all discourse involves two elements, a verbal or practical context and novelty. The novelty is that which the speaker is trying to point out or express and will thus use any appropriate word. When the precise word is lacking to designate the novelty, the speaker resorts to logical analogy and uses “a word denoting something else that is a presentational symbol for the thing he means”. The expression ‘the king’s anger flared up’ is used as an example.

We conceive the literal meaning of the term that is usually used in connection with a fire, but this concept serves us here as proxy for another which is nameless. The expression ‘to flare up’ has acquired a wider meaning than its original use, to describe the behaviour of a flame; it can be used metaphorically to describe whatever its *meaning* can symbolise.

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<sup>72</sup> S. K. Langer, *Philosophy in a New Key: A Study in the Symbolism of Reason, Rite and Art*, 3rd edn. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957), p. 41 [Henceforth: Langer].

<sup>73</sup> Langer, pp. 60-61; author’s italics.

<sup>74</sup> Langer, p. 71.

<sup>75</sup> Langer, pp. 96-97.

<sup>76</sup> Langer, p. 97.

Whether it is to be taken in a literal or a metaphorical sense has to be determined by the context.<sup>77</sup>

To take another example, she suggests that the idea of laughter “intervenes to symbolize the spontaneous, vivid activity of the brook” in the expression ‘the brook is laughing’. “In a genuine metaphor, an image of the literal meaning is our symbol for the figurative meaning, the thing that has no name of its own”.<sup>78</sup> The thing that has no name of its own is a concept of the brook which can only be expressed through metaphor. The image of laughter as symbol brings qualities to be associated with the brook and thus names that which has no name.

The very use of metaphor, Langer posits, is the power whereby language can embrace “multimillion things”, can produce new words, and is “forever showing up new, abstractable *forms* in reality”.<sup>79</sup> Metaphor

is our most striking evidence of *abstractive seeing*, of the power of human minds to use presentational symbols. Every new experience or new idea about things, evokes first of all some metaphorical expression.<sup>80</sup>

Like Fawcett, then, metaphors use symbols and these metaphors are essential for expressing novelty. These symbols, by her reckoning, are presentational symbols.

She further discusses artistic symbols and implies that poems themselves may be symbols. Artistic symbols, she argues, are often untranslatable, their sense

bound to the particular form which it has taken. It is always *implicit*, and cannot be explicated by any interpretation. This is true even of poetry, for though the *material* of poetry is verbal, its import is not the literal assertion made in the words, but the way the assertion is made...<sup>81</sup>

The poem as a whole is a bearer of artistic import and artistic truth does not belong to statements in the poem or obvious figurative meanings. “The material of poetry is discursive, but the product--the artistic phenomenon--is not; its significance is purely

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<sup>77</sup> Langer, p. 139; author’s italics.

<sup>78</sup> Langer, pp. 139-140.

<sup>79</sup> Langer, p. 141; author’s italics.

<sup>80</sup> Langer, p. 141.

<sup>81</sup> She notes that the manner of assertion includes sound, tempo, associations, sequences of ideas, imagery, suspense of literal meaning which is resolved and rhythm (Langer, pp. 260-261; author’s

implicit in the poem as a totality, as a form compounded of sound and suggestion, statement and reticence, and no translation can reincarnate that". The artistic symbol has more than discursive or presentational meanings. Its form, as sensory phenomenon, has implicit meaning. It is

subject-matter imaginatively experienced *in* the work of art...something which cannot be apprehended apart from the work, though theoretically distinguishable from its expressiveness.<sup>82</sup>

As a result, art is either adequate or inadequate in providing a conception of what things are like.

To understand the 'idea' in a work of art is therefore more like *having a new experience* than like entertaining a new proposition; and to negotiate this knowledge by acquaintance the work may be adequate *in some degree*.<sup>83</sup>

She seems to be arguing that a poem *is* an artistic symbol whose meaning can only be apprehended through participation. In this discussion, then, she draws on the concept of participation noted particularly by Fawcett and Goldammer but provides some distinctions and expands the possibility of what it might mean to be a symbol.

### 9.3.3 Observations Concerning Metaphor and Symbol

The preceding discussion has highlighted a few points that are worth mentioning. In agreement with Heisig, several of the above scholars have suggested that symbols by their very nature do not necessarily convey a precise meaning but may connote a variety of possibilities. As Goldammer emphasises, there is a distinct tendency to reveal and to veil. Opinions concerning the relationship between symbol and metaphor differed somewhat, although several of the scholars explicitly or implicitly accepted that the two are closely bound in religion and/or religious language. Metaphorical expressions may use symbols in an effort convey the new. Fawcett noted the participatory element so important to symbols. In the discussion of metaphors both

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italics).

<sup>82</sup> Langer, p. 262. She is quoting from L. A. Reid, 'Beauty and Significance', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 29 (1929), pp. 123-154 (p. 132).

<sup>83</sup> Langer, p. 263; author's italics.

Black and Soskice emphasised the importance of context; likewise, Langer noted that it was context that provided some guidelines as one attempted to understand metaphors that were constructed using presentational symbols.

However, Langer's discussion provided extra scope for interpretation. She stressed the metaphorical attempt to name that which has no name and she emphasised participation most adamantly in relationship to the possible meaning of a poem and poetry. These arguments echo the proposal forwarded by Soskice. The latter had argued that a particular mental state is accessible only through metaphor and that the metaphor produces a unity of subject matter and a plurality of associative networks. The reference to the particular mental state accessible through metaphor echoes Langer's thoughts on metaphor expressing novelty and her thoughts on an artistic symbolism which is like having a new experience. One cannot but wonder if these two powerful arguments concerning metaphor and symbol could somehow be usefully combined in the present discussion. The poetic text as artistic symbol invites a participation through which its meaning can be experienced. Within the poetic text inevitably resides a number of symbols or metaphorical statements. Thus, a metaphorical expression which attempts to convey a particular state of mind may be one of the contributing factors to an experience of, and therefore understanding of, the particular text as symbol. Any metaphorical statement may in turn depend upon symbols in order to convey a state of mind. These issues will be of some importance in the final chapter.

#### **9.4 Conclusions**

This chapter has noted that numerous recent scholars refer to the servant as a metaphor, symbol or both. It was suggested that references to the servant as metaphor and servant as symbol required clarification because they are in fact distinct terms and concepts albeit with some strong connections. Definitions of metaphors consistently describe the juxtaposition of two terms of reference and the discussion of symbols indicated the veiling and revealing function of symbols and their participatory nature. The two concepts are nevertheless related and it has been suggested that metaphors may use symbols. The analysis of metaphors provided by Soskice and the analysis of



symbols provided by Langer were given some attention. Soskice argued that the tenor and vehicle in a metaphorical statement conjointly describe a subject, which may be a state of mind accessible only through the metaphor. Langer argued that metaphors use presentational symbols in the description of novelty and poems themselves may be artistic symbols.

It might be most logical to discuss in more detail the servant within a metaphorical utterance or the servant as symbol. However, Langer's conception of the need for metaphors in order to express novelty dovetails nicely with comments made by many scholars concerning the purpose and function of DI in its historical context. This meeting of concepts thus deserves further examination and will be pursued in the next chapter.

## Chapter 10

### Servant, Metaphor and the Creation of Israel

#### 10.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter noted the distinction between metaphor and symbol as well as the relationship between the two. The role of metaphor in the expression of novelty was similarly discussed and thus an important function of metaphor was presented. The expression of novelty through metaphor correlates with the perceived purpose of DI and this chapter will therefore examine this confluence.

#### 10.2 DI and the Creation of Israel

DI has frequently been associated with an attempt to create Israel. Sawyer, for example, notes that the end of the Zion story in chapter 66 includes a description of childbirth, and it occurs just after the creation of a new heaven and new earth in chapter 65. "The connection between creation and childbirth is obvious, and, as elsewhere in these chapters of Isaiah (e.g. 43.15; 51.19f.), the result is in both cases the creation of a new Israel".<sup>1</sup> Clifford makes a similar point quite clearly and thus deserves a lengthy quote.

The prophet seeks to persuade the exiles in Babylon that they must now engage in the act whereby a scattered people becomes Israel, the people of Yahweh. They must join in a new Exodus-Conquest, a new cosmogony. Other elements in the prophet's message, first and last things, the nations and their statues, the servant and Israel, draw meaning from the main theme: Israel comes into being in the act of fleeing Babylon and coming to Zion.<sup>2</sup>

Many scholars set DI in Babylon,<sup>3</sup> as does Clifford, though a growing number have questioned such presumptions in favour of a Palestinian or non-Babylonian setting.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> J. F. A. Sawyer, 'Daughter of Zion and Servant of the Lord in Isaiah: A Comparison', *JSOT* 44 (1989), pp. 89-107 (pp. 105-106).

<sup>2</sup> R. J. Clifford, *Fair Spoken and Persuading: An Interpretation of Second Isaiah* (New York: Paulist Press, 1984), p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> J. Muilenburg, 'Isaiah: Chapters 40-66' in *The Interpreter's Bible*, vol. 5, ed. by G.A. Buttrick (New York: Abingdon Press, 1956), pp. 381-773 (pp. 397-398); C. Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66: A*

Interestingly, the language of creation has informed the discussions of these scholars as well.<sup>5</sup> The present work does not seek to critique or refine these arguments; instead, it is best in light of the preceding chapter simply to note that several have accepted that DI is involved in the creation of a concept or idea of Israel.<sup>6</sup>

### 10.3 An Abundance of Metaphors

Landy has noted the multiplicity of metaphors used to describe God in Hosea and argues that the “diversity of metaphor expresses an uncertainty of identity”.<sup>7</sup> DI is involved in the creation of a concept of Israel and transparently attempts to provide it with an identity. Indeed, metaphorical references to Israel occur throughout DI and are not limited to the phrase ‘Israel is a servant’. Jacob/Israel is the seed of Abraham;<sup>8</sup> a warrior;<sup>9</sup> a worm;<sup>10</sup> a threshing sledge;<sup>11</sup> subject of Yahweh the king;<sup>12</sup> a light;<sup>13</sup> prey;<sup>14</sup> a father with seed;<sup>15</sup> the sons/daughters of Yahweh;<sup>16</sup> and refined metal.<sup>17</sup> The 2mpl found in DI is frequently taken as a reference to the people of Israel as well and it is explicitly referred to as ‘my servant’ by Yahweh in 43.10. Willey has helpfully provided

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*Commentary*, trans. by D.M.G. Stalker (London: SCM Press, 1969), p. 8 [Henceforth: Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66*]; C. R. North, *The Second Isaiah* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), pp. 1-4.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. C. R. Seitz, *Zion's Final Destiny: The Development of the Book of Isaiah* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991); H. M. Barstad, *The Babylonian Captivity of the Book of Isaiah: 'Exilic' Judah and the Provenance of Isaiah 40-55* (Oslo: Novus Forlag, 1997); and P. R. Davies, ‘God of Cyrus, God of Israel: Some Religio-Historical Reflections on Isaiah 40-55’, in *Words Remembered, Texts Renewed: Essays in Honour of John F. A. Sawyer*, ed. by J. Davies, G. Harvey and W. G. E. Watson (JSOT Sup. 195; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), pp. 207-225.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. P. R. Davies, *In Search of 'Ancient Israel'* (JSOTSup. 148; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992), pp. 92-93 and T. L. Thompson, *Early History of the Israelite People: From the Written and Archaeological Sources* (Leiden: Brill, 1992), pp. 418-419, 423.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. also the discussion of Williamson, who presents a description of the manner in which the idea of Israel was conceptualised and reconceptualised (H. G. M. Williamson, ‘The Concept of Israel in Transition’ in *The World of Ancient Israel: Sociological, Anthropological and Political Perspectives*, ed. by R. E. Clements (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 141-161).

<sup>7</sup> F. Landy, *Hosea* (Sheffield: Academic Press, 1995), p. 18.

<sup>8</sup> 41.8.

<sup>9</sup> 41.12; 45.14.

<sup>10</sup> 41.14.

<sup>11</sup> 41.15.

<sup>12</sup> 41.21; 44. 6.

<sup>13</sup> 42.6.

<sup>14</sup> 42.22.

<sup>15</sup> 43.5; 44.3, 4; 45.19, 25; 48.19.

<sup>16</sup> 43.6; 45.11; 46.3

<sup>17</sup> 48.10.

some comments on the 2mpl entity which appears throughout DI and has suggested that it corresponds to the contemporary audience of the prophet.<sup>18</sup> She unfortunately does not present a precise examination of all of the 2mpl references found in DI and indeed a study of these references suggests that this 2mpl is consistently but not exclusively associated with a ‘plural Israel’.<sup>19</sup> This 2mpl entity is described as travelers in the desert;<sup>20</sup> witnesses in a law court;<sup>21</sup> the subjects of king Yahweh;<sup>22</sup> the sons of Zion;<sup>23</sup> ornaments for Zion;<sup>24</sup> the son of Abraham and Sarah;<sup>25</sup> and the seed of Zion.<sup>26</sup> The entity presented in the servant songs and described in terms reminiscent of Jacob/Israel is similarly described in metaphorical language: he is an arrow;<sup>27</sup> a light for nations;<sup>28</sup> Yahweh’s salvation;<sup>29</sup> a disciple or student of Yahweh;<sup>30</sup> a defendant;<sup>31</sup> a judge;<sup>32</sup> a criminal;<sup>33</sup> and a guilt offering.<sup>34</sup> To these a number of similes, which are not precisely metaphors but resemble them,<sup>35</sup> could be added. His mouth is like a sword;<sup>36</sup> his face is

<sup>18</sup> Willey, *Remember the Former Things*, pp. 175-181.

<sup>19</sup> Verbal and pronominal references to this entity are found approximately 180 times in DI (textual difficulties such as those found in 48.14 or 51.12 do not allow precision. The MT has been followed insofar as possible). Of these, 104 refer to Israel and context suggest that 11 others probably refer to Israel as well (taking the three in 42.18-25 as references to Israel; the two in 45.11; the four in 46.8-12; and the two in 48.16). Approximately 45 refer to a variety of entities.

<sup>20</sup> 43.20; 48.21; 49.10; 55.1, 13.

<sup>21</sup> 43.10, 12; 44.8.

<sup>22</sup> 43.15.

<sup>23</sup> 49.18, 20, 22, 25, 50.1; 51. 20; 54.1, 13.

<sup>24</sup> 49.18.

<sup>25</sup> 51.2.

<sup>26</sup> 54.3.

<sup>27</sup> 49.2.

<sup>28</sup> 49.6.

<sup>29</sup> 49.6.

<sup>30</sup> 50.4.

<sup>31</sup> 50.8.

<sup>32</sup> 50.9.

<sup>33</sup> 53.8.

<sup>34</sup> 53.10.

<sup>35</sup> Ricoeur states that “simile explicitly displays the moment of resemblance that operates implicitly in metaphor” (P. Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor: Multi-disciplinary Studies of the Creation of Meaning in Language*, trans. by R. Czerny (London and Henley: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978), pp. 24-27 [Henceforth: Ricoeur, *Rule of Metaphor*]). Black suggests that the literal comparison of a simile “lacks the ambience and suggestiveness, and the imposed ‘view’ of the primary subject, upon which a metaphor’s power to illuminate depends” (M. Black, ‘More about Metaphor’ in *Metaphor and Thought*, 2nd edn., ed. by A. Ortony (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 19-41 (p. 31)).

<sup>36</sup> 49.2.

like flint;<sup>37</sup> he is like a suckling and a root from dry ground;<sup>38</sup> and he is like a lamb and a ewe.<sup>39</sup>

In light of this variety of descriptive terms, it can be argued that the 16 chapters of DI are interested in presenting the two or three interconnected entities with a multitude of metaphors. Each entity possesses a texture and concreteness by virtue of the related images that gives it a life of its own. One might extrapolate from these observations and note that these descriptions in combination depict Israel from numerous angles, in order that they and their related metaphors may convey an image of an 'Israel' which includes but transcends the constitutive entities. The literary creation of Israel and the abundant metaphors are closely related to the function of metaphors posited by a number of other scholars, which now deserve discussion.

#### 10.4 The Creative Function of Metaphor

Several of the scholars mentioned in the preceding chapter have emphasised the creative function of metaphors. Aristotle suggested that smart sayings are derived from proportional metaphors, or analogies,<sup>40</sup> and are expressions which set things before the eyes, signifying actuality. He praises Homer for his use of metaphor: "it is to creating actuality in all such cases that his popularity is due".<sup>41</sup> This creation of actuality finds parallels in the work of Black, Lakoff and Soskice. Black had argued that metaphors organise and construct our perception of an object and some metaphors "enable us to see aspects of reality that the metaphor's production helps to constitute".<sup>42</sup> Lakoff and Turner argue that part of the power of a metaphor such as 'love is a journey' is its ability

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<sup>37</sup> 50.7.

<sup>38</sup> 53.1.

<sup>39</sup> 53.8

<sup>40</sup> 'Proportional metaphor' is the translation offered by Freese for ἀνάλογον (Aristotle, *The Art of Rhetoric*, trans. by J. H. Freese (LCL; London: William Heinemann, 1926), 1411b25-26; Bk. III.11.1, pp. 404-405 [Henceforth: Aristotle, *Rhetoric*]; Halliwell translates it 'analogy' (Aristotle, *Poetics*, ed. and trans. by S. Halliwell (LCL; London: Cambridge University Press), 1457b7-25; ch. 21, p. 105 [Henceforth: Aristotle, *Poetics*]).

<sup>41</sup> Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1411b25-38; Bk.III.11.1-4, pp. 405-407.

<sup>42</sup> M. Black, 'More About Metaphor' in *Metaphor and Thought*, 2nd ed., ed. by A. Ortony (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 19-41 (p. 38).

“to *create* structure in our understanding of life”.<sup>43</sup> We use the knowledge of journeys in order to reason about and better perceive the more abstract and difficult idea of love. Soskice, mentioned above, suggested that the good metaphor does not provide a new description of that which was previously discerned but that the subject or mental state is only accessible through the metaphor. “It is in this way that a metaphor is genuinely *creative* and says something that can be said adequately in no other way, not as an ornament to what we already know but as an embodiment of a new insight”.<sup>44</sup> In the discussion of symbols, Fawcett had noted the innovation of the application of the bread and wine symbols to Jesus<sup>45</sup> and Langer had emphasised the use of metaphor in the expression of the novel.<sup>46</sup>

P. Ricoeur provides a thorough analysis of the means by which this creation of reality is accomplished.<sup>47</sup> He argues that the place of metaphor is the copula of the verb ‘to be’, in which the metaphor signifies ‘is like’ and ‘is not like’.<sup>48</sup> A metaphor may be interpreted as a categorical transgression, a disordering of a scheme of classification which deviates in relation to pre-existing language order. Referring to Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*, he notes that metaphor conveys learning through genus<sup>49</sup> and wonders whether metaphors destroy an order in order to invent a new one. He then asserts that “metaphor bears information because it ‘re-describes’ reality. Thus, the category mistake is the de-constructive intermediary phase between description and re-description”.<sup>50</sup> He later argues that

metaphor is a semantic event that takes place when several semantic fields intersect. It is because of this construction that all the words, taken together, make sense. Then, and only then, the metaphorical *twist* is at once an event

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<sup>43</sup> G. Lakoff and M. Turner, *More Than Cool Reason: A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1989), p. 62; authors’ italics.

<sup>44</sup> J. M. Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), p. 48; italics added [Henceforth: Soskice].

<sup>45</sup> T. Fawcett, *The Symbolic Language of Religion* (London: SCM Press, 1970), p.53.

<sup>46</sup> S. K. Langer, *Philosophy in a New Key: A Study in the Symbolism of Reason, Rite and Art*, 3rd edn. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957), pp. 139-141.

<sup>47</sup> For a discussion of Ricoeur’s thoughts, see Soskice, pp. 86-89.

<sup>48</sup> Ricoeur, *Rule of Metaphor*, p. 7.

<sup>49</sup> Aristotle writes as follows: “for when Homer calls old age stubble, he teaches and informs us through the genus; for both have lost their bloom” (*Rhetoric*, 1410b13; Bk. III.10.2-3, p. 397).

<sup>50</sup> Ricoeur, *Rule of Metaphor*, p. 22.

and a meaning, an event that means or signifies, an emergent meaning created by language.<sup>51</sup>

Poetic language is vital to such a process because it refers to reality

by the means of a complex strategy which implies, as an essential component, a suspension and seemingly an abolition of the ordinary reference attached to descriptive language. This suspension, however, is only the negative condition of a second-order reference, of an indirect reference built on the ruins of the direct reference. This reference is called second-order reference only with respect to the primacy of the reference of ordinary language.<sup>52</sup>

The “self-abolition” of the literal sense is the negative condition for the emergence of the metaphorical sense.<sup>53</sup> The language at work in metaphors obliterates logical and established frontiers in language in order to bring to light new resemblances which previous classifications had prevented.

The power of metaphor would be to break an old categorization, in order to establish new logical frontiers on the ruins of their forerunners.<sup>54</sup>

These interpretations and analyses of metaphors agree that two meanings or conceptions are juxtaposed and this juxtaposition can organise or create a new reality. The suggested creation of Israel in DI depends heavily on the use of metaphors, as the previous discussion suggests. Each of the examples cited in 10.3 described an Israel through the juxtaposition of Israel, the 2mpl or the character in the songs with something which may contribute to a richer understanding of the entity. The accumulation of metaphors portray a multi-faceted, complex and variegated picture of Israel. Literal language is abandoned as Israel is depicted in conjunction with a host of images. The descriptions cannot and do not apply in a literal sense, either singly or in total, and therefore one must assume along with Ricoeur that these metaphors are meant to break

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<sup>51</sup> Ricoeur, *Rule of Metaphor*, pp. 98-99; author's italics.

<sup>52</sup> P. Ricoeur, 'The Metaphorical Process as Cognition, Imagination and Feeling', in *On Metaphor*, ed. by S. Sacks (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), pp. 141-157 (p. 151) [Henceforth: Ricoeur, *Metaphorical Process*].

<sup>53</sup> Ricoeur, *Metaphorical Process*, pp. 150-151.

<sup>54</sup> Ricoeur, *Rule of Metaphor*, p. 197.

an old categorisation or categorisations for the sake of a description of reality as DI perceives it.

## 10.5 The Creation of Servant Israel

Within the collection of metaphorical statements, the juxtaposition of the 2mpl associated with Israel, Jacob/Israel and/or the entity described in the songs with the concept of servant creates a particular view of reality. Several scholars have in fact suggested that the depiction of Israel as the servant of Yahweh originates with DI. Bonnard refers to the novelty of the reference<sup>55</sup> and Zimmerli and North argue that DI was the first to coin the term.<sup>56</sup> Elliger wonders if priority can be granted to DI in the use of servant in relationship to Israel in light of Jer. 30.10.<sup>57</sup> Whether the poet in DI chose to examine the possibilities created elsewhere in more detail or created the metaphor, it is the presentation in DI which has most convincingly created the perception of Israel the servant of Yahweh. This creation is accomplished through metaphor.

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<sup>55</sup> P. E. Bonnard, *Le Second Isaïe. Son Disciple et leurs Éditeurs* (Paris: J. Gabalda, 1972), p. 41.

<sup>56</sup> Zimmerli argues that the description of Israel in the singular as עַבְדַּי יְהוָה probably occurred in DI. The beginning of the development would be found in Jeremiah if Jer. 30.10 is authentic. Because “the paucity of testimony to the new use of עַבְדַּי in Jer. is surprising”, he argues that the “full vitality which the phrase ‘servant of the Lord’ enjoys when applied to Israel in Dt.Is. seems to me to indicate that this is an original usage” (W. Zimmerli, ‘The use of עַבְדַּי יְהוָה in the Old Testament’, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 5, ed. by G. Friedrich, trans. by G. W. Bromily (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967), pp. 656-677 (p. 662, incl. f.n. 35)). North writes that “DI was the first, as he is almost the only, writer, to call Israel” ‘my servant’” (North, *The Second Isaia*, p. 97).

<sup>57</sup> K. Elliger, *Deuterocesaja* (BKAT XI/I; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1978), p. 137. Carroll suggests that Jer. 30.10-11, which are lacking in the Greek text, “expresses hope for the people’s return from captivity in terms derived from the circles which produced Second Isaiah and added elements to the Jeremiah tradition”. These verses, which modify the time of distress for Jacob, fit more smoothly into their context than those found in 46.27-28 (R.P. Carroll, *Jeremiah* (OTL; Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1986), pp. 577-579; 772-774). Holladay argues that Jer. 30.10-11 are original to Jeremiah and suggests that 46.27-28 are not integrated into their context (W. L. Holladay, *Jeremiah 2* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989), pp. 156-173). Both provide helpful discussions of the Greek text. Thompson notes the argument of Bright, who suggested that both Jeremiah and DI drew from the same conventional form of address (J. A. Thompson, *The Book of Jeremiah* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), p. 557).



## 10.6 The Servant as Symbolic Vehicle

It was noted in the previous chapter that metaphors may use symbols. If the concept of Israel as a servant originates with DI or is primarily associated with DI, the servant could function as a symbol within a metaphorical statement. Goldammer argues that symbols conceal and reveal and Heisig suggests that the referent of a symbol may not be specifically spelt out. If the servant is a symbol, then it is not necessarily intended to convey a precise meaning or a precise referent. Instead, suggestions and connotations may be in order. Thus, in an effort to better understand the servant as symbol, it might be better not to attempt a comprehensive examination of the term 'servant' but rather to seek an indication of the characters from the Hebrew Bible who may be evoked by its use and some of the basic ideas and themes which may be associated with it.

Lindhagen places great stress on the relationship between king and servant. He argues that the concept of kingship, when introduced in Israel from Canaan, included the concept of 'servant'.<sup>58</sup> The presentation of Israel as the servant of Yahweh indicates a "disintegrated ideology of kingship"<sup>59</sup> in which the mission to the nations can be found in the ideology of sacral kingship. This fact shows that DI "assigned Israel the same position in the world of nations that the king had in Israel as Yahweh's principal servant".<sup>60</sup> The likes of Moses, Joshua and Samuel, prophets who made Yahweh's word known to the people, were coloured "with many of the traits of the Yahweh servant *par excellence* in the OT: the king".<sup>61</sup>

Within her study of the root עבד, Riesener notes its extensive field of reference, which may include slavery, kingship and the relationship with Yahweh. She similarly charts the development of its religious use, particularly in Deuteronomy and in its association with Moses and David.<sup>62</sup> In DI as a whole, Yahweh calls Israel 'my servant'

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<sup>58</sup> C. Lindhagen, *The Servant Motif in the Old Testament: A Preliminary Study to the 'Ebed-Yahweh Problem' in Deutero-Isaiah* (Uppsala: Lundequistska Bokhandeln, 1950), p. 280 [Henceforth: Lindhagen].

<sup>59</sup> Lindhagen, p. 206, n.7.

<sup>60</sup> Lindhagen, p. 215.

<sup>61</sup> Lindhagen, p. 290.

<sup>62</sup> I. Riesener, *Der Stamm עבד im Alten Testament* (BZAW 149; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1979), pp. 269-270

in order to strengthen its trust and make clear its task as a witness. Within the songs, the term refers to one who listens to Yahweh's word, trusts in Yahweh and bears witness to Yahweh for his own and all peoples. The songs mark the servant as a prophet who transcends merely individual interpretation, is the personification of the true Israel and embodies a way of existence for the people.<sup>63</sup>

Westermann's discussion of the word provides further insight. In his commentary he suggests that it balances two meanings: a servant belongs to someone who protects and gives security and also stands under or is subordinate to another.<sup>64</sup> In an examination of the word itself, he also notes that it is a relational term.<sup>65</sup> In human interactions, it can refer to a 'slave' in a social setting; in domestic policy it can describe the servant of a king, who in the fulfillment of important functions may be known for independence as well as loyalty or obligation to his king; and it can refer to servitude with respect to foreign relations.<sup>66</sup> Because the word describes an individual in relation to his lord, in relationship to God it primarily describes an individual person.<sup>67</sup> Numerous passages describe an individual or a group with a commission on behalf of God for his people. This function is particularly noteworthy with respect to Moses and other figures from the Hebrew Bible who were retrojectively called Yahweh's servants.<sup>68</sup> Against this background, DI, who describes Israel as the servant of Yahweh, provided an "astonishing expansion of the 'ebed concept" through the use of personification and the first person salvation oracles.

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[Henceforth: Riesener].

<sup>63</sup> Riesener, p. 246-247.

<sup>64</sup> C. Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66: A Commentary*, p. 70.

<sup>65</sup> C. Westermann, 'עבד', in *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament*, vol. 2, ed. by E. Jenni and C. Westermann, trans. by M. E. Biddle (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1997), pp. 819-832 (p. 819) [Henceforth: Westermann, עבד].

<sup>66</sup> Westermann, עבד, pp. 822-823.

<sup>67</sup> Westermann, עבד, p. 826.

<sup>68</sup> He gives Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Job as examples. Some have argued that the presentation of Moses as provided in the Pentateuch is influenced by later hands. For a discussion of this possibility as it relates to Moses and prophecy, cf. A. G. Auld, 'Prophets Through the Looking Glass: Between Writings and Moses', *JSOT* 27 (1983), pp. 3-23. Lemche too wonders whether Moses is not a later figure (N. P. Lemche, *Ancient Israel: A New History of Israelite Society* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1988), p. 256).

The description of Israel in these passages in the same way in which Moses is called Yahweh's servant indicates Israel's significance for others, just as Moses is called Yahweh's servant as the one who labors for his people under God's commission.<sup>69</sup>

He further interprets the servant of the songs as an individual. In this discussion, he stresses the task and commission of the servant and the combination of royal and prophetic language.<sup>70</sup>

A more detailed study of the word might provide further nuances of its possible connotations. Within the DI context, the noun עֶבֶד appears 21x but the precise phrase יהוה עבד occurs only once, at 42.19. The context in which 42.19 is found suggests that it is Israel which is so designated. The phrase 'servant of Yahweh', עֶבֶד-יהוה refers primarily Moses in the Hebrew Bible<sup>71</sup> and thus any reference to a servant of Yahweh might evoke Moses as *the* servant of Yahweh.<sup>72</sup> 'My servant' and closely related constructions, however, appear 14 times in DI.<sup>73</sup> A number of entities are referred to as 'my servant' by Yahweh in the Hebrew Bible but it refers primarily to David. There are 23 references to him as 'my servant' by Yahweh, outnumbering the closest rivals by a significant margin.<sup>74</sup> Thus, Moses in a sense may be evoked by the use of the phrase 'servant of Yahweh' but the term 'my servant' much more strongly suggests the presence of David in the background.

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<sup>69</sup> Westermann, עֶבֶד, p. 827.

<sup>70</sup> Westermann, עֶבֶד, p. 828.

<sup>71</sup> Moses (18x: Dt. 34.5; Jos. 1.1, 13, 15; 8. 31, 33; 11.12; 12.6; 13.8; 14.7; 18.7; 22.2, 4, 5, 6; 2Kgs. 18.12; 2Chr. 1.3; 24.6) and four times עֶבֶד הָאֱלֹהִים refers to him (Dan. 9.11; Neh. 10.30; 1Chr. 6.34; 2Chr. 24.9); Joshua (2x: Jos. 24.29; Ju. 2.8); David (2x: Pss. 18.1; 36.1); Israel as a collective (1x).

<sup>72</sup> Cf. Orlinsky's comments in particular (H. M. Orlinsky, 'The So-Called "Servant of the Lord" and "Suffering Servant" in Second Isaiah', in *Studies in the Second Part of the Book of Isaiah* (VTSup.14; Leiden: Brill), pp. 1-133 (pp. 7-11)).

<sup>73</sup> 41.8, 9; 42.1, 19; 43.10; 44.1, 2, 21 (2x: including עֶבֶד-לִי); 45.4; 49. 3, 6 (לִי עֶבֶד); 52.13; 53.11.

<sup>74</sup> David (23x: 2 Sam.3.18; 7.5, 8; 1Kgs. 11.13, 32, 34, 36, 38; 14.8; 2Kgs. 19.34; 20.6; Isa. 37.35; Jer. 33.21, 22, 26; Ez. 34.23, 24; 37.24, 25; Pss. 89.4, 21; 1Chr. 17.4, 7); collective Jacob/Israel (12x: Isa. 41.8; 42.19; 43. 10; 44.1, 2, 21; 45.4; Jer. 30.10; 46.27, 28; Ez. 28.25; 37.25); Moses (6x: Nu. 12.7, 8; Jos. 1.2, 7; 2Kgs. 21.8; Mal. 3.22); Job (6x: Job 1.8; 2.3; 42.7, 8 (3x)); Nebuchadnezzar (3x: Jer. 25.9; 27.6 (Nebuchadnezzar); 43.10); and once each for Zerubbabel (Hag. 2.23), Abraham (Gen. 26.24), Isaiah of Jerusalem (Isa. 20.3), Joshua the High Priest (Zach. 3.8), Caleb (Nu. 14.24) and Eliakim (Isa. 22.20). The appearances of the word in Isa. 42.1, 49.3, 52.13 and 53.12 have not been included due to difficulty in identification.

The servant may therefore be associated with a number of personae or concepts. Traits such as servitude, subordination, loyalty or obligation are emphasised; protection is implied; the idea of a task or commission is present; and the figures of Moses and David are especially evoked. If one wished to examine the servant as a symbol, it might be suggested that it connotes most or all of these images or associations by its very mention.

In the creation of Israel memories of other, previous servants have been drawn upon through the use of the servant symbol. Individuals, particularly Moses and David, may be associated with the servant. This very evocation might provide a depth, substance and history to the servant Israel which is created, but it is this very evocation which allows the possibility that an individual might be depicted where the servant Israel is not specifically stated. The immediate context of the songs therefore suggests that Israel is the servant whereas the actual terms 'servant of Yahweh' or 'my servant' primarily connote individuals. This balance will be addressed in the next chapter.

## **10.7 Conclusions**

Numerous scholars have associated DI with the creation of a concept of Israel. A multitude of metaphorical statements, including those with the term 'servant', is used to describe Jacob/Israel, the 2mpl entity closely associated with Israel and the figure in the songs, one described in terms reminiscent of Israel. This literary creation is consonant with the creative function of metaphors. The conception of Israel as a servant of Yahweh may originate with DI or, at the very least, the idea is more extensively presented in DI than elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible. The literary creation of Israel depends on the servant symbol acting as a vehicle within a metaphorical statement, a vehicle which connotes a number of traits, themes or characters. Moses, 'the servant of Yahweh', and David, frequently called 'my servant' by Yahweh, are particularly evoked.

This chapter and the preceding chapter have briefly left the concept of empathy behind but the next chapter will attempt to tie the threads of empathy, metaphor and symbol together.

## Chapter 11

### Conclusion: Connecting Empathy, Metaphor and Symbol

#### 11.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter suggested that the conception of Israel as a servant is integral to DI, which seeks to create a conception of Israel. This process of creation fits quite readily with theories of metaphors which emphasise their creative function, one which may create a new conception of reality. The study of the first person and third person language of the songs indicated that the songs may on one level be distinct from their DI context, though the empathy depicted in the songs or elicited by the songs may serve to connect the songs with the context. This study preceded a presentation of theories of symbols and metaphors, within which some time was spent summarising the metaphorical theory of Soskice and the analysis of symbols by Langer. It was proposed that their ideas might be of some interest in an analysis of the songs. Their ideas provide the basis through which the discussion of empathy can be brought into conversation with metaphor and symbol.

#### 11.2 Empathy and Metaphor

The term 'servant' is most frequently associated with Jacob/Israel within the context of DI and thus it might be most natural to interpret the songs in this manner. The songs, particularly 42.1-4, 50.4-11 and 53, would then describe the servant Israel interacting with the nations. Arguments that the servant cannot be Israel in these poems are not conclusive.<sup>1</sup> It cannot be denied, however, that an interpretation of 49.1-6 presuming the servant is the collective Israel is extremely difficult if the 'Israel' of v.3 is retained and the infinitives of vv.5-6 are taken with the servant as subject. This poem might therefore contain stronger hints of an individual or a group within Israel who is sent to the preserved of Israel.

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<sup>1</sup> Muilenburg provides a useful discussion in support of the servant Israel (J. Muilenburg, 'Isaiah: Chapters 40-66' in *The Interpreter's Bible*, vol. 5, ed. by G.A. Buttrick (New York: Abingdon Press, 1956), pp. 381-773 (pp. 406-412)).

If 49.1-6 connotes an individual servant or a smaller group interacting with the preserved of Israel, then this interpretation could theoretically be applied to the other songs. Isa. 42.1-4 could therefore depict an individual or group interacting with the nations and the reed/wick. This reed/wick, interpreted within a wider context, could theoretically refer to Israel or even a group within Israel rather than an illustration of the interaction with the nations, as proposed earlier.<sup>2</sup> Isa. 50.4-11 could be variously interpreted depending upon the view taken of the servant: it could describe a faithful individual amongst unfaithful Israelites; a faithful group interacting with an unfaithful group; or an individual or group amongst the nations. Isa. 53 could depict an individual amongst Israel and/or the nations; or, it could describe a faithful group amongst the faithless of Israel and/or the nations. Any of these are possible given the difficulties in identification and the proposals offered by many scholars. It might further be suggested that the description of the servant in 49.1-6 strongly connotes the collective Israel as it is described in the remainder of DI even if it is difficult to assert that this servant is the collective Israel found elsewhere. For example, references to despondency are found in 49.4ab and 40.27, and the formation from the womb is found in 49.5 and 44.2. The collective Israel described in DI outside the songs virtually seems to be residing just below the surface of 49.1-6.

Clines had argued that the text of Isa. 53 may gain its strength from the very ambiguities inherent within it. Extrapolating from these observations, it can be argued that the power of the songs originates in part from the very complexities mentioned above. The interaction of the personae has been of vital importance to an understanding of the poems *qua* poems, a focus similarly drawn from Clines, and now, when placed in the wider DI context, the very difficulties in attribution create poems in which personae interact on a number of levels. A servant as collective Israel interacting with the nations, the servant as faithful group interacting with a faithless group and/or the nations and an individual interacting with Israel and/or the nations may be *simultaneously* held together. In 49.1-6 the servant Israel, whether individual or group, works with the

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. Chapter 4, Sec. 4.4.2.

preserved of Israel and addresses the nations, and yet the presence of the collective Israel is just below the surface.

The songs therefore evoke at least three possible metaphorical statements in which Israel, a group or an individual are the servant. Soskice had quite perceptively argued that the tenor and vehicle conjointly depict the subject of the metaphor, which may be a state of mind conveyed only through that metaphor. She and Langer similarly emphasised the importance of context in the interpretation of metaphors. If an individual is the servant, then the subject or state of mind might include the following: the need of Israel and/or the nations for a mediator, presumably an individual; the inability of Israel or the nations to hear, see or respond to a mediator who does hear, see and respond to Yahweh; the faithfulness of the mediator and the faithlessness of Israel or the nations; or the characteristics of the mediator, implied by the language of royalty, prophecy, discipleship and sacrifice. If a faithful group within Israel is the servant, then other features come to the fore: the need of the faithless Israelites or nations for a faithful group; the distinction between those who hear, see and respond with those who do not; and the depiction of the faithful group in terms evoking royalty, prophecy, discipleship or sacrifice. If Israel is the servant, other associations come to the fore: the innocence of Israel vis-à-vis the nations; the suffering of Israel at the hands of Babylon; the blindness of the nations, who need to see Yahweh's work; or Israel depicted in language associated with royalty, prophecy, discipleship and sacrifice. In each case, the network of associations connected with the elements of the metaphor contribute to the subject matter or the state of mind depicted by the metaphor. The particularities associated with each metaphorical statement may differ but much nevertheless connects them: a close relationship with Yahweh; suffering; a resolution of suffering and/or success; support from Yahweh; the themes and figures associated with the term 'servant'; and, of course, empathy. If it is a state of mind which is to be conveyed through metaphor, particularly if the metaphor is interpreted in the context, then each metaphorical statement conveys that state of mind associated with mediating Yahweh's word or will. This state of mind includes empathy.

### 11.3 Empathy and the Songs as Artistic Symbols

The possible simultaneity of evocation echoes earlier comments made in the discussion of symbols. Goldammer had mentioned the veiling and revealing function of symbols and Fawcett the multiplicity of signification. If the songs connote layers of relationships, then the songs *themselves* are functioning in a symbolic manner. As symbols, the songs are concrete and definite, describing interactions amongst personae, but their precise referent is not entirely transparent. They connote relationships which are important within the context of DI: the interaction between Israel and the nations, between groups within Israel or between the individual mediator and Israel.

In the preceding chapter it was argued that the servant may be a symbolic vehicle within a metaphorical statement. As a symbol, the servant connotes particular themes, concepts or characters from the Hebrew Bible. Hanson had argued that the “meaning of the Servant passages, far from being withheld from the reader by the opacity of symbolism, unfolds precisely within the multivalence of that symbolism”<sup>3</sup> and thus the meaning of the songs depends upon symbols within the passages. The servant is one of the constitutive symbols.

One could expand on the observations offered in the two preceding paragraphs. The songs can be interpreted symbolically because they evoke characters found elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible who may not necessarily be referred to as a ‘servant of Yahweh’ or ‘my servant’ by Yahweh. Though Williamson has emphasised the strong royal language found in Isa. 42.1-4,<sup>4</sup> language which supports the association between the servant and David, Melugin has noted the variety of figures who may be evoked by the phrases contained within the poem.<sup>5</sup> Westermann focusses on the close connections between Jeremiah and the description of the servant in 49.1-6 and 50.4-9,<sup>6</sup> and in his discussion of 49.1-6 Hanson mentions Jeremiah and Elijah.<sup>7</sup> Willey has delineated

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<sup>3</sup> P. D. Hanson, *Isaiah 40-66* (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1995), p. 41 [Henceforth: Hanson].

<sup>4</sup> H. G. M. Williamson, *Variations on a Theme: King, Messiah and Servant in the Book of Isaiah* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1998), pp. 130-146.

<sup>5</sup> R. F. Melugin, *The Formation of Isaiah 40-55* (BZAW 141; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1976), pp. 65-67.

<sup>6</sup> C. Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66: A Commentary*, trans. by D.M.G. Stalker (London: SCM Press, 1969), pp. 207-212; 227-232.

<sup>7</sup> Hanson, p. 128.



connections between 49.1-6 and Jeremiah and ties between 50.4-11, 53 and Lm. 3, with its description of the *geber*.<sup>8</sup> The songs consciously evoke such figures in a manner similar to a symbol.

These observations can be complemented by Langer's discussion of artistic symbols. She had argued that poems could be artistic symbols whose meaning resides in the work of art, and an understanding is more like having a new experience than entertaining a new proposition. The poems as artistic symbols require participation in order to be understood. Empathy, of course, ensures participation. It was noted in chapter 3 that empathy is a slippery concept: according to Eisenberg and Strayer it involves sharing the emotions of another through perceptible cues or inference, while Lada emphasises congruity between passions. Empathy may be stimulated in response to particular imagery, particularly that which conveys and is based on a physicality, and it involves both affect and cognition. It was proposed that the songs themselves describe relationships which are informed by empathy and the songs elicit empathy from the reader. Thus, the empathy evoked by the songs draws the reader into a participation with the songs themselves. The songs describe a mediator of Yahweh's word or will and an empathetic experience of this mediation contributes to an understanding of the meaning of the poem. The meaning of each poem may be complemented by the portrayal of relationships informed by empathy and the participation in these relationships. One might further argue that the meaning of the poem is in fact the empathetic experience of *being* a servant of Yahweh and this experience is particularly accessible through and in these poems. The songs *mean* by creating poems in which the reader experiences and therefore more fully understands the empathy so important in the mediation of Yahweh's word or will.

Many scholars have noted that the poems fit into the context of DI through a variety of threads and it has been suggested that the concept of empathy similarly connects the songs with the surrounding material. One might legitimately argue, then, that the songs cannot be isolated as artistic symbols within DI. Indeed, DI itself could

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<sup>8</sup> P. T. Willey, *Remember the Former Things: The Recollection of Previous Texts in Second Isaiah* (SBLDS 161; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997), pp. 193-197; 211-220.

be an artistic symbol and it would therefore be only partially correct to recommend that the songs are artistic symbols. It has been suggested, however, that the songs are unusual within the context of DI due to the first and third person language related to the servant, and they therefore merit attention. In her discussion of presentational symbols, Langer notes that symbolic elements can contribute to a larger articulate symbol and thus the songs may be interpreted in light of her proposal. If so, then the songs can be read as artistic symbols which may contribute to a larger symbol within which they are placed.

In sum, the ability of the songs to connote the three metaphorical statements involving the servant indicates that they are symbols in and of themselves. The servant as symbol evokes a number of themes or characters from the Hebrew Bible and the songs themselves may evoke other characters not specifically called 'servant of Yahweh' or 'my servant' by Yahweh. The songs can thus be interpreted as artistic symbols in which an understanding is like having a new experience. Empathy from the reader encourages a participation and the very meaning of the songs *is* that participation in relationships marked by empathy.

#### **11.4 The Songs in Their Historical Context**

In the discussion of reader and audience in the third chapter,<sup>9</sup> it was proposed that the reader to which Clines referred and which would be assumed throughout the majority of the study would be one which was not restricted to one historical era or geographical location. In Chapter 10, it was argued that DI sought to create a concept of Israel no matter what its precise historical provenance. Indeed, the songs as artistic symbols are relevant to any of the proposed historical contexts. The songs read as artistic symbols invite the historical audience to participate in the interactions depicted within the songs, a participation which may in fact be the meaning of the songs. The songs through participation convey the state of mind associated with the individual, group or nation mediating the word or will of Yahweh, a state of mind which includes empathy. This state of mind is necessary to the individuals or groups attempting to

create Israel and mediate the word or will of Yahweh. Empathy too is relevant to an Israel which must function amongst the nations and act as Yahweh's servant and witness in this context. Through this meaning in participation the audience can therefore understand more clearly the empathy which is a part of mediation and thus mediate more effectively. The songs in their complexity were therefore relevant to an individual, group or the collective Israel within the historical context of DI.

### 11.5 Conclusions and Ramifications

This thesis has modified the work of D. J. A. Clines on Isa. 53, and has argued that the servant songs depict relationships informed by empathy and elicit empathy from the reader. The songs themselves are connected to their DI context through empathy: it exists in relationships described outside the songs and it is evoked from the reader elsewhere in DI. The first person used by the servant in the songs and third person language used to describe the servant in the songs distinguish them from their context, thus creating a tension between that which connects the songs to their surroundings and that which separates them. This tension is partially mitigated through the concept of empathy: the language of the songs focusses the empathy found elsewhere. Scholars disagree over the provenance of DI but many agree that DI sought to create a concept of Israel. The host of metaphors used to describe Jacob/Israel, the 2mpl associated with Israel and the persona depicted in the songs, one described in terms reminiscent of Israel, supports this proposal. The task of creation and the numerous metaphors fit quite readily with theories arguing for the creative function of metaphors. The term 'servant' therefore functions as a symbolic vehicle in the metaphorical statements. The possible metaphorical statements evoked by the songs convey a state of mind associated with the mediation of Yahweh's will or word, one which includes but is not necessarily limited to empathy. The songs themselves can be read as artistic symbols whose meaning is conveyed through participation. The empathy elicited from the reader encourages participation and this actual participation in the empathetic relationships described within the songs *is* the meaning of the songs.

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<sup>9</sup> See Chapter 3, Sec. 3.2.2.4.

On one level, then, this thesis may have moved only a short step away from Clines. He emphasised the identification of the reader with personae in Isa. 53, the need to enter the world of the poem, the possible empathy for the servant and the ability of the servant to alter the reader. To propose that the servant evokes empathy and the songs are artistic symbols in which participation in their events is their meaning strongly echoes Clines' proposals. In the modification of his ideas and their wider application, however, new insights have been generated. Empathy is not only elicited but is described within the songs. It connects the songs to their context and the songs focus the empathy found elsewhere. The conception of the servant as symbol and as the vehicle in a metaphorical statement is compatible with Clines' arguments concerning the identity of the servant. The songs as artistic symbols in which the reader participates depends on empathy and conveys empathy without presuming that the reader is seized and altered by the servant. Without Clines these ideas could not have been forwarded but they have similarly offered observations quite distinct from Clines' observations.

If these proposals are accepted, then it might be useful to examine other texts in an effort to uncover indications of empathy and its possible uses. Rendtorff has argued that comfort is one of the ideas that binds the Book of Isaiah together<sup>10</sup> and it has been suggested that the concept of comfort found in DI is closely related to empathy. Current studies in the Book of Isaiah have sought to delineate the connections which exist amongst the traditional three sections of the corpus. One might therefore wish to examine the Book of Isaiah in order to discover any thread of empathy which runs through the corpus and discuss its possible function. Other prophetic books too contain intimations of empathy. Jeremiah and his confessions come to mind and indeed a previous work on Jeremiah presents ideas which echo with the concept of empathy discussed here.<sup>11</sup> Thus, there is some scope for further research on a fascinating concept which infused and inspired one of the greatest and most influential collections of poetry ever written.

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<sup>10</sup> R. Rendtorff, 'Zur Komposition des Buches Jesaja', *VT* 34 (1984), pp. 295-320 (pp. 298-299).

<sup>11</sup> T. Polk, *The Prophetic Persona: Jeremiah and the Language of the Self* (JSOTSup. 32; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1984).

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