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THE SERVANT OF YAHWEH IN ISA. 40-55

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There are now few scholars who defend the unity of the book of Isaiah. Indeed, there are many who not only deny the genuineness of the last twenty-seven chapters, but attribute at least a part of chs. 56-66 to one or more other authors than the so-called Second Isaiah; and finally, there are some who find traces of difference of authorship even in chs. 40-55. This last claim is a matter of importance which ought to be neither allowed nor denied without careful study and valid reasons discovered. Perhaps an examination of the treatment given to a subject which runs through these chapters will help in determining whether more than one author had a hand in their production.

The subject proposed can best be discussed under a number of divisions which will suggest themselves as it develops.

The first of these divisions is suggested by the very first verse of ch. 40, where Yahweh commands:

"Comfort ye, comfort ye my people,
saith your God;
Speak comfortingly to Jerusalem,
and announce to her,
That her service is fulfilled,
that her penalty is satisfied."

Here is revealed an unhappy condition, with a name for the sufferers and something indicative of the nature of, and the reason for, their suffering. The intention of the prophet evidently is to convey the idea that the condition described has existed for some time. His words, strictly interpreted, would imply that it had just been brought to an end. This, however, is not his meaning, since it will be found that, in later passages, he repeatedly represents it as still existing. It is therefore necessary, here and wherever else a similar case occurs, for one to remind oneself that the so-called Perfect Tense in Hebrew is often used to represent something, not as already accomplished,

but as "undoubtedly imminent," where exact English would require the Future with an adverbial modifier. See 52:9 f.

The sufferers are here the Jewish people represented (v. 2) by Jerusalem personified. The same name is employed in the same sense v. 9; 41:27; 44:26, 28; 51:17; 52:1, 2, 9. "Zion" takes the place of Jerusalem v. 9; 41:27; 46:13; 49:14; 51:3; 52:1, 2, 7, 8. For the people "Jacob" is used 40:27; 48:14; 42:24; 43:1, 22, 28; 44:1, 2, 21, 23; 45:4; 46:3; 48:1, 12, 20; "Israel," with or without Jacob, 40:27; 41:8, 14; 42:24; 43:1, 15, 22, 28; 44:1, 21 (bis), 23; 45:4, 17, 25; 46:3, 13; 48:1, 12; 49:7; and "Jeshurun" 44:2.

Israel is called Yahweh's servant 41:8, 9; 43:10; 44:1, 2, 21 (bis); 45:4; 48:20. There are two other passages, 42:19 and 44:26, where the word "servant" has been interpreted as a collective; but in the former the fact that the Greek Version has the plural makes the Hebrew reading at least doubtful, and in the latter it is pretty clearly an error for "servants." See the parallel term "messengers." On the other hand, in 43:10, the qualifying clause "whom I have chosen," which is never elsewhere found with either "servants" or "witnesses," confirms the correctness of the present reading.

There are various passages from which one can gather details with reference to the nature of the suffering endured. Jerusalem was evidently in ruins and the surrounding country a desert. See 44:26; 51:3; 52:9. In 54:1 ff. the city is compared to a barren woman forsaken by her husband, and in v. 11 described as "afflicted, storm-tossed, uncomforted." Meanwhile the inhabitants of the country, or many of them, are in exile (51:14; 52:2), where, after having suffered from violence, famine, and slaughter (51:19), robbed and plundered (42:22), they are continually exposed to the contempt and cruelty of their masters. See 41:11 f.; 49:7, 13; 51:7, 23; 52:5. The scene of their suffering is Babylonia (48:20) and the authors of their misery the Babylonians. See 42:5; 47:6.

The next point requiring attention, the reason for the suffering described, presents no great difficulty. In fact, the question why this suffering was required finds its answer incidentally in the first of the messages with which the prophet seeks to comfort his people (40:2); whence it appears that the "service" near-

ing its end was imposed as a penalty for "all," that is, the multitude of, the sufferer's "sins." In 42:24 the prophet is more explicit. "Who," he asks, "gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to robbers?" a question which originally, perhaps, had no answer because it needed none. In 43:27 f. he makes Yahweh say,

"Thy first father sinned,
and thy interpreters transgressed against me;
Therefore I gave Jacob to destruction,
and Israel to revilings."

See, also, 48:18 f.; 50:1. In 46:8 Yahweh addresses his people as "transgressors," and in 43:24 complains that they have "burdened" him with their sins and "wearied" him with their iniquities. See, also, 44:22.

The picture of the condition of the Jews during the Exile is not complete without something said about the effect of their suffering on their spirits; which appears in the way in which they received the message of the Second Isaiah. The evidence goes to show that the majority of them are very despondent and sceptical. This feeling voices itself in 40:27 f., where the eloquence of the prophet is at once taxed to stimulate any faith in Yahweh:

"Why sayest thou, Jacob,
and speakest, Israel:
'My way is hidden from Yahweh,
and my cause passeth beyond my God?'
Dost thou not know?
or hast thou not heard?
An everlasting God is Yahweh,
the creator of the ends of the earth."

See, also, 41:14, where, after another comparison of Yahweh with the idols of the Gentiles, Yahweh himself comforts his people with the exhortation:

"Fear not, thou worm Jacob,
thou mite* Israel;
I will help thee, saith Yahweh,
and thy Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel;"

* The reading of the Greek Version.

and 46:12 f., where the original reading doubtless was:

“Listen to me, ye disheartened,*
 because far from recompense;
 I have brought near my recompense, it is not afar,
 and my help shall not tarry;
 But I will grant help in Sion,
 to Israel glory.”*

* The Greek reading.

In ch. 49 the prophet quotes two disconsolate utterances and answers them. In v. 14 he represents Sion as complaining,

“Yahweh hath forsaken me,
 and the Lord forgotten me.”

To which he replies in a wonderful tribute to the divine tenderness:

“Doth a woman forget her suckling,
 that she doth not pity the child of her womb?
 Even such may forget,
 but I will not forget thee.”

In v. 24 someone in his persistent pessimism objects:

“Is the spoil taken from the mighty,
 or the captives of the terrible* delivered?”

* The reading of the Latin and the Syriac.

to which he answers:

“Even the captives of the mighty may be taken,
 and the spoil of the terrible delivered;
 Yea, thy strife will I wage,
 and thy children will I save.”

Many seem to have suffered until their spirits were broken, and they lived in constant fear and constant need of encouragement. It was doubtless such as these to whom the prophet, speaking for Yahweh, addressed the impatient question (51:12):

“I, I am he that comforteth thee,*
 who art thou, that thou fearest
 A mortal that dieth, or a son of man
 that is made grass;—

* The Greek reading.

And hast forgotten Yahweh, thy Maker,
 that stretched out heaven and founded the
 earth;—
 And tremblest all the time
 on account of the fury of the oppressor?
 When he hath taken aim to destroy,—
 where, then, is the fury of the oppressor?''

The condition of the Jews in exile has now been presented as fully as necessary for the present purpose. It is a sad picture, but, as every reader of the Old Testament knows, it is an imperfect one, being one in which only the shadows have received somewhat adequate attention. Now let the artist complete his work, or, to abandon the figure, let the prophet of the Exile describe the inspiring outlook in which he rejoices. Some of the more general passages belonging under this head have already been cited. Of the rest there are many bearing on the stages by which the unhappy condition of the people of Yahweh is to be relieved. First, of course, their bonds must be broken and they set free. "The captive exile shall speedily be released," says 51:14. In fact, they are assured that the time has come and commanded to be prepared to

"Go forth from Babylon,
 flee from the Chaldeans."

See 48:20; also 49:9; 52:11. When they ask how they are to be liberated, he calls their attention to "one from the East" (41:2; 46:11), fresh from conquests in the North (41:25). In 44:28 and 45:1 this heroic figure is identified with Cyrus. True, there is room for doubt about the genuineness of the name in the latter of these passages, but there is not the same reason for expunging it from the former; and if there were, so life-like is the portraiture that the reader with some knowledge of oriental history would involuntarily supply the omission. The person intended is certainly not the Servant of Yahweh, for, in 45:4 he is expressly distinguished from the latter. There is another point which should not be overlooked, namely, that some of the Jews of the time seem to have objected to the program sketched by the prophet, because it had already become the current teaching that only a Hebrew could be called a "friend"

of Yahweh (48:14; comp. 41:8) and only a descendant of David his "anointed." See 45:1. The prophet, however, not only rebukes the objectors for their obstinate prejudice, but repeats one of the predictions that had offended them. Thus, 45:9, he says:

"Woe to him that striveth with his Maker,
 a potsherd among the potsherds of the ground!
 Doth the clay say to the potter, 'What makest thou?'
 or his work, 'Thou hast no hands?'"

then, v. 13, in the name of Yahweh:

"I myself aroused him in righteousness,
 and all his ways will I direct.
 He shall build my city,
 and all my captives shall he release."

Having freed his exiled people, Yahweh must restore them to their country. The prophet represents him as providing for them on their jubilant march thither by a continuous miracle:

"Let every valley be raised,
 and every mountain and hill be lowered;
 And let the hilly become a level,
 and the rough places a plain."

Thus 40:4; in 41:18 f. Yahweh promises:

"I will open on the barrens rivers,
 and in the midst of the plains springs;
 I will make the wild a pool of water,
 and the droughty land water-sources;
 I will set in the wild the cedar,
 the acacia, the myrtle, and the olive;
 I will set in the waste the cypress,
 the elm, and the box together."

See also 43:19 ff.; 49:9 ff. Above, this "way of Yahweh" was characterized as "a continuous miracle." In the end it becomes an endless wonder, for, in the last reference to it (55:12 f.), where the exiles go forth "with gladness," while the mountains and the hills "break into shouting" before them "and all the trees of the fields clap their hands," the prophet declares that

“it shall be to Yahweh a memorial,
an everlasting sign that shall not be destroyed.”

It is not entirely clear whether the prophet intended that his glowing description of Yahweh's plans for the safety and comfort of his people on their return to Palestine should be taken literally: he certainly expected that they would be even more wonderfully supplied with everything needful than their fathers were when Moses led them out of Egypt. See 43: 16 ff.; 48: 21. He is equally extravagant in the language he uses concerning the restoration of their native country. Jerusalem, of course, is foremost in his thoughts. The first references to it promise that it shall, not only be rebuilt, but rebuilt by Cyrus. See 44: 26 ff.; 45: 13. In 49: 19 Yahweh is made to say:

“Thy waste and thy desolate places
and thy ruined land—
Surely, now, it shall be too strait for the inhabitant,
and they that devour thee shall be far away.”

See, also, 51: 3; 52: 9. But it is ch. 54 in which he is most prodigal of his promises. He exhorts the holy city:

“Enlarge the place for thy tent,
and thy curtains* extend;† spare not.
Lengthen thy cords
and strengthen thy stakes;
For right and left shalt thou break forth,
and thy seed shall possess nations.”

* The phrase “of thy dwellings” is wanting in the Greek.

† The reading of the Latin and the Syriac.

Thus in vs. 2 f.; then in vs. 11 f.:

“Afflicted, storm-tossed, uncomforted,
lo, I will lay thy stones in sstibium,
and thy foundations in sapphires;
I will put rubies for thy battlements,
and for thy gates carbuncles;
and thy whole border shall be precious stones.”

The prophet evidently believed that the restoration of Jerusalem would be the beginning of a new era of growth, prosperity, and influence for his people. This is clear from the passages

in ch. 54 already quoted. There are others of similar import. Thus, it appears from 43:5 f. that the return from Babylonia is only a part of a larger movement toward Palestine; for Yahweh here says:

“I will bring thy seed from the East,
and gather them from the West;
I will say to the North, ‘Give up,’
and to the South, ‘Withhold not’;
Bring my sons from afar,
and my daughters from the end of the earth.’”

In 44:3 f. he promises that he will pour his spirit upon the new community and

“Then shall they spring up like grass in the midst of water,
like poplars by watercourses.”

At the same time their numbers will be increased by conversions from the Gentiles (v. 5):

“One shall say, ‘I am Yahweh’s,’
and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob;
Yea, another shall inscribe on his hand ‘Yahweh’s,’
and surname himself by the name of Israel.”

The Gentiles generally will not only recognize Yahweh as the only true God, but will even become subservient to his people. This is the teaching of 49:22 f., where Yahweh says:

“Lo, I will uplift to the nations my hand,
and to the peoples my signal;
And they shall bring my sons in their bosoms,
and my daughters on their shoulders shall they carry.
Kings, also, shall be thy guardians,
and princesses thy nurses.
Face to the earth shall they do thee homage,
yea, the dust of thy feet shall they lick.”

See also 45:14 f., which, however, at least in its present form, seems not so well to represent the Second Isaiah.

A good deal of space has been given to the promises by which the prophet sought to sustain and encourage his people in their misfortunes, but it was not otherwise possible to do justice to

the great things which he believed to be in store for them, and it is still necessary to the attainment of the purpose of this study to inquire what, to his mind, moved Yahweh to authorize him to make these promises. There is little, if any, evidence that he thought his people worthy of so great divine favor. In fact, his repeated strictures on them produce the contrary impression. Sympathy with their sufferings is only one, and that not the most prominent, of the motives by which he represents Yahweh as being actuated in exerting his power to their benefit. In 40:2, it is true, the word "comfort" is in strong contrast with the phrase "double for all their sins." See, also, 47:6. In 49:10, again, it is an act of mercy for him to lead his people forth from captivity, and in v. 13 heaven and earth are called upon to sing and rejoice because he is going to comfort them and "have compassion on his afflicted"; while in v. 15 he declares, as above quoted, that a mother would sooner forget her sucking babe than he would forget Israel. See also 51:22 f., where, because his people, in their misery, find no one else to comfort them, he promises to take their part against their oppressors.

The prophet also represents the determination of Yahweh to help Israel as prompted by a peculiar relation between him and them. Thus, in 41:8 ff., Yahweh uses the significant form of address, "Israel, my servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham, my friend"; in which there is doubtless an allusion to the covenant on which the Hebrews sometimes unwarrantably prided themselves. The same ideas are more closely connected in 43:1, where Yahweh is made to say,

"Fear not, for I will redeem thee;

I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine."

See, also, 44:1 f.; 45:4; 46:3 f.; 49:7; 51:16; in the first two of which he again calls Israel his servant. In 54:7 the bond between him and Israel is likened to that between a husband and his wife, as in Hosea, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel.

A third motive attributed to Yahweh in his espousal of the cause of Israel is a desire to display his own divine glory. No one can read the chapters now under examination without getting the impression that this is more prominent than either of the others. Yahweh claims nothing less than the homage of

mankind, and, that he may receive his due, his work is done in the eyes of the whole world. In 40:5 the deliverance of Israel, it is declared, will be a revelation of the glory of Yahweh. In 41:20 the subject is indefinite, but it is evidently men in general, whom he expects to convince, by his wonderful deeds, of his unique godhead. In 42:8 he gives as a reason for his activity in Israel's behalf that he will not give his glory to another or his praise to graven images. In 44:23 the prophet calls upon heaven and earth to rejoice because Yahweh is about to redeem Jacob and glorify himself in Israel. In 49:26 Yahweh promises to deliver his people from their oppressors, and that thus all flesh shall see and know that he is their Savior and their Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob; and in 52:10 that he will bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the help wrought by Israel's God. Finally, see 55:13, where it is triumphantly declared that this glorious deliverance

"shall be a memorial to Yahweh,
an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off."

The people of Yahweh are expected to spread the news of the deliverance promised, when it has been accomplished, to enhance the fame of their God. Thus, in 43:10 he says:

"Ye are my witnesses,
and my servant whom I have chosen;
That ye may know and believe in me,
and understand that it is I;"

where the second "ye" is probably a mistake for "they." According to 43:21 they are a people that he formed for himself to rehearse his praise. See, also, 44:8. When they finally (48:20) go forth from Babylon, they are commanded:

"With a ringing voice declare, proclaim this;
Send it forth to the end of the earth;
Say, Yahweh hath redeemed his servant Jacob."

The passages cited in the preceding paragraph should not be interpreted as indicating that Yahweh is so intent on his own glory that he has no object beyond or beside it. This is not the case. In fact, he seeks the recognition of his own people for

their best interest, and of mankind for a purpose which is most clearly brought out in 45:22, where he makes proclamation to the world,

“Turn unto me and be ye saved,
all the ends of the earth.”

This is the reason why he has sworn (v. 23) that to him every knee shall bow and by him every tongue shall swear. Then, as he says in 51:4, instruction will go forth from him, and his decree for a light to the peoples.

The reader was given to understand, at the start, that this study would cover the whole of chs. 40-55. He must have noticed that certain sections in these chapters have been neglected. They are 42: 1-4, with the three verses following; 49: 1-6; 50: 4-9, with the two following verses; and 52: 13-53: 12. These sections remain to be discussed; but, before they are examined, it will be well to put into a succinct statement the results already obtained. The following are the principal points: The Jews are suffering, some of them in Babylonia. They are suffering, they confess, on account of their disloyalty to their God. Cyrus appears on the horizon, and a nameless prophet recognizes in him their deliverer. The prophet declares that, not for their sake, but for the sake of their fathers and that he may reveal his unique godhead, Yahweh has commissioned the Persian king to set them free. They are slow to believe, but he pictures them leaving the scene of their suffering, crossing the desert, under divine guidance and protection, by a miraculous highway, and reoccupying, with songs of triumph, their restored country. Finally they behold the nations, moved by their testimony to these wonders, recognizing Yahweh as the only true God and enrolling themselves among his worshipers.

This is the gist of what, in the narrower sense, is called Second Isaiah. Any one tolerably familiar with the Old Testament will find the line of thought familiar. The fact is that it is practically that of Ps. 22, or, if one cannot accept its unity, of the last ten verses. Here, also, there is a sufferer. He is providentially delivered, and, in consequence, moved to bring a thank-offering and testify to the greatness and goodness of Yahweh to his associates, and even before Israel, great and small. The story spreads to the Gentiles, and they as well as Israel bequeath

it to their children and their children's children. Thus all mankind come to know Yahweh and trust in him for their salvation.

The similarity between this line of thought and that traced through most of Isa. 40-55 is evident. What is the case with the hitherto neglected sections? It is pretty generally agreed that they, without the verses appended to two of them, are by one author, but there are some who deny them to the Second Isaiah and assign the appended verses to the editor who inserted them. Let them speak for themselves.

First in order of the points on which these sections are to be tested are those on the subject of suffering, and the very first question to be put is, Who is here the sufferer? There is no difficulty in discovering that it is the Servant of Yahweh; but does the author of these sections mean by this phrase the same person or persons as it denotes elsewhere? In the passages already examined, without exception, it meant Jacob or Israel as a collective name for the Hebrews in some part or view. It is natural to expect to find it used in the same sense in these sections, and 49:3 favors that expectation; but it will be found that there is no other case which is equally clear and that, in this one, the interpretation proposed is forbidden by the fact that, in vs. 5 f., the Servant is clearly distinguished from "the tribes of Jacob." The only way to bring the whole passage into harmony is to omit the name Israel in v. 3, whereupon the Servant becomes a person or persons, other than the people Israel, whose identity here and elsewhere in these sections remains undefined. See 42:1; 49:5, 6; 52:13. It is sufficient for the present purpose to have made this point, but it may be noted that, although the Servant in these passages is not Israel, there is no objection to identifying him with an elect fraction of the people or an unknown individual, and that 50:10 f., which, as has been explained, is an editorial addition to vs. 4-9, favors the latter of these alternatives.

When one inquires concerning the nature of the suffering of the Servant of Yahweh in 42:1-4, etc., also, it is found to differ from that of the Servant who represents the people Israel. They were in captivity in Babylonia, surrounded by idolatry, deprived of their political rights and privileges, and exposed to the contempt and cruelty of their conquerors. In the sections

now under consideration there is no reference to Babylonia or idolatry. The Servant, whoever he is, is with his people, seeking, not to set them, as captive Jews, at liberty, but to gather them, as survivors of the twelve tribes, into a new nation. See 49:5 f. He has a *work*, while the other Servant is merely a *witness* to testify to the greatness of the deeds of Yahweh done in his interest. He suffers at the hands, not of tyrannical heathen rulers, but of corrupt and ruthless opponents. See 50:8 f., also 11. He is not only despised and abused, like the other, but he is finally put to death and buried as a common criminal. See 53:3, 8 f.

The Servant in 42:1-4, etc., not only suffers differently from the other, but from a different cause. The latter, as he is repeatedly reminded, suffers for his sins; in the case of the former, no one but his blind and cruel enemies attribute his misfortunes to the wrath of an offended God, and they, in the end, are so impressed by his character and conduct that they are obliged to repudiate a hitherto unquestioned doctrine and seek a new explanation of his sufferings.

Being what he is and having "a conscience void of offence" toward God as well as toward man, this Servant meets his sufferings in a spirit different from that which characterized the other. The latter, it will be remembered, is repeatedly represented as sadly lacking in faith and courage. Not so the nameless one. Only once does he seem to give place to discouragement, and then he makes the mention of the postponement of his success an occasion for asserting his confidence in Yahweh. See 49:4. He finally defies his adversaries (50:8 f.) and goes to his death without a struggle or a murmur. See 53:7.

In 42:1-4, etc., also, Yahweh has his purposes, but the execution of them is not to be so spectacular as in the case of the things promised to the Servant Israel. There are two of these purposes which are of major importance. That which is the more exigent concerns his own people. It is first stated in 49:5, where the text and the translation are both somewhat uncertain, but the most natural rendering is.

"To bring Jacob back to him,
and that Israel be not destroyed."*

* This rendering requires no change in the text, as does that of the English Version.

It is favored by v. 6, where the same purpose is repeated in the words,

"To raise up the tribes of Jacob,
and to restore the preserved of Israel";

for one who could speak of his people as "the preserved," that is, the remnant, "of Israel," may well have thought of them as threatened with destruction. When these two versions are combined it appears that Yahweh's first care is to "bring back," or restore "to him," not Judah only, but all the "tribes of Jacob," and "raise" them "up," that is, reestablish them in their land.

The same purpose seems to be referred to in 42:6 and 49:8, where, according to the English Version, Yahweh says, "I will keep (preserve) thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people." There is another possible rendering for the final phrase, namely, "a covenant people." This, to be sure, makes the Servant mean Israel, but that is no objection, since, as has been explained, 42:5-7 is an editorial addition, the object of which was to combine two views of the person and function of the Servant, and 49:8, in part, was borrowed from it for a similar context.

Yahweh's second great purpose is to enlighten the nations "to the end of the earth." What is meant by this figurative expression may be learned from 42:1-4. The light with which he purposes to illumine the world is the knowledge of justice, a fundamental attribute of the divine nature (Ps. 97:2), the lack of which has always been one of the most serious defects of the oriental character.

The God of the Servant Israel, having determined to restore his people, avails himself of the military prowess of Cyrus in the prosecution of his design, never, however, allowing the king to forget that he is merely the instrument of a higher power. See 45:1 ff. In 42:1-4, etc., also, Yahweh has his instrument, and, singularly enough, as has already incidentally appeared, this instrument is his Servant; that is to say, the sufferer is chosen to help those who are the authors of his suffering. The means by which he is commissioned to assist in the reestablishment of Israel and the enlightenment of the nations is pretty clearly indicated. Thus, from 42:1 it appears that he is endowed with the spirit of Yahweh; from 49:2 that his mouth is like a sharp sword; from 50:4 that he has the tongue of the learned; and

from 42:4 that what he has to offer is instruction in justice: all of which means that he is either a prophet or a scribe, or a guild, consisting of persons of the one or the other calling. The former is supported by 50:10, where those in trouble are exhorted to obey the voice of the Servant, but, of course, this verse has the value only of an editorial opinion. More important is 49:6, the last clause of which, however, should be rendered, as in the margin of the Revised English Version, "that my salvation may be to the end of the earth." In either case the Servant is not so much a witness to the deeds of Yahweh as an interpreter in that which he is and wills.

It remains to consider the results of the unnamed Servant's mission compared with the restoration of Jerusalem and Palestine and the relations of the reconstructed community with other peoples, as pictured in chs. 54 ff. In 42:4 Yahweh declares that the Servant will establish justice in the earth, the nations eagerly receiving his instruction. His success is also implied in 52:13 ff., where the exaltation of the agent must be regarded as the reward for the accomplishment of his mission. Both, however, are yet future. The same must be true of ch. 53. The Servant, whether he represents one or many, seems to have a certain reality in a person or persons with whose character and experience the author of the chapter was acquainted. He undertakes to picture the further career of his ideal. He first puts the story into the mouths of the Servant's future contemporaries, who ignored when they were not persecuting him; makes them describe the contempt and aversion, the abhorrence, with which they regarded him, and the cruelty with which they harassed him and finally compassed his death, only to find that they had murdered an innocent man and their most devoted benefactor. Then the author takes up the theme, and, after paying tribute to the virtues of the Servant, foretells the vindication of his character, the triumph of the cause of Yahweh through his unselfish devotion, and his startling exaltation, already promised in 52:13 ff.

The bearing of ch. 53 on the point in question deserves a little further attention. Its testimony, as above stated, is to the effect that the cause of Yahweh will triumph. This seems to be the meaning, if the text is correct (for critical suggestions, see Duhm, Marti, etc.), of the clause in v. 10 translated, "the pleasure of Yahweh shall prosper in his hands," which can only

refer to the joint purpose of Yahweh, that Israel be established and the knowledge of Yahweh, and his power to help and save, be published to the end of the earth. (See 49: 6, RV, margin.) Note, however, that the accomplishment of this purpose has no prominence in this chapter. On the other hand, while the proper work of the Servant, as the agent of Yahweh, is thus only incidentally mentioned, the Servant himself, with his really incidental suffering, the new interpretation of it, and the reward of his self-sacrifice, occupy the entire foreground. This fact is significant. In the first place, it adds another to the points already made, indicating that the Servant of this chapter is not the one identified with Israel, and that, for this and other reasons, the sections to which it belongs are from another hand than that of the author or authors of the rest of 40-55. It also seems to have a bearing on the identity of the nameless Servant, and for this reason: The description of the reward in store for him reminds one of Dn. 12: 1-3; that is to say, it is an appeal, and since so public an appeal would hardly be addressed to a single, according to Duhn historical, individual, and since, as has been shown, he is not Israel in its entirety, he must be some part of the people who are suffering, and whom the author, like the author of Dn. 12: 1-3, hoped to encourage to endure their ills, until their God should intervene, for the sake of their religion. Finally, from the nature of the suffering depicted, one seems warranted in inferring that it was inflicted, not by foreign oppressors, but by some hostile party among the Jews themselves after the Restoration. That, during this period, the godly sometimes suffered even unto death is evident from 57: 1 f., where the author laments the fate of these martyrs:

“The righteous perisheth, and no man
 taketh it to heart:
 The pious are taken away,
 none giving heed:
 For through evil is the righteous taken away,
 he entereth into peace;
 They rest on their couches,
 whoever walked straightforwardly.”

He of the Servant Songs, with keener vision, saw in them, and their like, heirs to the mission which his people as a whole had proved unable to fulfil.