

STUDIES IN OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY

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THE SERVANT OF THE LORD IN DEUTERO-ISAIAH

(a) THE SO-CALLED SERVANT SONGS

IN 1875 Duhm published his *Die Theologie der Propheten*, in which he isolated four pieces in Isa. xl.-lv., and called them the four 'Ebed-Jahve-Lieder, the Servant Songs. These four pieces are xlii. 1-4, xlix. 1-6, l. 4-9, lii. 13-14. 12. Some few scholars have argued against their segregation from the main body of the prophecy, notably Marti (1900), Giesebrecht (1902), Budde (1922) and Roman Catholic scholars generally. The great majority, however, have followed Duhm, to such an extent that the existence of the four Servant Songs has come to be regarded as one of the firm results of modern O.T. study.

Modern developments in the study of the prophets have, nevertheless, in our judgement, rendered Duhm's position much less secure than is generally recognized. The most recent view is that there is no "main body of the prophecy" in anything like the sense in which it was once the custom to use the phrase. We have learned to think of the prophetic books as "collections of independent and usually short oracles, poems and the like."¹ As we have pointed out elsewhere,² the conception of four distinct Servant Songs depended largely on the assumption that there was a main body of prophecy out of which they could be extracted. Both ideas stand or fall together. In Isa. xl.-lv. we have "a great number of separate pieces,³ in some of which there are references to the Servant, but with four of them at the end of the scale, similar enough in substance for Duhm to be led to notice them particularly and to isolate them from the rest."⁴ It is therefore not surprising that there has been considerable discussion as to

¹ O. Eissfeldt, "The Literature of Israel: Modern Criticism," in *Record and Revelation* (ed. H. Wheeler Robinson, 1938), p. 94. See also T. H. Robinson, "After Fifty Years: IV. Higher Criticism and the Prophetic Literature," in *E.T.*, 1 (1938-39), p. 200 f.

² "The So-called Servant Songs" in *E.T.*, lvi (1944-45), pp. 79-81.

³ These pieces have been worked out in detail by S. Mowinckel, "Die Komposition des deuterocesajanischen Buches," in *Z.A.W.* (1931), pp. 87-112, 242-60, and by W. Caspari, *Lieder und Gottessprüche der Rückwanderer (Jes 40-55)* (1934).

⁴ *E.T.*, lvi, p. 80.

the exact limits of these so-called Servant Songs, and that other pieces within the sixteen chapters have been proposed as additions to them. We can see now why these discussions arose. There are no four pieces which can be separated so markedly from the rest. It is wrong, therefore, to assume *a priori* that the Servant of the four pieces, either of all four or of any one of them, is different from the Servant of any of the other pieces which form the sixteen chapters. The presumption is that the prophet had substantially the same idea in all the forty-odd pieces. A difference in the identity of the Servant can be suggested only if and when the contents of any one separate and particular piece clearly demand it.

(b) THE RIGHTEOUS REMNANT

The prophets made two distinctive contributions to the development of the religion of Israel. The first is that sin merits and inevitably receives a full penalty. The second, even more important, is that this is far from being the whole of the story.

The prophets indeed were very firm in their condemnation of sin wherever it was to be found, whether amongst the mighty or amongst the humble and ordinary. Their conception of sin, however, was not a transgression of a code, but rather rebellion against a Person, and that Person Jehovah Himself. This most important point is obscured in our English Versions by the translation "transgression" for רִשְׁעָא , whereas it ought beyond question to be "rebellion." The importance of this lies in the fact that it brought the whole matter out of the realm of theoretical jurisprudence into the realm of personal relationships. This makes all the difference when the results of sin are considered. So long as sin is thought of in an abstract, theoretical, impersonal way, the predominant thought is that of strict justice with retribution accurately weighed and precisely apportioned. Justice is the woman who is blindfolded, scales in one hand and sword in the other, dealing with all offenders in an objective, impersonal way. When the bandage is removed from the eyes, the offenders are seen to be persons who must be rehabilitated into the community rather than objects on whom the proper punishment must be laid. Dealing with sinners is a different matter from dealing with sins, especially when the sinners are connected by ties of kinship and love with those whose duty it is to condemn.

This is what the prophets found. They were much more

sure of the inevitable consequences of sin when they were considering the sin of peoples other than their own. Amos, a Southerner from Tekoa, is fully convinced of the irrevocable doom of the Northern Kingdom. He comes to the conclusion, let us hope not too easily, that there is now no difference in the sight of God between Ephraim and the Ethiopians (ix. 7). Hosea, on the other hand, has great hope of Israel's ultimate restoration, though not without great searching of heart and anguish of soul. He is no whit less sure than Amos of the seriousness of Israel's sin, and no whit less sure that a dreadful retribution must follow. But he himself knew that he could never let his erring wife go, and that his love for Gomer-bath-Diblain must at last find a way of restoring her. From this personal experience of his he realized, himself an Israelite, that Jehovah's sure covenant-love for Israel must at last bring erring Israel back to Him. Discipline there must be, and punishment, but never the final extinction of love.

In the case of Isaiah of Jerusalem, we find both factors at work. He is sure of the final and complete destruction of Israel-Ephraim, but in the case of his own people of the South, he halts between two opinions. There are times when he speaks of Jerusalem and Judah in terms that admit of no relief whatever from a dreadful doom (e.g., ch. v.), but he calls his son Shear-jashub, a remnant shall turn back to God, repent (vii. 3), and in the time of ultimate crisis he is confident that Jerusalem will escape (xxxvii. 6 f.). Here we find clearly stated the doctrine of the Remnant. It arose out of human love and sympathies. It is not so much a doctrine of the head as of the heart. When we come into the realm of personal relationship, then it is that we know that, as Rashi said in his comment on Gen. i. 1, God "gave precedence to the rule of Mercy, and joined with it the rule of Justice." After all, God is no abstract concept, but a living Person. He is no impassible Absolute, but "a just God and a Saviour."

By the time we come to Jeremiah, the situation is that the prophet finds himself perforce condemning his own people, though still tender towards exiled Israel of the North, for he himself was a descendant of the House of Eli, the hereditary priests of the Ark. But Jeremiah cannot find it in his heart to condemn all the people of the south. He is sure of the survival of a faithful remnant. This remnant is the young king Jehoiachin and those

who were carried into captivity with him in 597 B.C. He thus divides Judah into two distinct sections. Those who went to Babylon with Jeconiah (Jehoiachin) are "very good figs, like figs that are first ripe," whilst those who were left in Jerusalem were "very bad figs, which could not be eaten they were so bad," xxiv. 2. The good figs are taken to Babylon "for good," "and they shall be my people, and I will be their God; for they shall return to me with their whole heart," xxiv. 5-7. The others, Zedekiah and "the residue," shall be "consumed from off the land that I gave to them and to their fathers," xxiv. 10.

We get the same differentiation in Ezekiel. The ones who "shall be my people, and I will be their God" (xi. 20) are those who were carried captive in 597 B.C. It is to these that God will give a new heart and put within them a new spirit, xi. 19. On the other hand, those who were left in Jerusalem are full of wickedness and every kind of idolatry, xi. 21; viii. Complete destruction is to be their portion, for they are "a rebellious house," ii. 6; v. 1-4, etc. etc. The restoration is for those who are far away in Babylon (xxxvii.), and on them alone will the blessings of the future fall. There is a tender one who will be cropped off from the topmost twigs of the cedar tree. It will be planted once more in the mountain of the height of Israel, and be a goodly cedar in whose shadow "shall dwell all fowl of every wing," xvii. 22 f.

To both Jeremiah and Ezekiel, then, there is a Righteous Remnant, and it consists of Jehoiachin and the exiles of 597 B.C. This explains why it is that the editor of the Books of Kings concludes with the particular happy ending which is found in 2 Kings xxv. 27-30. He concludes his long history of the people of God with the exaltation in exile of Jehoiachin, now no longer young, and with the setting of "his throne above the throne of the kings that were with him in Babylon." Here we get a semi-release from exile, and an exaltation, if not over the king of Babylon, at least over all the other kings of the heathen.

The Righteous Remnant, therefore, according to biblical tradition is, in the first degree, Jehoiachin and his fellow exiles of 597 B.C. But the tendency is to widen this group so as to include all the Babylonian exiles, i.e., to include those also who were exiled in 586 B.C. This tendency is found in Jeremiah (e.g., xxx., xxxi.) and also in Ezekiel (e.g., xxxvii. and in what appears to be an early addition in v. 3 f.). When we turn to Ezra-

Nehemiah we find that all those who were carried away by Nebuchadrezzar (Ezr. ii. 1) are included. The rigorous exclusion of "the people of the land" by Nehemiah and by Ezra had good biblical warrant. They follow the statements of Jeremiah, Ezekiel and the teaching which produced 2 Kings xxv. 27-30 as a happy ending. This is why they are careful to give full lists and genealogies of those who returned from Babylon. These alone are the people of God. The "adversaries of Judah and Benjamin" had their offer of help refused by "the children of the captivity" (Ezra iv. 1). This attitude is maintained throughout Ezra-Nehemiah, and it is to be seen in some elements in Isa. lvi.-lxvi.

Our contention is that the Servant of the Lord in Isa. xl.-lv. fits exactly into this orthodox setting, that Deutero-Isaiah is true to his predecessors Jeremiah and Ezekiel, and in turn is followed faithfully by his post-exilic successors who returned to Jerusalem. The Servant of the Lord in Deutero-Isaiah is in the first place Jehoiachin and the exiles of 597 B.C., but there is the same tendency as in Jeremiah and Ezekiel to shade off into the whole of the exiles, i.e., to include also those who were exiled in 586 B.C. This tendency explains why the Servant is always in exile, is sometimes distinguished from the exile as a whole (the "we") and yet at other times seems to be identified with them all. The prophet naturally finds it difficult to maintain the distinction, especially since it really was already a generation old, so that in his early post-exilic successors the distinction has altogether gone, and all who return are the people of God.

Further, we find also this prophet to be essentially nationalistic in attitude. He is actually responsible for the narrow and exclusive attitude of post-exilic days. The so-called Universalism of Deutero-Isaiah needs considerable qualification. Not a little of it seems to be due to a mistranslation in our English Versions at xlix. 6, in the phrase "a light to the Gentiles." The Hebrew is *אוֹר לְגוֹיִם*, which means "a light of (the) Gentiles," this being the translation of the phrase at xlii. 6. The meaning is not the same, as we shall see below. The whole prophecy is concerned with the restoration and exaltation of Jacob-Israel, the Servant of the Lord, the Righteous Remnant, and any place which the heathen have in the new order is entirely and debasingly subservient. We have not the space to discuss this thesis in relation to the many previous discussions of the subject, and must be

content to illustrate it from the pieces which make up the sixteen chapters of the prophecies of Deutero-Isaiah.

(c) NOTES ON ISA. XL.-LV.

xl. 1-2. We follow the Septuagint (first hand of Sinaiticus) and Vulgate in taking עַמִּי (my people) to be a vocative. It is "my people" who are to comfort Jerusalem. Her long travail is over, the punishment for her iniquity is accepted, and she has received quittance for her sins. The root נָחַם means comfort out of sorrow, not consolation in the midst of continuing sorrow.⁵ It is important also not to say that Zion-Jerusalem is "an ideal representation of the people." Zion-Jerusalem throughout is the city itself, left desolate and bereaved of the people of God, the city that suffered the loss of her children, solitary and alone. "My people." are the exiles, with whose imminent return the prophet is almost exclusively concerned.

xl. 27-31. Jacob-Israel, away in exile, is weary and out of heart, conscious only of weakness and ineptitude. Ezekiel had proclaimed that God would bring to new and vigorous life even the dry and dead bones of Israel ("our hope is lost; we are clean cut off," xxxvii. 11). So here the prophet says that though human strength fails (even lusty youths shall faint for weariness), yet those who rely on God shall exchange (יְהַלִּיפוּ) strength. The word "their" is an unwarranted intrusion into the English Versions and entirely misleads the English reader. Instead of human strength, they will receive the strength of God. They will grow eagles' wings, and then they will run and walk without faintness or weariness.

xli. 1-5. It is customary here to see a reference to Cyrus and his victorious march. This is largely under the influence of *xlv.* 1-4, and the assumption that everything outside Duhm's four pieces is a unity. There is no need to assume any reference to Cyrus. The "one from the east" who is raised up by Jehovah is exiled Israel, returning as conqueror. Nations are to be given to him, and God will make him to rule over kings, cf. *Isa.* liii. 12; *xlix.* 23.

xli. 8-13. Here Jacob-Israel is the Servant whom God has chosen, cf. *Jer.* xxx. 10 f. In *Isa.* xli. 9: "Thou art my servant, I have chosen thee and not cast thee away," we have a deliberate rebuttal of the idea that exile meant rejection for the exiles as

⁵ "The Meaning of 'the Paraclete,'" in *E.T.*, lvii (1945-46), p. 48 f.

the people of His choice. It is a defence of the exiles similar to that made by Ezekiel in xi. 14-16, and similar also to the diffidence which lies behind the "blindness" of exiled Israel in Isa. xlii. 18-25. Once again in this piece (xli. 11 f.) Israel is the conqueror who will overcome all that strive against him.

xli. 25-29. Here again there is no need to assume a reference to Cyrus, for it is Jacob-Israel who is the conqueror. In xlv. 4 the statement says of Cyrus that "I have called thee by thy name." Here the one that is raised up from the north-east is "one that calleth upon my name." There is a great difference between the two statements, especially since in the piece which is clearly concerned with Cyrus it is said that he never knew God (xlv. 4). Further, the "behold, behold them" (if the reading is sound) shows that the one who is raised up to come from the north and east (the direction of Babylon from Palestine according to route and direction) is a company of people whose approach the herald (xli. 29; xl. 9-11) is to proclaim.

xlii. 1-4. This is the first of Duhm's Servant Songs. It opens with two words "my-servant" and "my-chosen," cf. xli. 8, where the identification Israel-Jacob is made, as here also in the Septuagint. This piece tells of the Servant on whom the spirit of the Lord will be put. We find the same quiet submission as in other pieces, but a change with respect to the future. He will dispense justice to the Gentiles. It is customary to assume a special meaning here for דִּין, analogous to the Arabic *din*, which means both a system of customs and true religion. This interpretation depends upon the acceptance of a Deutero-Isaianic universalism, but if he is seen to be an essentially nationalistic prophet, then the word means the execution of justice, מִשְׁפָּט דִּין (true justice) as the piece itself says, almost in the sense of strict retribution, perhaps even a Carthaginian Peace. The Servant is the wick, now dimly burning, but he will not burn dimly (v. 4, EVV. "fail," but see R.V. margin. The root is *k-h-h*, as in the phrase "smoking (dimly burning) flax") till he has established justice in the earth, cf. Isa xxviii. 17; Exod. xv. 25. Similarly he is the "bruised reed" (v. 3), but he will not be bruised henceforth till he establishes justice in the earth. Further, it is by no means essential that the root יָה should be translated "hope." It is true that most often in Hebrew the root means "wait expectantly" rather than "wait with dread," but the meaning "hope" tends to be late. The Syriac root

means "grow weak" and in the Aphel "despair." * We, therefore, translate "wait" with the inference "in dread."

xlii. 6-9. The Lord has called "in righteousness" (cf. *xli.* 2) one who is given "as a covenant of (the) people." It is legitimate to insert the definite article, since it is a characteristic of the prophet's style to omit it, most of the cases where it is now found in the Massoretic Text being instances where a vowel only is required (e.g., with the inseparable prepositions). The same phrase is found at *xlix.* 8, where it is clear that the Servant's mission is limited to his own people. This is in accordance with the general usage whereby עַם (singular) means "the people Israel," and גוֹי (sing. or plur.) means "the Gentiles." If the phrase אֹר נְרִים (light of Gentiles) were not found here, then the phrase "covenant of the people" would be seen to have reference to Israel alone. It would therefore involve the recognition of the Servant in the narrower interpretation of the term, as the means by which exiled Israel might be restored to Zion-Jerusalem. Verse 7 refers to release from exile under the figures of opening blind eyes and prisoners being released from dungeons and the darkness (hence the figure of blindness) of prison-houses. This is confirmed by the first hand of Codex Sinaiticus, which reads עַמִּי (my people). The intervening phrase אֹר נְרִים is not found in LXX (Codd. A, B). It is therefore suspect, and may be a gloss from *xlix.* 6, where we interpret it to mean "a Gentile light," i.e., a world-wide light. In both this piece and in *xlix.* 8-12, the Servant is not the whole of exiled Israel.

xlii. 10-17. Like all "new songs" this is a song of deliverance. In *v.* 16 the "blind" are the exiles, brought out of darkness (cf. *xlii.* 7). They are to be brought back by a way and in paths "that they know not." Compare the same idea in *xli.* 3, where the phrase "even by a way he used not to go with his feet" is found. This phrase is, with the parallel in mind, not so much of a difficulty as when *xli.* 1-5 is interpreted of Cyrus.

xlii. 18-25. In this piece we have the beginning of the unfolding of the mystery of the servant's suffering. Much confusion has been caused in interpretation by the assumption that the word "blind" has the same meaning here as in *v.* 16. The two verses are in distinct pieces. In the first piece "the blind"

* Cf. *Bar Hebræus*, ed. Bruns and Kirsch. p. 403. אֲנִי וְאֵלֵינוּ "and they despaired of help."

are the exiles, but here they are those who do not understand the real significance of the exile experiences. The word עִוְר (blind) has been the link word of the two pieces; there is no other immediate connexion. The blindness of the Servant in this piece consists (*v.* 20) in the fact that in spite of all he has seen and heard, he is still blind and deaf to the true meaning of it all. Everything has happened to make God's law great and glorious. It has all been "for His righteousness' sake." But how can that be? Here is a people robbed and spoiled, imprisoned, captive, exiled. Surely these are the rejected ones. The answer is that God Himself gave Jacob-Israel for a spoil to the robbers, and He well knew what He was doing. Duhm and Cheyne objected to the whole answer as an interpolation. We would excise the phrases "and they would not walk in his ways, and did not hearken to his law" (*v.* 24). Both are good Deuteronomic phrases and neither is Deutero-Isaianic. The change of persons is also eliminated, and we are left with the statement that "we" have sinned, and the Lord poured His wrath upon the Servant, i.e., the (innocent) servant suffered for the sins of the rest. The prophet is speaking as one of the general body of the people as in *liii.* 4-6. Jacob-Israel (the Servant) never realized this, and did not understand its significance.

xliii. 1-7. This piece tells of God's saving work on behalf of exiled Jacob-Israel. He will give other peoples in exchange for them. There is no universalism here. The prophet's interest is in the redemption of exiled Israel, and in Israel's exaltation at the head of the Gentiles.

xliii. 8-13. The Servant is identified with the witnesses, the blind and deaf exiles who now have eyes and ears, those who are to be the Lord's instrument in the confounding of the heathen.

xliii. 14-21. God once rejected Ephraim and chose Judah. So now he has rejected Judah and has chosen the Servant, i.e., the Jacob-Israel in exile; cf. *vv.* 20 f.: "my people, my chosen: the people which I have formed for myself, that they might set forth my praise."

xliii. 22-28. We take this piece to be the charge against the pre-exilic Jacob-Israel, who did not call upon God and was weary of Him. The pronoun אֲנִי is emphatic because of its position. We therefore regard the piece as a statement that the pre-exilic people did sacrifice, but not to Jehovah. Skinner,⁷ for instance,

⁷ *Isaiah* (Camb. Bible), ii, p. 48.

rejects this on the ground that such an antithesis is foreign to the context, but if these are all short pieces, then there is no previous context, and this is the first line in a new piece. The "yet" of R.V. is due to the assumption that the chapter is all of one piece and that there is a close connexion between *vv.* 21 and 22. This is not the case. The difficult *v.* 23b can now mean that though Israel was enslaved by offerings and wearied with incense, yet it was not Jehovah who was the cause of this. The end of *v.* 24 is a condemnation of the people for their sins. Then, as always in Deutero-Isaiah, the charge of sin is immediately followed by the declaration of forgiveness. The last two verses (reading a strong-*vav*) tell how God destroyed the sacred princes and reduced Jacob-Israel to destruction and great reproach.

xliv. 1-5. The old Jacob-Israel of the previous piece has been rejected, but now a new people of God has been created, "Jacob my servant," "Israel-Jeshurun whom I have chosen." This one and that one shall now be called by the name of the people of God, chosen and called by Him now.

xliv. 21, 22. Here Jacob-Israel, newly formed to be the Servant of the Lord, is identified with the wider group of exiles, i.e., the group which elsewhere are the "we" which have sinned, *liii.* 4-6; *xlii.* 24.

xlv. 11-13. It is not necessary to assume that Cyrus is intended here. Once again we hold that the one who is raised up in righteousness is the victorious Servant, the new Jacob-Israel (*xli.* 1-3, 25-27), the "my sons" of *xlvi.* 11 of whom the Lord bids this question be asked. It is the returning Jacob-Israel who will have his paths made straight, as in the piece *xl.* 3-7. It is the Servant who will build the city, as indeed they ultimately do, *Neh.* *iii.* It is the Servant in the narrower sense, because of his patient endurance of undeserved suffering who causes the exiles to be set free (the form of the verb is causal, not permissive). The assumption that Cyrus is to build the Temple comes in part from *xliv.* 28, because of the way in which לֵאמֹר (*saying*) there follows the reference to Cyrus. But Septuagint and Vulgate have קִיָּיִם (that saith) as at the beginning of the verse.

xlvi. 18-25. Verses 22 and 23 are usually taken to be firm evidence of the prophet's universalism, but they can be so interpreted only if they are taken out of their context in this piece. The call is to those "that are escaped of the nations," and the conclusion of the piece is that "in the Lord shall all the seed of

Israel be justified (צדקתו come to be in the right, become prosperous, victorious, be vindicated) and shall boast themselves." We understand this last phrase to refer to the proud, perhaps arrogant, boasting of a conquering Israel, and *v.* 23 to refer to the humble subservience of the heathen, cf. *xlix.* 23. Verse 22 refers to all the scattered Israelites amongst the heathen everywhere, cf. *xlix.* 6; *xliii.* 5, 6.

xlvi. 3-7. This is the piece in which the change-over is clearest from the narrower idea of the Servant to the wider view which would include the exiles of 586 B.C. also: "O house of Jacob and all the remnant of the house of Jacob."

xlviii. 1-11. This piece is directed to "the house of Jacob that call themselves by the name Israel and have come forth out of (Hebrew has "the waters of"; Septuagint omits, and Targum has "the seed of") Judah." They call themselves "of the holy city," and "brace themselves on the God of Israel," but it is all false and without justification. The prophet declares that God now has created something new, not known before, but they have neither heard nor understood. This was only to be expected, because they were bound to deal treacherously, being rebels from the womb. These eight verses are most naturally to be taken to refer to those who were left behind in Jerusalem after the first deportation, who claimed, as we have seen (see note on *xli.* 8-13 and its reference to *Ezek.* xi. 14-16), to be the true people of God. The last three verses of this piece (9-11) say that because of His Name's sake, God will not wholly cast even these off, but will refine them in the furnace of affliction; i.e., some of them will come to belong to the new Jacob-Israel, the righteous Remnant already in Babylon.

xlviii. 12-19. Mowinckel regards these verses as one piece, but, in our judgement, they consist of a number of very short pieces. The rhythm is continually changing, and the pronouns vary throughout. The first piece is *vv.* 12-13, and next *vv.* 14-15. In this latter piece the prophet utters his surprising ("who among them (or 'you') has announced these things?") announcement, which is that "the Lord loved Him (Jacob-Israel). He (i.e., God) will accomplish His purpose on Babylon, and (Hebrew has 'his arm,' but Septuagint has 'on the seed of') on the Chaldæans." Verse 15 is again separate. God proclaims "I, even I, have spoken; yea I have called him (Jacob-Israel), and I have brought him (out of Babylon), and I (after Septuagint,

Targum and Syriac) will prosper his way." Verse 16 is a short mutilated fragment, unless 16b is also another mutilated piece. Two other pieces remain, *v.* 17 and *vv.* 18-19, though it is doubtful whether this last piece is Deutero-Isaianic at all.

xlvi. 20-21. The Lord has redeemed his servant Jacob from Babylon. Here the Servant includes all those that returned. Verse 22 is a pious addition.

xlix. 1-6. The second of Duhm's Servant Songs. The Servant declares his mission to the heathen. He is a secret weapon, efficient and sharp. In *v.* 3 the identification is made with Israel. All who hold to an individualist interpretation excise the word "Israel," allegedly on metrical grounds. Its presence is certainly fatal to any individualistic theory. We find no grounds for its omission. The fact that one or two adherents to the "collective" interpretation would omit the word is neither here nor there. Textually the omission is supported by one Hebrew MS., cod. 96 in Kennicott's list, a MS. "with very many variations" (*plurimas habet variationes*) as Kennicott describes it. The metrical evidence is weak in the extreme, since the number of beats in the last half of the lines of this piece is decidedly irregular (3:4; 3; 2; and 3, if the word is retained). And further, if *v.* 4 is to be retained within the rhythmical scheme, with its four two-stresses, then on what grounds is any change to be made in *v.* 3? To continue: the Servant complains of his fate. He is wearied, exhausted, and all for nothing, but he still is confident that he can leave his vindication to God. The answer comes. God formed the Servant to bring back Jacob-Israel. The two names are synonymous in Deutero-Isaiah. He does not use Jacob for the south and Israel for the north. Follow therefore the *Qre* and read יָב with a *vav*, and not with an *aleph*. This is the honourable calling of the (despised) servant, and it is in God's strength that he will accomplish it. But it is far too small a thing to bring back only all the Babylonian exiles (the tribes of Jacob and the preserved of Israel). The servant's mission is to be "a light of Gentiles," i.e., a light throughout all the Gentile lands "that my salvation may be to the end of the earth," i.e., my salvation of Israel, since this is the only salvation in which the prophet is interested. The Servant will be a light to guide every Israelite wanderer home. His mission is to gather in all exiles wherever they may be scattered.

xlix. 7-13. The Lord speaks to the Servant, "to him that

despised life (self), abhorred of the heathen, slave of rulers," i.e., despondent, defeated, exiled and captive Jacob-Israel. The tables will be turned. He will re-establish the homeland. Kings and princes will stand in honour and bow down in obeisance. All the scattered sons of Israel will return—from far, from the north and from the west, from the land of Sinim (? Syene, Assouan).

xliv. 14-21. Desolate Zion is astonished at the number of her new children. She had been bereaved, and "solitary" (נְלוּמָה means without husband and so without any chance of bearing children). The two words which make Zion herself an exile, namely נִלָּה and טוּרָה, are not in the Septuagint and are evidently out of rhythm with the rest.

xliv. 22-23. Here especially we have the complete abasement of the heathen before Israel. Gentile kings and queens shall be their nurses to carry them home, and shall lick the dust off their feet. Read אִיִּים (islands, i.e., the heathen) in *v.* 22 with LXX for עַמִּים.

l. 4-9. The third of Duhm's Servant Songs. The Servant proclaims his innocence. He was never rebellious against God, nor did he turn away backward from Him. He submitted to dishonour, but he knows that God will vindicate him soon.

l. 10. A general call to all the exiles to listen to the servant. Verse 11 is generally recognized to be an addition.

li. 4-6. It is best to read עַמִּים (peoples) and לְאֻמִּים (nations) in 4a after the Syriac. The passage tells of the judgement which God is about to bring upon the heathen. They will wait for Him and His strength (lit. "arm"), but with dread rather than in hope and trust.

li. 12-16. When the exiles have been freed and the restoration in the new age is accomplished, then God will be able to say to Zion, no longer desolate, "Thou art my people."

lii. 13-14. The Servant shall prosper and be highly exalted. He shall cause many nations to leap up (i.e., to their feet, suddenly and astonished to leap to their feet in respect, Job xxix. 8) and kings shall refrain from talking (cf. Job xxix. 9, "refrained talking, and laid their hand on their mouth") in subservient homage.

liii. 1-13. A new piece begins here, with the root שָׁמַע as the link-word. Israel now is speaking. "We" reckoned nothing of the Servant. He was uncomely, despised, ceased from amongst men; knowing sickness and sorrow—all of which we take to be descriptive of the exile and its shame and sorrow. But now we

see that it was our griefs and sorrows he was bearing. "We" were the guilty ones, not he. All "we" have gone astray, every one his own way (i.e., rebels from God), and the Lord laid on him the results of the iniquity of us all. And so he was led away, unresistingly, a helpless victim, taken away by coercion and harsh judgement, vanished from his dwelling place, smitten for the rebellion of my people, cut off from the land of the living, buried amongst rich oppressors and all the time guiltless and without a word of deceit. (Death and burial are a figure for the exile, cf. Ezek. xxxvii.) But all this bruising and affliction of the Servant was the Lord's will. If (v. 10) you realize that he (שָׂמַח with suffix is frequent in Deutero-Isaiah for the pronoun) is an אֲשֶׁר (the rendering "guilt-offering" is a post-exilic ritual meaning. In pre-exilic times the word means "compensation, quit-tance, substitution"), i.e., that his bearing of the punishment sets you free, then the Servant will multiply, live long, and the Lord's will will prosper in his keeping. God will see the Servant's travail and will be satisfied by his knowledge.⁸ My servant, the righteous one (unless this is a dittography, three MSS. omit it—126, 355, 490 in Kennicott's list, all reasonably good), will make the many prosperous, for their punishments he is bearing. Therefore (the ultimate destiny of the Servant, for which the prophet longs and prays) will I (God) divide him a portion with the many, and with the strong he shall divide spoil . . . , i.e., the Servant will prosper and become one of the great ones of the earth.

The remainder of the pieces in the sixteen chapters are full of exultation and joy. The destiny is fulfilled and all nature rejoices.

NORMAN H. SNAITH

⁸ Cf. *The Distinctive Ideas of the Old Testament* (1944), p. 92.