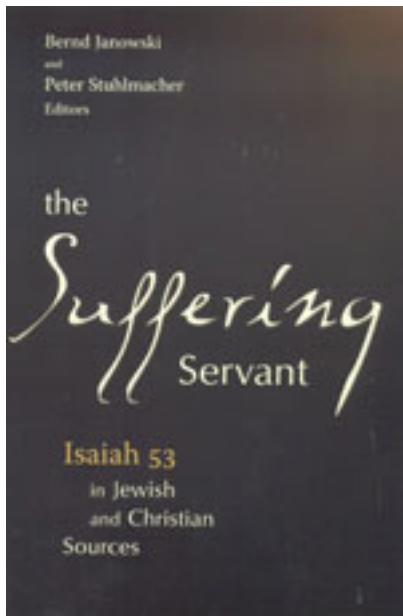


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**Janowski, Bernd, and Peter Stuhlmacher, eds.**

***The Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 in Jewish and Christian Sources***

Translated by Daniel P. Bailey

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William D. Barker

St. Catharine's College, University of Cambridge  
Cambridge CB3 9BA, England

Seven of the essays in this volume are an English translation of papers originally presented at the University of Tübingen graduate and faculty seminar in 1991. The three additional essays were written later and subsequently added to this collection, including one by Daniel P. Bailey that is unique to this English edition.

In "The Conception and Prehistory of the Idea of Vicarious Suffering," Hermann Spieckermann argues against W. Zimmerli's interpretation of the prehistory of Isa 53. Spieckermann alleges that the theology of vicarious suffering is a result of the failure of prophetic suffering, and vicarious suffering was a later tradition (i.e., sixth century), rather than an eighth-century development.

In "The Fourth Servant Song in the Context of Second Isaiah," Hans-Jürgen Hermisson argues that a Prophetic Servant and the Servant Israel must be considered in the interpretation of Isa 53. Hermisson contends that both Servants are inseparably linked in all of the Songs, and in the fourth Song the Prophetic Servant is a substitute, not a representative, for Israel. This Song involves students of the Prophetic Servant speaking about his mission and fate; thus, Isa 53 is not chronological. Most of Hermisson's conclusions are based upon conjectural textual emendations and the phrase "But

Yahweh” in 53:10 as the exegetical key for interpreting the entire passage. Contra Spieckermann, Hermisson alleges that only 53:7 speaks of the “Servant’s own independent behavior” (31). Hermisson notes the pericope is part oracle, part narrative, containing elements of a dirge and a thanksgiving hymn, but unable to be classified completely into any category. Hermisson’s excursus states that the prehistory of Isa 53 is not related to the Babylonian material, as the prehistory is found in Old Testament traditions. Further, Isa 53 was not derived directly from these traditions; rather, they only provide “the means to facilitate an expression that far transcends all that is traditional” (44).

Bernd Janowski’s “He Bore Our Sins: Isaiah 53 and the Drama of Taking Another’s Place” is primarily concerned with Isa 53 and the nature of guilt in relationship to vicarious suffering. The “place-taking” of vicarious suffering contradicts Kantian and circular views of guilt. Janowski argues that the Servant Songs progress chronologically and theologically. The third Song ends with the question: “Has the Servant ... failed in his mission ... Or has he been vindicated in his existence and function?” (56–57). For Janowski, the fourth Song answers this question, as the “reality of place-taking” is found in the Servant’s victory through defeat. Janowski says that various Servants appear within and outside of the Songs; however, Second Isaiah is the Prophetic Servant of the Songs. To arrive at this conclusion, 44:21–22 is read in conjunction with 49:5–6. Along with Spieckermann and Hermisson, Janowski does not equate the Servant of Isa 53 with an animal sacrifice or Lev 16. In contrast to Spieckermann and Hermisson, Janowski argues that 53:10 “is the central statement of the fourth Servant Song” (66). Janowski defines  $\text{דָּוָן}$  from contexts such as Gen 26:10 and 1 Sam 6:3–4 and says that it was after the composition of Isa 53 that the term  $\text{דָּוָן}$  made its way into Lev 4–5; 7. Janowski concludes that, although New Testament interpretations are not inaccurate, Old Testament texts do not derive their original truth from the New Testament.

Collaborating with Daniel Bailey, Martin Hengel provides the fourth essay, “The Effective History of Isaiah 53 in the Pre-Christian Period.” Hengel demonstrates that this text had a widespread influence in the pre-Christian period. However, there was not a unified pre-Christian interpretation of Isa 53. There were collective and individual interpretations of the Servant in the pre-Christian period. The strongest influence on pre-Christian texts was the “motif of exaltation” in Isa 52:13–15 and 53:11. Rarely does the suffering of the Servant appear in other texts; when it does appear for an eschatological messianic Servant, vicarious suffering is only an allusion, if it is present at all. When the exaltation motif is present, the vicarious suffering motif has receded or disappears altogether. Still, “already in the pre-Christian period, traditions about suffering and atoning eschatological figures were available in Palestinian Judaism,” and this explains how Jesus and his disciples could have presupposed that their message of “the vicarious

atonement of the Messiah ... would be understood among their Jewish contemporaries” (146).

Peter Stuhlmacher’s “Isaiah 53 in the Gospels and Acts” argues that the early church did not author the interpretation of Jesus as the Suffering Servant of Isa 53. Rather, Jesus’ own understanding of his mission applied Isa 43:3–4 and 53:11–12 to his life. Further, Jesus considered his suffering “an event in which God’s will was fulfilled” (153). Thus, his own interpretation provided “clear and precise soteriological terms for speaking about Jesus’ death on the cross and his resurrection” (155). As a result of Jesus’ messianic self-understanding, a new interpretation of Isa 53 came into existence. This interpretation defined the Servant collectively (i.e., Jesus as the representative of Israel before God) and individually (i.e., Jesus as a single, historical person who is the Servant).

Otfried Hofius begins “The Fourth Servant Song in the New Testament Letters” by arguing that originally Isa 53 dealt with “exclusive place-taking.” This idea was theologically “unthinkable” because of the existential impossibility of one individual taking on the guilt of another (172). In the New Testament, a divine individual takes the place of the guilty, resulting in atonement and allowing the sinner to become a new creation; Hofius calls this “inclusive place-taking.” Thus, in the New Testament letters, the fourth Servant Song is interpreted in a way that focuses on the atonement of Christ. Hofius’s conclusion is that in the New Testament letters the person and work of Christ are not explained by Isa 53 as much as Isa 53 is explained by the person and work of Christ.

“The Servant of Isaiah 53 as Triumphant and Interceding Messiah: The Reception of Isaiah 52:13–53:12 in the Targum of Isaiah with Special Attention to the Concept of the Messiah” is provided by Jostein Ådna. Ådna states that *Targum Isaiah* was not translated based on variant *Vorlagen*, anti-Christian polemic, or homiletic technique but was a faithful translation. Ådna dates *Tg. Isa. 53* to just before the Bar Kokhba revolt. Ådna believes the targumist was convinced that Isa 53 is about an exalted messiah who does not suffer. Ådna says the targumist’s translation technique was based on changes of voice; as a result, Isa 53 is not chronological but representative of different aspects of the messianic age. Further, the Messiah of chapter 53 unites in himself the functions of various eschatological mediating figures. Thus, the Messiah of *Tg. Isa. 53* is judge of the wicked, ruler of the godly, teacher of the law, builder of the temple, intercessor, and the only “single saving figure” (224) whom the targumist could allow.

In “Jesus Christ as a Man Before God: Two Interpretive Models for Isaiah 53 in the Patristic Literature and Their Development,” Christoph Marksches advocates Isa 53 as an important but not central passage in the patristic corpus. Marksches divides patristic

references to Isa 53 into two groups: the exemplary model and the christological model. The majority of references belong to the latter category. Marksches provides detailed commentary on Justin's *First Apology* and *Dialogue with Trypho* before exploring other patristic texts. He finds that Isa 52–53 was “a central proof text for a suffering Messiah and for the prophetic prediction of his death on the cross” (274). Marksches suggests that the ancient discourse about Jewish and patristic interpretations of Isa 53 can be used as “conversation partners” (320) in current dialogues. Marksches says certain patristic interpretations serve as warnings about mistakes that can be made in the “individual details” of exegesis (319). In the accompanying appendix, Daniel Bailey details variants from the LXX found in the quotation of Isa 53:1–12 in *1 Clem.* 16:3–14.

Daniel P. Bailey's “‘Our Suffering and Crucified Messiah’ (*Dial.* 111.2): Justin Martyr's Allusions to Isaiah 53 in His *Dialogue with Trypho* with Special Reference to the New Edition of M. Marcovich” provides a summary, commentary, critique, and new index for Marcovich's work. Bailey points out that in the *Dialogue* Justin viewed the Servant of Isa 53 almost exclusively as a suffering messiah. Bailey demonstrates that Justin used certain terms to allude to Isa 53. Further, Justin used his understanding of Isa 53 to combat docetic Christology.

Stefan Schreiner begins “Isaiah 53 in the *Sefer Hizzuk Emunah* (“Faith Strengthened”) of Rabbi Isaac ben Abraham of Troki” by noting the diversity of interpretation for Isa 53, not only between Christians and Jews, but also within both religious traditions. Schreiner then turns his attention to Isaac ben Abraham, a Karaite rabbi in mid-1500s Lithuania. This rabbi's *Sefer Hizzuk Emunah* was the result of his dialogues with Unitarians, Russian Orthodox, and Roman Catholics. Its first half consists of refutations of Christian proof texts from the Old Testament, its second half of refutations of the New Testament. The work also provides a summary of fifteen hundred years of Jewish-Christian debate. Chapter 22 of *Sefer Hizzuk Emunah* deals with Isa 53. Although a Karaite, ben Abraham often agreed with and used the Rabbanite tradition. He defined the Servant of Isa 53 as the people of Israel suffering in exile; this is at odds with the Karaite tradition, which “otherwise usually interprets the Servant as applying to the righteous Karaites, the prophets, and occasionally even to the Messiah” (431). Schreiner concludes that ben Abraham and his *Sefer Hizzuk Emunah* still deserve attention, as they were unique and historic. The essay's appendix is a reprinting of the commentaries of Rashi, Ibn Ezra, and David Kimchi on Isa 53.

*The Suffering Servant* is a careful and insightful volume. Daniel Bailey is to be commended for providing a very readable translation of the original German texts and for adding essay summaries and updated bibliographic notes to this volume. Additionally, Bailey updated the classified bibliography of Isa 53 originally compiled by Wolfgang

Hüllstrung and Gerlinde Feine. There are few weaknesses to this collection; however, three minor issues ought to be mentioned. Hermisson's essay relies too heavily on conjectural emendation and the significance of "But Yahweh" in 53:10 for translating and interpreting the fourth Servant Song. Second, despite his commendable work in translating, updating, and enhancing the present volume, Daniel Bailey's own essay might have been more appropriately published as a supplement or an appendix to Marcovich's edition. Finally, it seems there is a disproportionate amount of Christian sources and interpretation in comparison with the attention given to the Jewish sources and interpretation. Especially in light of the title and Schreiner's appendix, one would have hoped for papers devoted specifically to the interpretations of Isa 53 by Rashi, David Kimchi, and Ibn Ezra. The present collection is not demeaned by the absence of such essays, but the lack of such studies in this volume is disappointing. At the same time, there are many strengths to *The Suffering Servant*; in addition to those already noted, both Janowski's and Hengel's essays are detailed analyses that have the added benefit of being well-written. Schreiner's appendix of Jewish sources is helpful in that it provides important commentaries around the single topic of Isa 53 in one convenient location. The entire work can be considered a tribute to Bailey's versatility and skill as a translator, editor, and scholar.