

ASPECTS OF THE SPIRITUAL IMAGE OF DEUTERO-ISAIAH

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I would like to emphasize, at the outset, that my essay is based on the assumption that chapters 40-56 of Isaiah are the work of a single prophet who lived during the Babylonian Exile. The style of this prophet was clearly influenced by that of the royal inscriptions from Assyria, Babylonia and Persia. Moreover, the analysis of the historical background and literary structure of these prophecies indicate that they were spoken in Babylonia during the reign of Cyrus. Nevertheless, we cannot deny the special relationship between this prophet and Isaiah the son of Amoz, as shown by Rachel Margaliot in her book : *Isaiah was One* (Hebrew). This special relationship, while not sufficient evidence for proving the unity of the book, does justify, however, our use of the name 'Deutero-Isaiah', for this great unknown author of the Babylonian Exile was an outstanding disciple of Isaiah.

I would like to clarify two questions which are of utmost importance for

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understanding the uniqueness of Deutero-Isaiah and his position in the history of prophecy : the first question deals with the nature of his prophetic experience, the second with his view of history.

Let us begin with a discussion of the first question: Many scholars, on the basis of Isaiah 40 : 3, "A voice cries : 'In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord,'" and 40:6, "A voice says: 'Cry!' And said, [Septuagint: "and I said"] "What shall I cry?" — claim that Deutero-Isaiah was not privileged in hearing direct speech from God, as did his predecessors, the prophets of the First Temple period; he heard only indefinite, anonymous voices. According to scholars such as Budde¹ and Volz,² he was not a prophet but rather a thinker who disseminated his view in writing. In their view, the book provides clear evidence of a decline in prophetic intuition and spontaneity. Buber, too, claims that Deutero-Isaiah was only a commentator — in essence, Isaiah's disciple and expositor. (Martin Buber, *The Prophetic Faith*, [Hebrew], p. 188). He is a theologian expressing his own ideas on God's involvement in world history (*ibid*, p. 291). Kaufmann justifiably rejects this approach in saying:

"The determining factor is the prophetic form — the expression of those ideas as the word of God. In the prophecies of Deutero-Isaiah, the religious ideas are expressed, not as the result of the speculative cognition of the prophet... but as an intuitive cognition derived from Divine revelation, expressed as the word of God. Even what seems to be an expression of the prophet's thoughts is really the word of God." (Yehezkel Kaufmann, *History of the Religion of Israel*, [Hebrew], vol. 4, p. 81).

Furthermore, I am of the opinion that the prophecies of Deutero-Isaiah contain real evidence of a living dialogue between himself and God which cannot be explained away as a literary device.³

Direct speech between God and man, one of the identifying characteristics of classical prophetic literature, ceased when Ezekiel saw the Divine Glory departing from the Temple Mount. In the vision of the future Temple (chapters 40-48), God no longer speaks to him. In his prophetic trance, he is guided by a man who explains to him his vision of the future temple and its cultic institutions and laws. This weakening of the direct relations between man and God is most striking in the books of Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi who never claim to have heard direct speech from God. Zechariah told of the "angel who talked with me," who guided him in the realm of vision. The void that stretched between heaven and earth was filled, in apocalyptic literature, by a multitude of angels and intermediaries that spoke to man. This led many scholars to argue that Deutero-Isaiah is nothing but a transitional stage between classical prophecy and apocalyptic

1. K. Budde, "Deuterocesaja", in Kautsch, *Handkommentar zum Alten Testament*, vol. 1, pp. 653-720.

2. P. Volz, "Jesaja", *KAT* (1932), p. xxi.

literature, wherein the spontaneity of dialogue vanished, to be replaced by a form of literary expression whose authors disguise their identities, presenting their work under the pseudonym of an ancient prophet, visionary or author.

This historical and theological evaluation is incorrect. The songs of the servant of the Lord testify to a renewal of the living prophetic dialogue. They contain an authentic consecration experience. But here, the reader may be misled by the unique style of literary expression. Therefore we will dwell hereafter upon this problem.

The classification of the nature and extent of the songs of the servant of God depends upon our general literary evaluation of Deutero-Isaiah. I cannot agree with the views of Gressman and his followers, who split the book into smaller literary units, making it a kind of anthology of prophetic utterances, artificially connected by the editor, based on certain *Stichworte* (catchwords), as explained by Mowinckel. As opposed to this atomistic approach, we must emphasize that the use of the *leitwort* or *leitmotif* is the unifying principle of the entire book, connecting one prophecy to another. In addition, the book contains speculative thought; this prophet expressed and developed at relative length certain ideas which could not be expressed through short sayings and aphorisms.

As mentioned earlier, chapters 40-55 are the work of a single prophet living in the Babylonian Exile. I see no sufficient reason for assuming that chapters 56-66 are the work of a second prophet, although there may be some additions at the end of the book. Thus, chapter 61, which is of importance for our question, will be included in our frame of reference when speaking of the songs of the servant.

While it is difficult to ascertain the extent of a particular literary unit in every case, we may, nevertheless define the extent of the first song of the servant as chapter 42:1-9. The view of those scholars who would limit this song to verses 4-7 is untenable. Verses 1-4 are a subsection describing the first prophecy from God, vs. 5-9 are organically tied to it. The second song is included in 49:1-13. Here, this same scholarly tendency would have the song end with verse 4, omitting the end of verse 3, "Israel in whom I will be glorified." But this tendency has no textual basis, resting entirely on the scholar's attempts to interpret the song as referring to an individual.

All agree on the extent of the third and fourth songs: 50: 4-9; 52: 13-53: 12. Following on Segal's work in the field, we may add to this group of songs, 51: 1-11 (or 9) even though the word 'servant' is not mentioned there.

Before taking up the age-old question of the identity of the servant — whether it is a collective or an individual image — I would like to deal with a more basic question: are we presented with the literary image of a great poet or do the songs contain autobiographical references to Deutero-Isaiah himself? In other words: is the servant a literary image, example or metaphor like Mother Zion or the Daughter of Zion, created to serve a specific literary purpose, or is he a symbol, that is, a spontaneous intuitive creation, in which two levels of reality are reflected? I intend to show that the servant is a symbol reflecting certain autobiographical aspects.

The starting point for my claims is the two songs in which the prophet speaks of his consecration and conversation with God without any literary disguise whatsoever; they are 50:4-9 and 51:1ff. In 50:4-9 (or 11) the speaker is, without a doubt, the prophet, who views his inner tension in order to understand the meaning of events, like a student listening attentively to his teacher's every word.

He speaks of his dedication to his mission and his sufferings: "I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard" (v. 6). In language borrowed from Ezekiel, he describes his obedience: "and I did not disobey" — and his unwavering decision: "Therefore I have set my face like a flint." Thus, the prophet speaks of his daily struggle. But in 61: 1ff., he mentions his consecration, and the general orientation of his mission: "The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me . . . He has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound."

I think it is clear that chapter 61 does not mark the beginning of his prophetic action, but a turning point in the content of his mission as understood in verse 2: "To proclaim the year of the Lord's favour and the day of vengeance by our God; to comfort all who mourn." Here enters, for the first time, the motif of revenge, which cannot be found in his first prophecies, as we will show later.

Chapters 42 and 49 contain a distinct autobiographical element as well. In chapter 42, a clear distinction is made between the autobiographical formulation and the symbolic explanation. Verses 1-4 speak of a single man, summoned to a mission; verses 5-9 describe the mission of Israel in the image of this man. As in 61: 1 it is written: "I have put my spirit upon him." His function and mission are portrayed in terms used to describe the offspring of the House of David (Is. 11). There is a parallelism in content between 42:1-4; 5-9, on the one hand, and 61:1-2 on the other. All three

sections speak of an active, historical mission. In the last section, the servant says that the Lord has anointed him, "to bring good tidings to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound." We should add here that the subject of 42: 7 is not God, which is one syntactic possibility, but the "covenant-people", which is mentioned in the foregoing verse. Israel is "to open the eyes that are blind"; in other words, Israel's mission is to "bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness."

In chapter 49 as well, the summons is phrased in terms borrowed from the prophetic tradition, especially from the book of Jeremiah. The servant begins, "the Lord called me from the womb" (v. 1), as in Jer. 1:4, and continues: "He made my mouth like a sharp sword . . . He made me a polished arrow" (v. 2). The parallels are, Jer. 1: 9 — "Then the Lord put forth His hand and touched my mouth; and the Lord said to me 'Behold I have put my words in your mouth'" and Jer. 15: 19 — "If you return, I will restore you . . . you shall be as my mouth." There, as here, the motif of repentance is mentioned: "And now the Lord says, who formed me from the womb to be His servant, to bring Jacob back to Him" (Is. 49:5). It seems, then, that the basis for this song is the summons of the anonymous prophet to his mission; we have here evidence of his consecration.

In this song (49: 1ff.) the symbolic commentary is already present in the first text, "Israel, in whom I will be glorified" (v. 3). But this does not detract from the meaning of the prophecy referring to the individual. The autobiographical, personal element is even more obvious in this song than in the last one of the series, "Behold, my servant shall prosper" etc. (52:13ff.), which became a central point of contention in the Judeo-Christian polemic. There, the servant is described in terms and language borrowed from the psalms of the poor. The autobiographical aspects of this song are very sketchy. The major difficulty confusing the scholars is the masterful exposition of a multifaceted symbolism of the image of the servant, developed through literary associations leading to different areas. As we mentioned earlier, the distinguished traits of the image in 42: 1-4 and, to a lesser extent, the description in 61 lead to the "shoot from the stump of Jesse" (Is. 11), while the literary associations in 49 lead to Jeremiah, those of 50: 4-9 to Ezekiel and those of 52:13-53:12 to the psalms of the poor. But the basis for these varied descriptions is the experience of dialogue between the prophet and his God. The uniqueness of his way lies in his symbolic conception of his consecration and his mission.

To clarify: often, in the First Temple period, the consciousness of the prophets was so overwhelmed by their mission that even simple daily events,

such as an almond tree, a boiling pot, date blossoms, and other such things were seen in an entirely different light. But with Deutero-Isaiah we are faced with a strange, new phenomenon: his personal mission is perceived as a symbolic projection of the mission of the people of Israel or the righteous of Israel. The songs of the servant of God, with all their personal and collective significations, demonstrate the prophet's awareness of a parallelism between his own personal mission and the historical mission of the nation. The major difficulty facing the scholars in understanding these songs arises from the fact that the borders between the collective and personal meanings of these songs are undefined. This ambiguity accurately reflects the prophet's personal involvement with the life of the people. Among the First Temple prophets, the prophetic consecration created a barrier between the prophet and the people, for the major part of the prophecy consisted of chastisement and prophecies of doom. There, the consecration created a barrier between themselves and their contemporaries, whereas the circumstances leading to the emergence of Deutero-Isaiah led to a personal involvement of the "I" of the servant-prophet with the collective "I" of the nation entrusted with the mission. The spiritual background for this involvement was already present at the time of the first appearance of the prophet, when he announced: "That her time of service is over, and her iniquity is pardoned" (40: 2). The essence of his mission was not castigation and prophecies of doom, but rather the transmission of the message of redemption to the deserving nation. While there is an element of chastisement in his prophecies, it is of minor importance in comparison with the deep pathos of the herald of redemption. Sometimes he condemns the servant as a "rebel from birth" or by saying "who is blind but My servant, or deaf as My messenger whom I send" (42:19). But, it seems to me, that here he is describing the nation of the past, and not that of the present.

With this background, we should mention three salient features of his historical outlook. They are:

- 1.) The unbounded optimism at the beginning of his mission. .
- 2.) This optimism explains the extremely utopian character of his eschatological view, tied to a new interpretation of Israel's history and a fundamentally new argument against idolatry which serves to substantiate the monotheistic idea.
- 3.) Furthermore, this utopian is paradoxically connected with an attempt to uncover the tragic meaning of the fate of Israel which, freshly illuminated in the songs of the servant of God (mainly in 52:13-53:12), is a turning point in the Israelite conception of history.

I would like to discuss now these three aspects and their mutual connections. With respect to optimism: Deutero-Isaiah's belief that the contemporary

events were the beginning of the redemption awoke in him the hope that all the obstacles in the path of redemption would vanish miraculously. Moreover, this optimism shunted aside the apocalyptic motif of "the day of the Lord", which he inherited from earlier prophecy. Only after these exaggerated hopes were not fulfilled, did the image of God as a "man of war," and the motif of revenge and war with the Gentiles reassert themselves (Ch. 61). For the first time, Edom is used as a symbol of the entire gentile, pagan world (Ch. 63).

In his first prophecies, beginning with chapter 40, he describes the redemption in terms of miraculous changes that would take place in nature. In this connection he mentions the abolition of all physical obstacles preventing the return of the redeemed: mountains and hills would be levelled, and rivers and streams dried up (40:4, 42:15-16, etc.). In addition, he mentions the miraculous irrigation of the wilderness and its transformation into blossoming gardens (41:18-20, 43:17-20, 51:3, 55:13) — all these in order to safeguard the new exodus from Babylonia as well as to spare the people from the vicissitudes of thirst, hunger and wild animals (43:20, 48:21, 49:9-11, 55:1-2). In this context, he elaborates Isaiah's motif (Jer. 10) of a future peace between the beasts of prey (65:25). He greatly enhances the expected miracles as compared to those of the first exodus from Egypt (52:12, etc.). The new elements in his prophecies are of a political nature: Cyrus is called the anointed of the Lord (45:1) and all the nations will, of their own volition, join Israel, serve it and participate in its redemption as well as in the rebuilding of its devastated land (60). Many of them will even bring their offerings to the altar on Mount Zion "for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples" (56:7).

He even speaks of the creation of a new heaven and earth (65:17), a renewal of creation of cosmic import. Such declarations emphasize in an unprecedented way the utopian character of Israelite eschatology. They express the polar opposite of the mythical conception, in which time is viewed as an eternal, ever-renewing cyclical process, a biological-cosmic process progressively undoing its own results. The prophets, (and DeuteroIsaiah in particular) in contrast, declare that the history of Israel is exempted, by the word of God, from the cyclical law of biological necessity (40:8 — "but the word of our God will stand forever"). The final redemption is, first and foremost, an actualization of the eternal word of God; furthermore, it creates unprecedented cosmic and social perfection. Thus the utopian aspect of the eschatological idea is not the unrestrained product of imagination; its inner essence is the actualization of what should be in potential, of all the possibilities that were built into the creation and the historical process, but whose actualization has been hindered by man's deeds.

Deutero-Isaiah makes use of the victories of Cyrus and all the great moments in the history of Israel to support this belief. The wonders of the Exodus are cited only in order to emphasize that these “first things” [*rishonot*] (41:22, 42:9, 43:9-18, 46:9, 48:3, 65:17-18) will be negligible in comparison with the future miracles, the “new things” [*hadashot*] (42:9, 48:6). In this reference he mentions the popular myth of God’s primeval victory over the sea monsters, thus praying that God may again demonstrate the strength of His arm as in ancient times (51:9-11). Jeremiah and Ezekiel mentioned past events in order to explain the nation’s present sin. According to Jeremiah (chapter 2), Israel was guilty of the sin of idolatry from the time of her entry into Canaan, while at the beginning of her history, during the period of wandering in the desert, she demonstrated unwavering loyalty to God. Ezekiel is more pessimistic; he does not believe that there ever was a period of faithfulness, for even in Egypt, Israel was tainted by idolatry (chapters 16, 32). The conception and birth of the nation was impure: “Your father was an Amorite and your mother a Hittite” (16:3); the nation is corrupt from its very creation, for it was born with a “heart of stone” (11:19). In this pessimistic evaluation, the present is seen as a necessary continuation of the sins of the past. Ezekiel denies all hope for the future, thus justifying the irrevocable, divine decree of destruction. By contrast, Deutero-Isaiah makes use of examples from the past in order to cast a positive light on the present and create hope for the future. He mentions the wonders of God during the Exodus and the crossing of the Red Sea in order to prove the greatness and glory of God, and to show that no miracle is beyond his power. In stressing the magnitude of future miracles, in comparison with past events, he hints at the unprecedented dimensions of redemption in store for Israel and the nations.

This essential optimism, which created the spiritual background for the double meaning of the image of the servant of God, also gave rise to the new explanation he offered for the history of Israel in the song “Behold, my servant shall prosper” (52:13-53:12). His declaration that the iniquities of Israel are pardoned (40:2), and its accompanying new spiritual outlook forced him to abandon the standard explanation for the reasons delaying the coming of the redemption, namely, the sins of Israel. This led him to a deeper insight into the universal nature of the suffering of the people. The two arguments raised by Kaufmann against this logical explanation of the song in 52:13-53:12 do not hold up to criticism:

- 1.) His first claim is that the confession in 53:1ff., is false if we assure that it is spoken by the Gentiles, for in their eyes, Israel was never “smitten by God.”
- 2.) Secondly, he claims that this explanation is based on the non-biblical idea of vicarious suffering (Kaufmann, *ibid.* vol. 4, p. 128ff.).

With respect to the first argument, we already mentioned that the literary associations of this song lead to the psalms of the persecuted and oppressed. The servant is portrayed here as one of the oppressed who is persecuted because, in the popular view, sickness and calamity are evidence of the sufferer's having sinned. The future gentile nations are portrayed by the poet-prophet in the image of the common man of Israel, who, to his surprise recognizes that the sufferers and the oppressed are not wicked but righteous men who suffer for the sins of others. This description does not reflect the reality of the Gentile, idolatrous psychology; it portrays the future gentiles in the image of the faithful of Israel.

With respect to vicarious suffering — indeed, the view that the suffering of the righteous can atone for the sins of the whole community does not appear in this form elsewhere in the Bible. Nevertheless, it is not a severe deviation from the spiritual setting of the Bible, which acknowledges the suffering of the children for the sins of the fathers, and the rewarding of the children for the good deeds of their fathers. In other words: parents and children share equally in guilt and retribution. It was precisely this accepted popular belief which aroused Ezekiel's opposition when calling his fellow citizens to repentance in order to save themselves from the horrors of impending destruction (Ez. 14:12-20 ; 18). But elsewhere in the Bible, in the Pentateuch as well as Prophets, we are told that on the "day of wrath" and distress, innocent people will be killed along with the wicked. From this perception, only a small step brings us to a favourable view of the suffering of the righteous ; that is, the belief that such suffering can atone for the sins of the community. The *aggada* (legend) in the Talmud (BT, *Sota* 14a) explains the song "Behold, my servant shall prosper" in this spirit.

Finally, the emphasis on the utopian character of the idea of redemption is tied to an emphasis on the absolute power of God as opposed to the worthlessness of idoltry. We can understand Deutero-Isaiah's argument against idolatry on this basis. This argument can be traced to two historical settings; first, he attempts to convince the people that Cyrus is the anointed king, and the messenger of the Lord in history — even though Cyrus himself is unaware of his mission. In 45:9ff., Deutero-Isaiah hints at opposition to this interpretation on the part of the faithful of Israel. Second, in the portrayal of the servant, there are many aspects borrowed from the courtly style of the kings of Babylonia and Persia. In particular, there is a strong linguistic connection between Deutero-Isaiah and the barrel inscriptions of Cyrus.³

3. Important parts of these inscriptions have been translated by H. Tadmor, "The historical background for Cyrus' declaration," *Oz le-David* (Hebrew), Jerusalem : 1964, pp. 450-473. (An English translation of the inscriptions by A. Leo Oppenheim is to be found in *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, pp. 315-16.

Some of the phrases and honorific titles which Cyrus claimed for himself as the gifts of Marduk, Deutero-Isaiah mentions as well, attributing them to God. In doing so, Second Isaiah attempts to remove any possibility of belief, on the part of the Babylonian exiles, or on the part of certain groups among

the exiles, in the power of the victorious idols of Babylonia and Persia. In order to prove the absolute superiority of God, as opposed to the non-existence of the idols, he cites examples of events in the history of Israel and popular mythology dealing with the primeval war of God against the sea monsters. Furthermore, in arguing against idolatry, he also polemicalizes with other biblical writers. In particular, he argues with the author of Gen. 1, who, despite his rationalistic approach, allowed himself to say that man was created in the image of God. In contrast, Deutero-Isaiah asks: "To whom then, will you liken God, or what likeness compare with Him?" (40:18).⁴ An early polemic alluded to in the early Pentateuchal texts, centers around the question as to whether or not it is permitted to see God; on the one hand, the author of Ex. 24:10 recounts that the nobles of Israel saw the God of Israel ("there was under His feet as it were a pavement of sapphire stones, like the very heaven for clearness") without being punished. On the other hand, God answers Moses "for man may not see Me and live." Deutero-Isaiah adopts an extreme rationalist view which diffuses the old argument by saying that God cannot be seen for He has neither form nor image. By way of his argument with idolatry, Deutero-Isaiah attains an extreme formulation of Divine transcendence which has no parallel in the Bible. However, at this point a problem arises: in the very places where he commits himself to an extreme rationalist formulation of monotheism, we find, paradoxically, an attempt to express this truth in mythical-anthropomorphic language. His rationalistic conception of God closely approximates Maimonides' formulation, 1700 years later: "for He has neither body nor corporeal image." Nevertheless, he speaks elsewhere in striking anthropomorphisms describing God as a "man of war," as in early biblical poetry. I am referring to 66:1-6, or to the renewed development of the old mythological motif of God's war with the sea monsters (51:9-11). The inner dialectic of monotheism, the tension between the rationalist tendency, on the one hand, and its mythological formulation, on the other, reaches unprecedented dimensions here. This is not a war between the religion of pure reason and archaic mythological vestiges which continued to circulate in popular conscience; it is a war between intellectual achievements and existential needs. When the initial eschatological hopes that Deutero-Isaiah had placed in the victories of Cyrus were disappointed, the traditional motif of "the Day of the Lord", on which

4. See M. Weinfeld, "God the Creator in Gen. 1 and in the Prophecy of Second Isaiah," *Tarbiz AS: T* (1968), pp. 105-132 (Hebrew).

God would take revenge on the nations reappears. Thus in chapter 63, Edom symbolizes the Gentile world in general ; God, who fights them, again displays His strength as a man of war, as in the days of the Exodus. Deutero-Isaiah is still able to retain the polarities between the rationalist and mythological tendencies in monotheism. Afterwards, the two paths separate: in apocalyptic literature the popular-mythological tendency gains strength, while in halachic literature the rationalist element gains momentum, becoming the dominant criterion in the recension of the Mishnah under R. Judah the Prince. In this respect, too, the prophecies of Deutero-Isaiah serves as transition and crossroads leading to the complicated structure of the Second Temple Judaism.

To summarize.

1.) The uniqueness of his conception lies in the eschatological interpretation of contemporary events in Near Eastern history. The climax of these events was the famous Edict of Cyrus (538 BCE) which provided for the restoration of the exiles. Deutero-Isaiah views these events as the beginning of the final miraculous redemption, as well as the fulfillment of age-old prophetic promises.

2.) The utopian nature of his eschatology is enhanced by the use of traditional motifs pertaining to the exodus from Egypt, the crossing of the Red Sea and Israel's wandering in the desert. The impending miracles in store for Israel will surpass even those of the past as outstanding changes take place in nature. Their purpose will be to enable the redeemed people to pass through deserts, hills, mountains and rivers without being haunted by hunger, thirst and wild animals. The nations of the world, who will witness these miracles, will sustain those redeemed with all the material means at their disposal ; some of them will even join the chosen people. The future Temple will become a prayer house for all nations. In short, this conception is the outcome of the re-interpretation of traditional-historical motifs in light of the description of "the End of Days" stemming from Isaiah. The cosmic dimensions of this vision culminate in the creation of a new earth and heaven.

3.) Deutero-Isaiah believed at first that the era of redemption had already begun. As a result he did not mention revolutionary elements in the traditional-historical outlook. These were embodied in the image of "the Day of the Lord" which would precede final redemption. But in the course of time, Deutero-Isaiah's initial euphoria was marred by strains of disappointment. Then the motif of the Lord's revenge on all pagan nations, as expressed for the first time in the symbol of Edom reappears.

4.) The transcendent rationalistic view of God which marks Deutero-Isaiah's initial optimism gives way to the re-mythologization of God and the re-acceptance of ancient mythological motifs. These changes in his conception resulted from his disappointment in Cyrus, as pointed out in the preceding paragraph.

5.) In searching for a positive reason for Israel's tragic fate, he discovered the image of an Israel as the Servant of the Lord suffering for the sins of the nations. This view marks a major turning point in biblical historiography, which was dominated up to his time by the model — sin-chastisement-repentance-salvation. The autobiographical aspects of this image, and the divine call reflected in it, indicate the renewal of direct prophetic dialogue with God.

6.) The innovation in the image of the servant is the involvement of the personal "I" of the prophet with the collective "I" of the nation. This came about as a result of the unique spiritual circumstances characterizing Second Isaiah as a prophet, a comforter and a herald. It seems to me that this is a first step towards the new conception of prophecy found in rabbinic literature, in which the prophets are seen not as fiery castigators, but as defenders of the Jewish people. Their stormy chastisement is sometimes viewed even as a sin on their part.⁵

5. See my study, "The Sanctification of Isaiah and its Development in Rabbinic Tradition," *HaMikra V'Toledot Yisrael* (Tel-Aviv : 1972), pp. 18-50 (Hebrew).