

## Paul and the Servant(s): Isaiah 49,6 in Acts 13,47

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The insight that the depiction of the apostolic mission to the Gentiles in Luke-Acts and the Pauline epistles is related to the description of the Servant in Isa 40–55 is not new<sup>1</sup>. The question that presents itself is *why* these texts would use Deutero-Isaiah's description of the Servant in such a way. For example, Acts 13,47 depicts Paul and Barnabas concluding their message in Pisidian Antioch by quoting Isa 49,6, "I will make you a light to the nations", then claiming that this is "what the Lord commanded *us*" – in apparent contradiction of the fact that in Isa 49,5-7, YHWH is addressing a figure entitled "my Servant". And how is it that Acts 13,47 uses Isaian language about the Servant to describe the apostolic mission when elsewhere this language is used to depict Jesus as a "light to the Gentiles" (Luke 2,32; Acts 26,23; cf. Isa 42,6; 49,6) and as the "fulfillment" of passages describing the Servant's appointment (Luke 3,22; cf. Isa 42,1) and suffering (Luke 22,37; cf. Isa 53,12)? As B. Koet notes, "That the gentile mission is based on this reference to the OT [*Isa 49,6*] is clear, but the actual way it happens leaves much to be discussed"<sup>2</sup>. In this essay I will argue that the use of Isaian Servant language by Luke-Acts to describe the mission of both Jesus and the apostles is based on an argument strategy that originates within the composition of Isaiah itself<sup>3</sup>. This argument strategy is recognized by and reflected in other Second

1. L. CERFAUX, *St Paul et le "Serviteur de Dieu" d'Isaïe*, in *Recueil Lucien Cerfaux*, II (BETL, 6-7), Gembloux, Duculot; Leuven, University Press, 1954, 439-454; J. DUPONT, *The Salvation of the Gentiles and the Theological Significance of Acts*, in Id. (ed.), *The Salvation of the Gentiles: Studies in the Acts of the Apostles*, New York, Paulist Press, 1979, 11-33, p. 19; T. HOLTZ, *Selbstverständnis des Apostels Paulus*, in *TLZ* 91 (1966) 321-333, p. 327; H. STETTLER, *An Interpretation of Colossians 1:24 in the Framework of Paul's Mission Theology*, in J. ÅDNA – H. KVALBEIN (eds.), *The Mission of the Early Church to Jews and Gentiles* (WUNT, 127), Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 2000, 185-208, p. 194; J. WARE, *Paul and the Mission of the Church: Philippians in Ancient Jewish Context*, Grand Rapids, MI, Baker Academic, 2011, pp. 274-282.

2. B.J. KOET, *Isaiah in Luke-Acts*, in S. MOYISE – M.J.J. MENKEN (eds.), *Isaiah in the New Testament*, New York, T&T Clark, 2005, 79-100, p. 94. See also WARE, *Paul and the Mission* (n. 1), p. 278: "The question has perplexed many interpreters".

3. See the suggestive comment of J. ROLOFF, *Die Apostelgeschichte* (NTD), Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1988, p. 209: "Diese Übertragung ist schwerlich Werk des Lukas; es ist anzunehmen, daß Jes 49,6 zusammen mit anderen deuterojesajanischen Texten schon sehr früh zur Begründung der Heidenmission gedient hat".

Temple-period texts as well. A recognition of how these later authors perceived trajectories in Isaiah sheds light on reading practices in Antiquity and on the role that this book played in shaping communal identity and values.

#### I. PAST RESEARCH ON ISAIAH 49,6 IN ACTS 13,47

In Acts 13, Paul's use of Isa 49,6 coincides with the announcement that he and Barnabas are "turning to the Gentiles" after receiving opposition during their second synagogue message. But who is the referent envisioned in the use of this quote – Paul, Jesus (as proclaimed by Paul), or both? And if both, by what logic? Some commentators simply note the use of this passage in Acts 13,47 without attempting to uncover the rationale behind its use<sup>4</sup>. Others claim that the apostles "continue" the mission of Jesus and/or the Servant, or at least see an analogy between their mission and his mission insofar as the "light to the nations" theme is used for both, but fail to show how this accounts for the understanding of Isa 49,6 as a command (*ἐντέταλται ἡμῖν*) to the apostles<sup>5</sup>. Still others claim that the question under consideration here is not really a problem to be solved. P. Grelot argues that Paul and Barnabas are not here being depicted as a "light to the nations"; this is the role of Christ alone. The role of the apostles is only to proclaim Christ, the content of the Gospel. He concludes that "it is therefore unnecessary to speak of an accommodation which would fit the text of the Servant Song to the apostolic mission of Paul"<sup>6</sup>.

Several commentators explain Paul's reference to the Lord's "command" by citing Jesus' commissioning of the apostles in Acts 1,8 (which also alludes to Isa 49,6) and/or the commissioning of Paul in Acts 9,15-16<sup>7</sup>. From this, they infer that Paul is being described as God's servant in

4. E.g., E. HAENCHEN, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary*, Philadelphia, PA, Westminster John Knox, 1971, p. 414; H. CONZELMANN, *Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles* (Hermeneia), Philadelphia, PA, Fortress, 1987, p. 106.

5. R. RACKHAM, *The Acts of the Apostles: An Exposition*, London, Methuen & Co., 1901, p. 221; F.F. BRUCE, *The Acts of the Apostles: The Greek Text with Introduction and Commentary* (3rd rev. ed.), Grand Rapids, MI, Eerdmans, 1990, p. 315; E. SCHNABEL, *Early Christian Mission: Paul and the Early Church*, vol. 2, Downers Grove, IL, InterVarsity Press, 2004, pp. 942-944; D. BOCK, *Scripture and the Realisation of God's Promises*, in I.H. MARSHALL – D. PETERSON (eds.), *Witness to the Gospel: The Theology of Acts*, Grand Rapids, MI, Eerdmans, 1998, 41-62, pp. 56-57.

6. P. GRELOT, *Note sur Actes 13:47*, in *Revue Biblique* 88 (1981) 368-372, p. 371.

7. R. PERVO, *Acts: A Commentary* (Hermeneia), Minneapolis, MN, Fortress, 2009, p. 343; D. BOCK, *Proclamation from Prophecy and Pattern: Luke's Use of the Old Testament for Christology and Mission*, in C.A. EVANS – W.R. STEGNER (eds.), *The Gospels and the Scriptures of Israel* (JSNTS, 104), Sheffield, Sheffield Academic Press, 1994, 280-307, pp. 302-303; L.T. JOHNSON, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Sacra Pagina), Collegeville, MN, Liturgical

Acts 13,47. But this raises a further question: is the use of Isaian Servant language to describe the mission to the Gentiles to be attributed solely to Jesus, as if this were an idea that he had invented *de novo* and passed on to his followers? Such a position fails to take into consideration the possibility that the outlook of the book of Isaiah itself might be significant for the early Church's understanding of its own mission. And while the fact of a commission *per se* is necessary for comprehending the earliest Christian articulation of its mission to the Gentiles, I do not think it is sufficient to explain the use of Isaiah in Luke-Acts. After all, the descriptions of the commission to the apostles and of the mission of the early Church could have been articulated without quotations of or allusions to Isaiah.

J. Dunn argues that because it was Israel's role to be a light to the nations, the earliest Christians – seeing themselves as the new Israel – simply took over what they believed was Israel's role<sup>8</sup>. But Dunn himself admits uncertainty as to the rationale for this hermeneutical manoeuvre; as he remarks, “This is the crucial factor: for some reason not entirely clear, Paul understood that with the death and resurrection of Jesus, the time and possibility had arrived for Israel's responsibility to be a light to the Gentiles to be fulfilled”<sup>9</sup>. Moreover, the fact that the early Church also identified the Isaian Servant figure with Jesus (*e.g.* Luke 2,32; 22,37; Acts 8,30-35) and not only with Israel or themselves shows that this argument does not account for all the evidence.

J. Meek also wonders how Paul concluded that being a “light to the nations” was now his task. His own approach is, in his words, “to have our cake and eat it too [...] We can hold both [*viz.*, *Jesus as servant and Paul as servant*] to be true because of the typological relationship that exists between Christ and the Church”<sup>10</sup>. But this ignores textual strategies in both Isaiah and the New Testament in favor of an external construct (to

Press, 1992, pp. 241-242. See also J.A. FITZMYER, *The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB), New York, Doubleday, 1998, pp. 206, 521, who notes this as a possibility, but then says that the quote “may in reality refer to Christ” whose message is proclaimed by Paul and Barnabas.

8. J.D.G. DUNN, *The Acts of the Apostles*, Valley Forge, PA, Trinity Press, 1997, p. 184: “Moreover, Israel itself had been given the task of being and bringing light and salvation to the Gentiles (Isa. 49,6). So all Paul and Barnabas were doing was fulfilling Israel's mission”. See also B. WITHERINGTON, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary*, Grand Rapids, MI, Eerdmans, 1998, p. 416: “They are assuming the role and tasks of the Servant in the Servant Songs, which is to say the task of Israel”; similarly, I.H. MARSHALL, *Acts* (TNTC), Leicester, Inter-Varsity Press, 1980, p. 230: “Thus the task of Israel, which she failed to carry out, has passed to Jesus and then to his people as the new Israel; it is the task of bringing the light of revelation and salvation to all the peoples of the world”. But how is it that this task is conceived of as being “passed” from one entity to another?

9. DUNN, *Acts* (n. 8), p. 329.

10. J. MEEK, *The Gentile Mission in Old Testament Citations in Acts: Text, Hermeneutic and Purpose* (LNTS, 385), New York, T&T Clark, 2008, p. 53; see the broader discussion, pp. 46-50.

use his term, a “redemptive-historical category”) that is imposed on the text.

C.K. Barrett argues that the apostles share in the mission of the Servant insofar as Christ is the content of their message: “Paul is a light of the Gentiles only in virtue of the Christ whom he preaches; Christ is a light to the Gentiles as he is preached to them by his servants”<sup>11</sup>. While I do not disagree that this may be true, I wonder whether such a statement truly takes into account the sophisticated argument structure in Isaiah and its strategic employment in Luke-Acts<sup>12</sup>. Moreover, while Barrett acknowledges the importance of the dual referent of Isa 49,6 in Luke 2,23 and Acts 13,47, it is clear that its significance for him has little to do with literary strategy in Luke-Acts: “The double use of the imagery is important (whether or not Luke formulated its importance in his own mind)”<sup>13</sup>.

B. Koet argues that the “us” of Acts 13,47 refers (as does the “you” in Isa 49,6) to a collective “gathered Israel”. He concludes: “The question whether the ‘you’ in the quotation in 13,47 is referring to Jesus, Paul (and Barnabas) or to Israel is a false dilemma”<sup>14</sup>. But if the Servant of Isa 49,6 is read as “collective Israel” – which could conceivably make the role of being a “light to the nations” open to appropriation by the early Jewish Jesus movement – how do we explain the fact that Luke-Acts uses Isaian Servant language not only for a group (the apostles, in Acts 13,47) but also for a singular agent (Jesus, in Luke 2,32; Acts 26,23), and sees the role of the former as in some way *derived from* the latter (that is, not just as a “collective”)? Similarly, if the quote of Isa 49,6 in Acts 13,47 is understood simply as God giving a command to collective Israel, why

11. C.K. BARRETT, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles 1* (ICC, Edinburgh, T&T Clark, 1994, p. 658. See also R. PESCH, *Die Apostelgeschichte: Apg. 13–28* (EKK, 5/2), Zurich, Benziger; Neukirchen-Vluyn, Neukirchener, 1986, p. 48: “Als ‘Licht für die Heiden’ ist Paulus der Sohn Gottes offenbar geworden, in seiner Verkündigung unter den Heiden repräsentiert er ihn als dieses Licht (vgl. 26,18)”.

12. On the use of the theme of “light” in Isaiah, see R.E. CLEMENTS, *A Light to the Nations: A Central Theme of the Book of Isaiah*, in J.W. WATTS – P.R. HOUSE (eds.), *Forming Prophetic Literature: Essays on Isaiah and the Twelve in Honor of John D.W. Watts* (JSOTS, 235), Sheffield, Sheffield Academic Press, 1996, 57-69.

13. BARRETT, *Acts* (n. 11), p. 658.

14. B.J. KOET, *Five Studies on Interpretation of Scripture in Luke-Acts* (SNTA, 14), Leuven, University Press, 1989, p. 114; see his full discussion, pp. 110-114. The rejection of the “Jesus as light vs. Paul as light” dichotomy and the appeal to a collective understanding of the servant can also be found in M.F.-J. BUSS, *Die Missionspredigt des Apostels Paulus im Pisischen Antiochien: Analyse von Apg 13,16-41 im Hinblick auf die literarische und thematische Einheit der Paulusrede*, Stuttgart, Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1980, pp. 138-139. See also G.J. STEYN, *Septuagint Quotations in the Context of the Petrine and Pauline Speeches of the Acta Apostolorum*, Kampen, Kok Pharos, 1995, p. 201, who finds a collective understanding of the servant for Acts 13,47 in both the LXX and the Hebrew text of Isa 49. WARE, *Paul and the Mission* (n. 1), pp. 279-281, appeals both to a collective understanding of the servant and to the commissioning of the apostles (Acts 1,8) for understanding the quote in Acts 13,47.

does the author of Luke-Acts find it necessary to describe multiple separate commissions by Jesus to the apostles?

I believe that Koet's reference to the concept of "gathered Israel" is a step in the right direction, as is his recognition of the paradigmatic nature of Isaiah for Luke-Acts<sup>15</sup>. However, it seems to me that an over-emphasis on a concept of "collective Israel" could obscure the complexity of both Isa 40–66 and Luke-Acts. It is true that in some instances the Septuagint understands the servant figure as the nation of Israel where the MT does not explicitly do so (e.g., Isa 42,1LXX adds *Ιακωβ* and *Ισραηλ*; Isa 49,5LXX gives the nation a first-person speaking voice by reading *συναχθήσομαι* "I will be gathered" for *יִשְׂרָאֵל* "[Israel] will be gathered")<sup>16</sup>. In Isa 49,5-6MT, at least, the servant figure is not "gathered Israel", but the one who gathers Israel. However, the Septuagint does not utilize this strategy in all places; in Isa 53, the suffering figure remains an individual<sup>17</sup>. It is also true that Luke-Acts is using a text that in most cases matches the Septuagint. But it does not always do so: in Luke 3,22, the reading *ἐν σοὶ εὐδόκησα* represents a Greek text of Isa 42,1 that has been revised towards the Hebrew (cf. MT, ס', ת') as opposed to LXX's *προσεδέξατο αὐτὸν ἢ ψυχῆ μου*. If therefore Luke-Acts does not correspond at all points to an individual Greek text-form known to us, we should not assume that it would necessarily reflect the Septuagint's understanding of the servant imagery at all points. In any case, I am unconvinced that appealing to a notion of "collective Israel" will adequately explain how Luke-Acts uses Isaian Servant language for both Jesus and the apostles.

None of the responses to Acts 13,47 mentioned above, it seems to me, adequately take into account the argument structure of Isa 40–66 and its role in shaping early Christian identity and compositional strategy. I would argue that texts like Acts 13,47 are simply following a trajectory that already exists in the book of Isaiah, in which Isa 56–66 extends and develops the earlier arguments about the Servant in Isa 40–55: namely, that a righteous community (the "servants") would carry out the mission of the Servant. It is for this reason that Luke-Acts can claim that the mission of

15. KOET, *Isaiah in Luke-Acts* (n. 2), p. 79, argues "that Luke not only knows the quotations, he also takes into account their contexts (at least to some extent), that some passages of Isaiah are more crucial than others, and that some of the ideas in Isaiah are adopted as a blueprint for his work".

16. See I.L. SEELIGMANN, *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah: A Discussion of Its Problems*, Leiden, Brill, 1948, p. 116.

17. M. HENGEL cautions against overly rigid categorizing of Second Temple interpretive traditions, noting that "individual messianic and collective interpretations seem to have stood together as possibilities from the start, though depending on the situation, the emphasis could be placed on one side or the other"; see M. HENGEL – D.P. BAILEY, *The Effective History of Isaiah 53 in the Pre-Christian Period*, in: B. JANOWSKI – P. STUHLMACHER (eds.), *The Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 in Jewish and Christian Sources*, Grand Rapids, MI, Eerdmans, 2004, 75-146, p. 81.

the Servant to be “a light to the nations” and “bring salvation to the ends of the earth” has been passed on to others.

## II. THE STRATEGY OF ISAIAH 40–66: THE SERVANT AND THE SERVANTS

While the composition of Isa 40–55, 56–66 is complex, the major arguments are clear<sup>18</sup>. Israel, called God’s “servant”, was given God’s law, but rebelled and was consequently punished with exile (Isa 42,18-25; 50,1; 51,17-20). Israel is therefore in doubt and despair (Isa 40,27; 49,14; 51,12-13), but is told that punishment is over (Isa 40,1-2; 44,21-22a). Restoration is proclaimed (Isa 43,1-8; 44,23; 52,1-9), and Israel is challenged to return to God (Isa 44,22b). This restoration of Israel will also involve the nations: they will see YHWH’s salvific activity towards Israel (Isa 49,26b; 52,10) and will participate in Israel’s restoration (Isa 49,22). Furthermore, the nations will receive justice and instruction from Israel’s God (Isa 51,4-5) and are themselves called to “turn to [God] and be saved” (Isa 45,20-25)<sup>19</sup>.

A key part of the argument of Isa 40–55 grows out of the fluctuating perspective and even overlap between the individual and national referents of the title “servant”<sup>20</sup>. This dual use of the term “servant” for both Israel

18. On the rhetoric and setting of Isa 40–55, see A. KAPELRUD, *The Main Concern of Second Isaiah*, in *VT* 32 (1982) 50-58; on the relation of Isa 40–55 to the first part of the book, see H.G.M. WILLIAMSON, *The Book Called Isaiah: Deutero-Isaiah’s Role in Composition and Redaction*, Oxford, Clarendon, 1994. Isa 56–66 has traditionally been understood to be distinct from chaps. 40–55 because of a shift in outlook (e.g., proclamation of comfort and imminent restoration in chaps. 40–55, confessions of sin and hope for future restoration in chaps. 56–66). However, there is no sharp literary break between these units. Moreover, Isa 56–66 seems to have been composed in relation to Isa 40–55, and there is material in chaps. 40–55 that appears to be redactionally coordinated with chaps. 56–66. See J. STROMBERG, *Isaiah after Exile: The Author of Third Isaiah as Reader and Redactor of the Book*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2011.

19. On the “conversion of the nations” theme in Isaiah, and its reception in Second Temple Judaism, see WARE, *Paul and the Mission* (n. 1), pp. 57-159.

20. Given the argument in Isa 49,5-6, it seems most likely to me that some of the “servant” passages refer to an individual agent who will restore Israel-as-servant back to God. For different perspectives on the referent(s) of the servant imagery in Isa 40–55, see C.R. NORTH, *The Suffering Servant in Deutero-Isaiah: An Historical and Critical Study* (2nd ed.), London, Oxford University Press, 1956; P. WILCOX – D. PATON-WILLIAMS, *The Servant Songs and Deutero-Isaiah*, in *JSOT* 42 (1988) 79-102; H.G. REVENTLOW, *Basic Issues in the Interpretation of Isaiah 53*, in W.H. BELLINGER, JR. – W.R. FARMER (eds.), *Jesus and the Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 and Christian Origins*, Harrisburg, PA, Trinity Press International, 1998, 23-38; H.-J. HERMISSON, *The Fourth Servant Song in the Context of Second Isaiah*, in B. JANOWSKI – P. STUHLMACHER (eds.), *The Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 in Jewish and Christian Sources*, Grand Rapids, MI, Eerdmans, 2004, 16-47; U. BERGES, *The Literary Construction of the Servant in Isaiah 40–55: A Discussion about Individual and Collective Identities*, in *SJOT* 24 (2010) 28-38.

and the agent who restores Israel underscores the connection between the two and demonstrates that God's promises for his people will not be jeopardized by their disobedience. This agent the Servant not only restores Israel (Isa 49,5-6a; cf. 42,7, which recalls the "darkness" of 9,1 and anticipates the "blindness" and imprisonment imagery of 42,18.22)<sup>21</sup>, but also brings "light" (Isa 42,6; 49,6b), "justice" (Isa 43,1.4), "law" (Isa 42,4) and "salvation" (Isa 49,6b) for the nations.

In Isa 53, it is said that this agent, God's Servant, will suffer redemptively for the sins of the people (Isa 53,5); as a result, he will have "offspring" (53,10) and "make many righteous" (Isa 53,11). What is significant is that after chapter 53, the Servant figure vanishes from the book, and is replaced with descriptions of a community called the "servants" or the "offspring"<sup>22</sup>. According to W. Beuken, it is the development of this theme of the "servants" that constitutes the major theme of Isa 56-66<sup>23</sup>.

In Isa 55,6-7 God makes an offer to Israel to repent and "seek" him, an offer that is described as rejected in Isa 65,1-7<sup>24</sup>. Yet not all have rejected this offer, for according to Isa 65,9-10 those identified as the

21. Note how Isa 42,18-20 picks up the "blindness/deafness" motif which began in Isa 6,9-12; this motif is continued in Isa 43,8; 42,7; 44,18 and reversed in Isa 29,18; 30,20-21; 32,3; 35,5; 42,7. See R.E. CLEMENTS, *Beyond Tradition History: Deutero-Isaianic Development of First Isaiah's Themes*, in *JSOT* 31 (1985) 95-113, pp. 101-104.

22. עבדים "servants": Isa 54,17; 56,6; 63,17; 65,8.9.13-15; 66,14; ירע "offspring": Isa 59,21; 61,8-9; 65,9.23; 66,22. The "servants" first appear in Isa 54,17b, in which the "inheritance of the servants" has been editorially coordinated with the restoration of Zion described in Isa 54,1-17a; see STROMBERG, *Isaiah after Exile* (n. 18), p. 246. Note that we already see a hint of a community that follows the Servant in opposition to one that does not in Isa 50,4-11.

23. See W.A.M. BEUKEN, *The Main Theme of Trito-Isaiah "The Servants of YHWH"*, in *JSOT* 47 (1990) 67-87; also G.W.E. NICKELSBURG, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life in Intertestamental Judaism and Early Christianity* (2nd ed.), Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 2006, pp. 39-40; P. HANSON, *The Dawn of Apocalyptic: The Historical and Sociological Roots of Jewish Apocalyptic Eschatology* (2nd ed.), Philadelphia, PA, Fortress, 1979, pp. 152-155; J. BLENKINSOPP, *The "Servants of the Lord" in Third Isaiah: Profile of a Pietistic Group in the Persian Epoch*, in R.P. GORDON (ed.), *"This Place Is Too Small for Us": The Israelite Prophets in Recent Scholarship*, Winona Lake, IN, Eisenbrauns, 1995, 392-412; *The Servant and the Servants in Isaiah and the Formation of the Book*, in C. BROYLES - C.A. EVANS (eds.), *Writing and Reading the Scroll of Isaiah: Studies of an Interpretive Tradition* (SupplVT, 70.1), New York, Brill, 1997, 155-175; H.G.M. WILLIAMSON, *Variations on a Theme: King, Messiah and Servant in the Book of Isaiah*, Carlisle, Paternoster Press, 1998, pp. 192-199; STROMBERG, *Isaiah after Exile* (n. 18), pp. 79-91.

24. Isa 55,6-7 "Seek (דרש) the Lord while he may be found (מצא); call (קרא) upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake his way (דרך), and the unrighteous man his thoughts (מחשבת); let him return to the Lord, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon". This offer is described as rejected in Isa 65,1-2, "I was ready to be sought (דרש) by those who did not ask; I was ready to be found (מצא) by those who did not inquire of me. I said, "Here am I, here am I," to a nation that was not called (קרא) by my name. I spread out my hands all day long to a rebellious people, who walk in a way (דרך) that is not good, following their own thoughts (מחשבת)".

“servants”/“offspring” have accepted the offer to “seek” God<sup>25</sup>. These servants/offspring are mocked and persecuted by those who have rejected God (Isa 57,1; 66,5), but they will be vindicated (Isa 54,15-17; 66,2,5) and their opponents will be punished (Isa 65,6-12; 66,4-6). God will bless the servants/offspring (Isa 65,13-15; 66,14), but withhold blessing from those who rejected him (Isa 66,13-15). The last ten chapters of Isaiah place great emphasis on the “inheritance” that God will give the servants; this includes vindication from enemies, possession of the land, God’s favor, and the eschatological blessing of the “new heavens and new earth” (Isa 66,17-25; note that the description of cosmic restoration in Isa 11,6.7.9 is repeated here in 65,23.25 as the blessing of the servants/offspring)<sup>26</sup>.

Isaiah 56–66, then, extends and develops earlier passages in Isaiah to argue that the Servant creates a community (the “servants”/“offspring”) that suffers righteously and is vindicated like him. Moreover, these chapters also associate the task of the servants with that of the Servant. First, the description of restored Zion in Isa 60,1-3 reuses the “light for the nations” motif that was earlier used to describe the role of the Servant (Isa 49,6)<sup>27</sup>. Second, the offer to “seek” God in Isa 55,6-7 (taken up by the servants in Isa 65,9-10) is preceded by a promise that foreign nations will come to Israel (Isa 55,5)<sup>28</sup>. Third, in Isa 56,6-8 we see that foreigners are able to be included among the servants, and in v. 8 the author argues that the restoration of Israel will include even the nations. Finally, it appears that the Servant’s role of being a “light to the nations” (Isa 42,6; 49,6) is passed on to the servants in Isa 66,18-21, though these verses are admittedly difficult<sup>29</sup>. What is clear is that this passage describes witnesses who go out to “declare God’s glory among the nations” (Isa 66,19). The fact that this passage is surrounded by descriptions of “servants” (v. 14) and “offspring” (v. 22) suggests that this role of witness to the nations is a further link between the Servant and the servants. The Servant’s role as “light to the nations,” then, is passed on to the community he creates.

25. Isa 65,9-10 “I will bring forth *offspring* (זרע) from Jacob, and from Judah one who will possess my mountains; my chosen ones shall possess it, and *my servants* (עבד) shall dwell there. And Sharon will become a pasture for flocks, and the Valley of Achor a place for herds to lie down, *for my people who seek me* (עמי אשר דרשוני)”.  
 26. Isa 54,17 (נחלה); Isa 57,13 (ירש); Isa 61,7 (ירש); Isa 65,9 (ירש).  
 27. See CLEMENTS, *A Light to the Nations* (n. 12), pp. 66-68.  
 28. Note that while the Hebrew text of Isa 55,5 depicts glorified Israel as having an active role with respect to the nations (תקרא “you will call”), the Septuagint attributes the activity to the nations (ἐπικαλέσονται σε “they will call upon you”).  
 29. J. BLENKINSOPP, *Isaiah 56–66: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB), New York, Doubleday, 2003, p. 315. On the numerous difficulties in these verses, see pp. 313-315; he argues that v. 20 is an interpolation that attempts to correct the radical description of restoration in vv. 18-19.21.

## III. THE STRATEGY OF LUKE-ACTS: THE SERVANT AND THE SERVANTS

It appears likely that the argument structure about the Servant and servants in Isa 40–66 forms the basis for Paul’s assertion in Acts 13,47 that God’s speech to the Servant (Isa 49,6) functions as a command to the apostles. The author of Luke-Acts understands Jesus as the Servant and his followers as his servants, the community who shares in his sufferings and carries out his mission. The reference to Isa 49,6 in Acts 13,47, however, is only part of the larger literary strategy in which the language and argument of Isa 40–66 is taken up in Luke-Acts<sup>30</sup>. The author has not randomly selected the quotations of and allusions to Isaiah listed below, but has drawn them from the salient points of his source text’s argument structure.

In both Isaiah and Luke-Acts, Israel is God’s “servant” (παῖς, Isa 41,8-9 // Luke 1,54-55; note the reference to Abraham in both verses), who waits for restoration (Isa 40,3 // Luke 1,76; Isa 9,2 [MT 9,1] + 60,1-2 // Luke 1,78-79; cf. Acts 3,21). This restoration is variously described in terms of “comfort” (παρακαλέω/παρακλήσις, Isa 40,1 // Luke 2,25), “redemption” (λυτρόω/λύτρωσις, Isa 44,22-23; 51,11; 52,9; 62,12 // Luke 2,38; 24,21), and “salvation” (σωτήριος, Isa 40,5 // Luke 2,30)<sup>31</sup>.

Like the agent of restoration in Isaiah, Jesus is described in Luke-Acts as God’s “servant” (παῖς, Acts 3,13.26; 4,27.30; cf. Isa 42; 49; 52–53), the “righteous one” (δίκαιος, Luke 23,47; Acts 3,14; 7,52; 22,14 // Isa 53,11)<sup>32</sup>. He is empowered by God’s Spirit (Luke 3,22 // Isa 42,1 + Ps 2,7; Acts 10,38 // Isa 61,1). He is “delivered up” (παραδίδωμι, Luke 9,44; 18,32; 20,20; 22,4.6.48; 23,25; 24,7.20; Acts 3,13 // Isa 53,12) and suffers (Luke 22,37 // Isa 53,12; Acts 8,32-33 // Isa 53,7-8; cf. Luke 17,25; 24,26.46; Acts 3,18; 26,23), but is vindicated by God (δοξάζω, Acts 3,13 // Isa 52,13). He is both the agent of restoration for Israel and a “light to the nations” (Luke 2,32 // Isa 49,6 + 46,13; Luke 4,17-21 // Isa 61,1-2; Luke 7,22 // Isa 61,1; Acts 26,23 // Isa 42,6; 49,6). In this role, he comes to bring “release to the captives” (αἰχμαλώτους ἄφεσιν, Luke 4,18 //

30. On the use of Isaiah in Luke-Acts, see J. DUPONT, *Apologetic Use of the Old Testament in Acts*, in DUPONT (ed.), *The Salvation of the Gentiles: Studies in the Acts of the Apostles* (n. 1), 129-159, pp. 141-146; J. GREEN, *The Death of Jesus, God’s Servant*, in D. SYLVA (ed.), *Reimagining the Death of the Lukan Jesus* (BBB, 73), Frankfurt, Anton Hain, 1990, 1-28, 170-173; D. PAO, *Acts and the Isaianic New Exodus*, Grand Rapids, MI, Baker Academic, 2002; K. LITWAK, *Echoes of Scripture in Luke-Acts: Telling the History of God’s People Intertextually* (JSNTS, 282), New York, T&T Clark, 2005; KOET, *Isaiah in Luke-Acts* (n. 2), 79-100; P. MALLÉN, *The Reading and Transformation of Isaiah in Luke-Acts* (LNTS, 367), New York, T&T Clark, 2008.

31. On the theme of the restoration of Israel in Luke-Acts, see R. BAUCKHAM, *The Restoration of Israel in Luke-Acts*, in J.M. SCOTT (ed.), *Restoration: Old Testament, Jewish, and Christian Perspectives*, Leiden, Brill, 2001, 435-487.

32. For other ways in which Luke-Acts depicts Jesus as the Servant, see R.F. O’TOOLE, *How Does Luke Portray Jesus as Servant of YHWH*, in *Biblica* 81 (2000) 328-346.

Isa 61,1); quite possibly this is understood in Luke-Acts as captivity to sin, given the prominence of the phrase “release from sin” (ἄφεσις ἁμαρτιῶν, Luke 1,77; 3,3; 24,47; Acts 2,38; 5,31; 10,43; 13,38; 26,18; note the extent to which these references coincide with the use of other locutions taken from Isaiah).

Like the Isaian Servant who has “offspring” and “makes many righteous” (Isa 53,10-11), the Jesus described in Luke-Acts also creates a community who embodies his values and mission. There is a connection of joint service and joint glorification between Jesus and his followers (Luke 22,24-30). Like the servants of Isa 56–66, Jesus’ followers suffer “on account of his name” (Luke 21,12.17; Acts 9,16 // Isa 66,5). Like the servants of Isa 56–66, Jesus’ followers are assured of their inheritance over and against others (Luke 6,20-26 // Isa 65,13-14)<sup>33</sup>. Like the servants of Isa 56–66, Jesus’ followers are given God’s promised Spirit (Luke 24,49; Acts 1,8; 2,33, 38-39; 10,44-45; etc. // Isa 57,19; 59,21). And like the Servant and the servants of Isa 40–66, Jesus’ followers both proclaim restoration to Israel and are a “light to the nations” (Acts 1,8 // Isa 49,6; Acts 10,36 // Isa 52,7; Acts 13,47 // Isa 49,6; Acts 15,15-18 // Amos 9,11-12 + Isa 45,21; Acts 26,17-18 // Isa 42,7; 42,6; 49,6; Acts 28,28 // Isa 40,5; cf. Acts 9,15). Note that Acts 26,23 presumes that Jesus’ mission is transferred to his followers: “the Christ was to suffer ... he would be *first* to proclaim light to both our people and the Gentiles”.

The use of Isaiah in Acts is not just a matter of borrowed vocabulary; the plot itself contains “case studies” of Jewish and Gentile transformation which have been shaped according to the argument of Isa 40–66. For example, in Acts 8,27ff Philip meets a travelling Ethiopian eunuch who is reading Isaiah. When asked by the eunuch to explain the referent of the suffering Servant figure in Isa 53, Philip proclaims Jesus to him. What is intriguing is that Isa 56,3-5 argues that foreigners and eunuchs should not fear separation or lack of inheritance from God, and states that foreigners can even become part of the “servants” (Isa 56,6). The figure of the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8, then, is an instantiation of the argument of Isa 56<sup>34</sup>. In another example, Paul’s initial encounter with Jesus is described using the “light” and “blindness to sight” motifs from Isa 42 (Isa 42,6-7 // Acts 9,3.8.12.17-18; note that Paul only regains his sight after another proclaims Jesus to him). The same context refers to Paul’s new role given by Jesus, which is to “suffer for the sake of [his] name” and proclaim him to Israel and the Gentiles (Acts 9,15-16).

33. See J. BLENKINSOPP, *Opening the Sealed Book: Interpretations of the Book of Isaiah in Late Antiquity*, Grand Rapids, MI, Eerdmans, 2006, p. 134: “There can be no doubt that these are identical with the Servants of the Lord to whom the promised reversal of 65:13-14 is addressed”.

34. PAO, *Acts and the Isaianic New Exodus* (n. 30), pp. 140-142.

## IV. THE PARADIGMATIC USE OF ISAIAH 40–66 IN OTHER LITERATURE

If my thesis is correct – namely, that the argument of Isa 40–66 about the Servant and the servants formed the conceptual background for describing the relationship between Jesus and his followers in Luke-Acts – then we might expect to see other evidence that Isa 40–66 was read in a paradigmatic way in the Second Temple period. We do in fact find such evidence in the Pauline epistles. For example, in 2 Cor 5,18–6,2 Paul identifies Jesus with the Servant by alluding (2 Cor 5,21) to the innocent sin-bearer whose work made many righteous described in Isa 53,5.6.11. He portrays his community as those who have been transformed by the Servant’s work (2 Cor 5,18). In 2 Cor 6,2 he quotes Isa 49,8, where the Servant receives encouragement that he is divinely endorsed and has been chosen by God to be a “covenant to the people”<sup>35</sup>. By emphasizing the immediacy of God’s salvific acts through the Servant (“now is the ‘day of salvation’”), Paul justifies his argument that the early Christian community has been given the task of proclaiming God’s deliverance through Christ (2 Cor 5,18-20), and that his community is in fact “working together” with Christ (2 Cor 6,1). M. Gignilliat argues that this is evidence that Paul is using the argument structure of Isa 40–66 to define his community as the servants who suffer like the Servant (cf. 2 Cor 6,4-5) and participate with the Servant in his role of deliverance<sup>36</sup>.

Paul makes extensive use of Isaiah in his epistle to the Romans, and the references in Rom 10 and 15 are worthy of particular notice<sup>37</sup>. In Rom 10,13, Paul quotes Joel 2,32 to argue that “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved”. In the following verses, he argues that this is not possible unless the good news is proclaimed, and quotes Isa 52,7 in support. However, when Paul quotes Isa 52,7 in Rom 10,15, he changes its singular “he who brings good news” (εὐαγγελιζόμενος ἀγαθά) to

35. J. BLENKINSOPP, *Isaiah 40–55: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB), New York, Doubleday, 2000, p. 305: “The second saying (49:8-12) is addressed to the individual whose voice we have just heard (vv 1-6). It consists in reassurance (form-critically, an oracle of salvation) about the original mission to Israel”.

36. See M. GIGNILLIAT, *Paul and Isaiah’s Servants: Paul’s Theological Reading of Isaiah 40–66 in 2 Corinthians 5:14–6:10* (LNTS, 330), New York, T&T Clark, 2007, pp. 108-142. For a similar analysis of the use of Isaian language by Paul in Galatians, see M. HARMON, *She Must and Shall Go Free: Paul’s Isaianic Gospel in Galatians* (BZNTW, 168), Berlin, de Gruyter, 2010. For Harmon’s analysis of Isaian Servant language to describe Paul’s mission in Gal 1,10.15-16.24, see pp. 75-89; for his suggestion that the relationship between the Servant and the servants in the argument structure of Isa 40–66 forms the conceptual background for Paul’s argument, see pp. 45, 74, 120 n.257, 192.

37. On Paul’s use of Isaiah in Romans, see particularly J.R. WAGNER, *Heralds of the Good News: Isaiah and Paul in Concert in the Letter to the Romans*, Leiden, Brill, 2002. However, while he rightly places great emphasis on the degree to which the argument of Isaiah shaped Paul’s outlook (see his conclusions, pp. 29-33, 353-359), he does not specifically refer to the argument about the Servant and servants in Isa 40–66.

the plural “those who bring good news” (τῶν εὐαγγελιζομένων ἀγαθῶν)<sup>38</sup>. This is in line with the idea that the righteous community created by the Servant should carry out the Servant’s role of proclaiming God’s deliverance<sup>39</sup>.

Did the earliest Christian communities invent this paradigmatic reading of Isa 40–66? The evidence indicates otherwise. For example, G.H. Dalman pointed out over a century ago that Dan 12,3 is borrowing the wording of Isa 53,11<sup>40</sup>:

Because of his anguish, he will see light; he will be satisfied through his knowledge. The righteous one, my Servant, *will make the many righteous* (בְּצַדִּיק . . . לְרַבִּים), and he will bear their iniquity. (Isa 53,11)  
 And those who have insight will shine like the radiance of the expanse; and *those who make the many righteous* (בְּצַדִּיקֵי הַרְבִּים), like the stars forever and ever. (Dan 12,3)

The larger context of Dan 11–12 parallels the argument structure of Isa 53: the righteous suffer (Isa 53,3-10 // Dan 11,33-34; 12,1) even to death (Isa 53,8.9.12 // Dan 11,33; 12,2), make others righteous

38. For a discussion of the texts, see *ibid.*, pp. 170-174. Three other points are relevant to what Paul is doing here: first, while the “messenger of good news who announces salvation” in Isa 52,7 is an anonymous figure not explicitly identified as the Servant, this messenger is proclaiming what God intends to enact through the work of the Servant (Isa 49,6). Second, the anointed agent of deliverance in Isa 61,1 is also introduced as one who “proclaims good news”. For the relationship of the figure in Isa 61,1 to the Servant of Isa 40–55, see H.A.J. KRUGER, *Transferor of Privileges, an “identikit” of the Servant of the Lord?*, in *HTR* 58 (2002) 1555-1576; J. STROMBERG, *An Inner-Isaianic Reading of Isaiah 61:1-3*, in H.G.M. WILLIAMSON – D.G. FIRTH (eds.), *Interpreting Isaiah: Issues and Approaches*, Downers Grove, IL, InterVarsity Press, 2009, 261-272. Note that Isa 52,7 and 61,1 are already explicitly linked together in *11QMelchizedek (11Q13)*. Third, the shift from singular proclamation to plural proclamation is already attested in Isaiah itself in a remarkable way: in Isa 60,6, it is the *nations* who stream to a restored Zion who will “proclaim the praises of YHWH” (תְּהַלֵּל יְהוָה בְּשִׁרָר); even more explicitly in the LXX, “proclaim good news of the salvation of YHWH” (τὸ σωτήριον κυρίου εὐαγγελιοῦνται).

39. See also Rom 15,12 (which uses Isa 11,10; 42,4), Rom 15,16 (where Paul’s description of his mission to the Gentiles as “ministering as a priest” and “offering of the Gentiles”) may reflect the argument and language of Isa 66,18-21 [on which see my discussion above]), and Rom 15,20-21 (which uses Isa 52,15). On Rom 15,16, see R. REISNER, *Paul’s Early Period: Chronology, Mission Strategy, Theology*, Grand Rapids, MI, Eerdmans, 1998, pp. 245-253.

40. G.H. DALMAN, *Der leidende und der sterbende Messias der Synagoge im ersten nachchristlichen Jahrtausend*, Berlin, H. Reuther, 1888, p. 31; see also J.A. MONTGOMERY, *The Book of Daniel* (ICC), Edinburgh, T&T Clark, 1927, p. 472; H.L. GINSBURG, *The Oldest Interpretation of the Suffering Servant*, in *VT* 3 (1953) 400-404; NICKELSBURG, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life* (n. 23), pp. 33-41. J. DAY finds an additional parallel between the word דָּעַת in Isa 53,11 and Dan 12,4, translating both occurrences of this word as “humiliation” rather than “knowledge” (based on the occurrence of דָּעַת in Isa 53,3, which he translates as “humbled”); see J. DAY, *DA’AT “Humiliation” in Isaiah LIII 11 in the Light of Isaiah LIII 3 and Daniel XII 4, and the Oldest Known Interpretation of the Suffering Servant*, in *VT* 30 (1980) 97-103.

(Isa 53,11 // Dan 12,3), and are vindicated by God (Isa 52,13; 53,12 // Dan 12,1-3). But Daniel 12 is not simply repeating the argument of Isaiah 53. Its argument that the righteous *community* (here called “those who have insight”) suffers, makes many righteous, and is vindicated is drawn from the larger argument in Isa 56–66, in which the servants (like the Servant) suffer, carry out the Servant’s mission, and are vindicated<sup>41</sup>. As in Isa 40–66, this is set against the backdrop of hope for the coming of God’s Kingdom.

The complaint psalms Ps 22, 69, and 102 also borrow the vocabulary and themes of the “Servant/servants” material in Isa 40–66 and use the argument in these chapters as a paradigm for righteous suffering and hope for a vindication in which the global acknowledgment of YHWH is realized<sup>42</sup>. The author of *Wisdom of Solomon* constructs the figure of an exemplary individual by borrowing Isaian vocabulary describing God’s agent the righteous suffering Servant, then aligning it with the argument in Isa 56–66 about the righteous servants<sup>43</sup>. This figure of an exemplary individual in *Wisdom of Solomon* is constructed for the needs of the righteous suffering *community*, who will be vindicated and participate in God’s Kingdom because they put their trust in him (*Wis* 3,1-9; note the shift to plural language). It is no surprise, then, that the Isaian language of righteous suffering is also used by New Testament authors not only to describe the mission of Jesus (Mark 9,12; 10,45), but also to function paradigmatically for the followers of Jesus who must suffer as he did (Mark 8,31.34.35; 1 Pet 2,21-25; 4,1.12-14; see also Phil 1,29; 3,10; Col 1,24).

41. Note that the terms *משכיל* and *הרבים* from Dan 12,3 are used as self-designations by the sectarian group in the *Rule of the Community* (*IQS* 3.13; 6.1–7.25; 9.12).

42. For the use of the “Servant/servants” theme in these psalms, see M.A. LYONS, *Psalms 22 and the “Servants” of Isaiah 54, 56–66*, in P.J. KISSLING – R.L. COLE (eds.), *Text and Canon*, Eugene, OR, Wipf & Stock/Pickwick Press (forthcoming); U. BERGES, *Who Were the Servants? A Comparative Inquiry in the Book of Isaiah and the Psalms*, in J.C. DE MOOR – H.F. VAN ROOY (eds.), *Past, Present, Future: The Deuteronomistic History and the Prophets* (OTS, 44), Leiden, Brill, 2000, 1-18; A. GROENEWALD, *Who Are the “Servants” (Psalm 69:36c-37b)? A Contribution to the History of the Literature of the Old Testament*, in *HTS* 59 (2003) 735-761. J. BECKER, *Israel deutet seine Psalmen: Urform und Neuinterpretation in den Psalmen* (SBS, 18), Stuttgart, Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1966, pp. 43-53, argues that these three psalms are a “collectivizing interpretation” of Isa 40–55, whereas I understand them as composed in light of the larger argument trajectory in Isa 40–66.

43. For lists of words and themes that *Wisdom of Solomon* borrows from the Servant passages of Isaiah, see M.J. SUGGS, *Wisdom 2:10-5: A Homily Based on the Fourth Servant Song*, in *JBL* 76 (1957) 30-31; NICKELSBURG, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life* (n. 23), pp. 83-88; HENGEL – BAILEY, *Effective History* (n. 17), pp. 129-131; P.C. BEENTJES, *Wisdom of Solomon 3,1–4,19 and the Book of Isaiah*, in J. VAN RUITEN – M. VERVENNE (eds.), *Studies in the Book of Isaiah: Festschrift Willem A.M. Beuken* (BETL, 132), Leuven, University Press – Peeters, 1997, 413-420. The awareness of the larger context of Isaiah is obvious in the following allusions: Isa 54,1 in *Wis* 3,13; Isa 56,4-5 in *Wis* 3,14; Isa 59,17 in *Wis* 5,18.

## V. CONCLUSION

At the close of his study reconstructing the social setting of the “servants” in Isa 56–66, J. Blenkinsopp remarks<sup>44</sup>:

A closer study of the movement generated by the Servant’s career may serve not only to fill out some details, but to suggest that the early Christian movement, in the way it understood itself charged<sup>45</sup>, and the prospects which lay ahead of it, was following a pattern already at hand in the historical experience of Second Temple Judaism.

Blenkinsopp’s insight is, I believe, fundamentally correct. The reception of Isa 40–66 in the Second Temple-period texts discussed above demonstrates that the early Christian conception of its identity and mission in relation to its founder did not originate in a vacuum.

In this essay I have argued that the use of Isaian Servant language in the depiction of the apostolic mission in Acts 13,47 is based on a literary strategy already present in Isa 40–66 itself. It is not based solely on the fact that the apostles believed that they had been commissioned by Jesus to be a witness to the Gentiles. Nor is it based on a mere analogy, as if the Isaian “light” imagery was simply a convenient way of describing the effect of their respective messages on their hearers. Nor again did the author of Luke-Acts suddenly come to the unprompted realization that the apostolic community constituted the “new Israel,” and could therefore speak of the apostles as taking over the task of Israel, God’s servant, as described in Isaiah. Rather, the argument strategy of Isa 40–66, in which the Servant creates a community of servants who embody his values and carry out his mission, was read paradigmatically – as it had been already by earlier readers. In Luke-Acts, however, it was used to describe the relationship and shared mission between Jesus and his followers. Acts 13,47 in this way takes up the Isaian vision of God’s Servant, a restored Israel, and the conversion of the nations.

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ABSTRACT. — Acts 13 relates Paul’s sermon in Pisidian Antioch, which he and Barnabas conclude by quoting Isa 49,6, “I will make you a light to the nations,” then claim that this is “what the Lord commanded *us*” – in apparent contradiction

44. BLENKINSOPP, *The “Servants of the Lord” in Third Isaiah* (n. 23), pp. 411-412.

45. *Ibid.*, p. 412, n.60: “The sequence: mission to Israel, relative failure, mission to the Gentiles as a preparation for the parousia not only in the Servant passages but throughout Second and Third Isaiah (e.g., 66:18-21 for a Gentile mission leading to the parousia)”.

of the fact that in Isa 49,5-7, YHWH is addressing a figure entitled “my Servant”. What is the rationale for this use of Isaiah? And how can Luke-Acts use Isa 49,6 to describe both the mission of the apostles (Acts 1,8; 13,47) and the mission of Jesus (Luke 2,32)? In this essay I argue that the use of Isaian Servant language to describe the mission of Jesus and the apostles is based on an argument strategy that originates within the composition of Isaiah itself. As W. Beuken and J. Blenkinsopp have shown, Isa 56–66 extends and develops the earlier arguments about the Servant in Isa 40–55 to claim that a righteous community called the “servants” would derive their values and mission from the Servant. A number of Second Temple period texts show awareness of this argument strategy in Isaiah. It is likely, then, that Acts 13,47 links the mission of the apostles to that of Jesus on the basis of the Isaian argument about the relationship between the Servant and the servants.