

The Servant-Messiah and the Messiah's Servants in Targum Jonathan Isaiah

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In Targum Jonathan Isaiah (T^J Isa), the Suffering Servant does not suffer. The passages regarding the Suffering Servant have been systematically rewritten to accord with expectations of a triumphant messiah. These facts are well known and have been explored numerous times in the past.¹ What has not been explored are the implications of this rewriting for the theme of the servants. In the Masoretic Text (M), the characteristics of the servants are determined by those of the Suffering Servant. The servants emulate the servant to the extent that they suffer in their own right.² For T^J Isaiah, though, one must ask: how is the identity as the servants construed, if it is not shaped by a figure who suffers righteously? Below I have provided parallel translations of these texts with notes on translation equivalents so that the reader may have a context for understanding T^J's differences from its *Vorlage*.

The Servant-Messiah in T^J Isaiah

¹ I make no attempt in this chapter to relate my findings to all modern proposals on the topic. A basic bibliography, for those who would like one, would have to include: Jostein Ådna, "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 Messiah," in *The Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 in Jewish and Christian Sources*, eds. Bernd Janowski and Peter Stuhlmacher (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004 [German original 1996]), 189–224; Robert Aytoun, "The Servant of the Lord in the Targum," *JTS* 23 (1921): 172–80; Hans Dieter Betz, "Die Übersetzungen von Jes 53 (LXX, Targum) und die Theologia Crucis des Paulus," in *Jesus, Der Herr der Kirche: Aufsätze zur biblischen Theologie II*, ed. idem (WUNT 52; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1990), 197–216; Bruce Chilton, *The Isaiah Targum: Introduction, Translation, Apparatus and Notes* (ArBib 11; Liturgical, 1987); idem., *The Glory of Israel. The Theology and Provenance of the Isaiah Targum* (JSOTSup 23; Sheffield: JSOT, 1982); Harald Hagermann, *Jesaja 53 in Hexapla, Targum und Peschitta* (BFCT 2/56; Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1954); Otfried Hofius, "Kennt der Targum zu Jes 53 einen sündenvergebenden Messias?" chap. in idem., *Neutestamentliche Studien* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), 70–107; Jorg Jeremias, "παῖς θεου," *TDNT* 5:695; Klaus Koch, "Messias und Sündenvergebung in Jesaja 53 – Targum: Ein Beitrag zu der Praxis der Aramäischen Bibelüberstzung," *JSJ* 3 (1972): 117–48; Arie van der Kooij, *Die alten Textzeugen des Jesajabuches: Ein Beitrag zur Textgeschichte des Alten Testaments* (OBO 35; Berlin: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1981); Étan Levin, *The Aramaic Version of the Bible: Contents and Context*. (BZAW 174; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1988); Roger Syrén, "Targum Isaiah 52:13–53:12 and Christian Interpretation," *JJS* 40/2 (1989): 201–12; Hans-Walter Wolff, *Jesaja 53 im Urchristentum*, 4th ed. (Zürich: TVG, 1984).

² W. A. M. Beuken, "The Main Theme of Trito-Isaiah 'The Servants of YHWH'," *JSOT* 47 (1990): 67–87; Joseph Blenkinsopp, "The Servant and the Servants in Isaiah and the Formation of the Book," in *Writing and Reading the Scroll of Isaiah: Studies of an Interpretive Tradition* (eds. Craig Broyles and Craig Evans; VTSup 70; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 155–75.

The title “servant” (עבד) is given to many characters in \mathfrak{S}^J Isaiah, as it is in \mathfrak{M} . The prophet Isaiah (20:3), Eliakim (22:20), David (37:33), and Israel/Jacob (e.g., 41:8–10; 44:1–2, 21; 45:4; 49:3) are all designated “servant” of God. Three texts in \mathfrak{S}^J Isaiah also associate the servant with the Messiah: 42:1–7; 43:10a; 52:13–53:12. Isaiah 43:10a offers no details about the Servant-Messiah and will not detain us.³ The other two describe his status before God, his actions on behalf of Israel, and the ways that he engages with the nations. In \mathfrak{M} , Isa 42:1–7 and 52:13–53:12 portray an unnamed “servant” who suffers, whereas in \mathfrak{S}^J , they describe the Servant-Messiah, who champions the suffering.

Isaiah 42:1–7⁴

\mathfrak{M}

\mathfrak{S}^J

¹ Here is my servant, whom I uphold,
my chosen one, [in whom] my soul
delights;
I have put my spirit upon him;
he will bring forth justice to the nations.

² He will not cry out, nor lift up,
or make heard in the street his voice;

³ a bruised reed, he will not break,

and a dim wick, he will not quench it;

faithfully, he will bring forth justice.

⁴ He will not grow faint or be crushed
till he has established justice in the earth;
and for his instruction, the coastlands
wait.

⁵ Thus says the god, Yhwh,
the creator of the heavens and the one who
stretched them out,
the one who hammered out the earth with
its produce [in it],
the one giving breath to the people upon it
and spirit to those who walk around in it,

¹ Behold my servant, I will bring him near,
my chosen one in whom my Memra is
pleased;⁵

I will put my *Holy* Spirit upon him,
he will reveal *my* justice to the nations.

² He will not cry or call
or lift up outside his voice.

³ *The humble who are like* a bruised reed he
will not break,

and *the poor who are like* a flickering
lamp he will not quench;

for his truth, he will bring forth justice.

⁴ He will not tire or be weary
till he has established justice in the earth;
and for his Torah, the islands wait.

⁵ Thus says the *eternal* God, Yhwh
who created the heavens and suspended
them,

who completed the earth and its
inhabitants,⁶

who gives breath to the people upon it,
and spirit to those who walk around in it,

³ \mathfrak{S}^J Isa 43:10a: “You are witnesses before me,” says Yhwh, “and my servant the Messiah (משיחא) whom I am pleased with him.” The pericope in which this line appears, Isaiah 43:8–21, describes the incomparability of Yhwh and his fulfilment of prophecies. It only speaks of the Servant-Messiah in this one half-verse.

⁴ Where translations of \mathfrak{M} and \mathfrak{S}^J are compared, plusses in either text are *italicised*, and differences (e.g., word substitutions) are underlined. Where elements of a single poetic line in \mathfrak{M} were split between two lines in \mathfrak{S}^J , I have added and ellipsis (...) to mark the split. Other excerpts from \mathfrak{S}^J are offered without distracting paratextual elements.

⁵ For \mathfrak{M} ’s אֶתְמַדְּבוּ, “I will sustain him,” \mathfrak{S}^J offers אֶקְרַבְנִיהּ, “I will bring him near.”

⁶ Aram. וְדִירָהּ, “its inhabitants,” clarifies how the Targumic scribes understood Heb. וּצְאֵצְאִיהּ, which can be translated “its offspring.” I imagine that they had Gen 2:7 in mind as well, cued by the parallels between the next two lines and Gen 2:7b: וַיִּפֶּחַ בְּאַפְיוֹ נֶשְׁמַת חַיִּים וַיְהִי הָאָדָם לְנֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה.

⁶ “I am Yhwh. I called you in righteousness,
I have taken you by the hand, and I have
guarded you;

I have given you as a covenant of people,
as a light to the nations,

⁷ in order to open the blind eyes

In order to bring out from the dungeon the
prisoner,

from the the house of confinement those
who dwell in the dark.

⁶ “I am the Lord. I elevated you by truth,
and I will seize your hand, and I will
establish you

I will give you as a covenant of people, as
a light to the nations,

⁷ to open the eyes *of the house of Israel*
*who are like those blind from the Torah,*⁷

in order to bring out *their exiles* from
among the nations *where they are like*
prisoners,

and to release them from servitude to the
kingdoms

where they are imprisoned like prisoners
of darkness.

The identity of the servant is not made explicit here. Modern commentators of the Hebrew text often identify him with Israel, the *golah*, or a royal figure, possibly Cyrus.⁸ The scribes of \mathfrak{J} , however, considered the servant of 42:1–7 to be the messiah. The servant is identified as the “chosen one” in 42:1, and the “chosen” “servant” is explicitly named as the Messiah in \mathfrak{J} 43:10. The only other character in \mathfrak{J} Isa who is called “servant” and “chosen” is Israel (45:4), but the servant in view here cannot be Israel. One of his tasks is to “open the eyes of the house of Israel” (42:7). In addition, the servant of 42:1–7 brings justice to the poor and needy and liberates Israel from Gentile rule. Both of these tasks are assigned to the messiah (e.g., \mathfrak{J} Isa 11:4; 52:15; 53:3, 7, 8, 11).⁹

The principle duties of the servant in 42:1–7 are to establish God’s justice under the empowerment of the divine spirit (42:1b) and to bring light to the whole world (42:6–7). The two tasks are closely related. דין (“justice/judgment”; Heb משפט) appears three times in vv. 1–7: when the servant reveals justice to the nations, when he brings justice for the poor and humble, and when he establishes justice in the earth (vv. 1b, 3b, 4b). This “justice” is equated with “truth” קושט (v. 3b; cf. v. 6a), and with the Torah, אורית (v. 4b; cf. v. 7a). The Torah-compliance of the messiah’s justice is illustrated by the one example provided. In accordance with the Law of Moses, the messiah does not tread on the humble (ענותן) or poor (חסיד) (e.g., Exod 22:22; 23:6; Lev 19:15, 34; 25:35; Deut 10:18; 24:14–19; reiterated in Isaiah at 1:17; 10:2; 11:4; and 32:7). The image of the servant as a “light to the nations” who will bring light to the darkness and open blind eyes is closely related to this theme. The cause of Israel’s

⁷ Translating woodenly, \mathfrak{J} reads: “who, they are the blind from (מן) the Torah.” My understanding of מן אוריתא as a prepositional phrase meaning “[away] from the Torah” is based on the tenor of this pericope and on \mathfrak{J} 53:12, where the Servant-Messiah subjects Israel’s rebels “to (ל) the Torah.”

⁸ E.g., Karl Elliger, *Jesaja 40, 1–45, 7* (BKAT XI/1; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1978), 228; Reinhard Kratz, *Kyros im Deuterojesaja-Buch* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1991), 15–17; Ulrich Berges, *The Book of Isaiah: Its Composition and Final Form* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2012; German original 1998), 336; Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 40–55: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 19A; Doubleday: Anchor, 2000), 209–212, esp. 212;

⁹ The pericope does not stop at v. 4. It continues in vv. 5–9, but those verse do not contribute to our theme.

blindness and the darkness of the nations is ignorance of the Torah (42:2a). Its re-revelation will open Israel's eyes too.

The justice theme, in 42:1–7, is not limited to Torah piety, though. It also represents a return to conditions-as-they-should-be. The Servant-Messiah's double-task, (expressed by the purpose clauses in v. 7) is to open Israel's eyes *and* regather her from diaspora. When Israel is healed and can see, the Servant-Messiah will liberate her from diaspora where she has lived in darkness like a prisoner. The main task of the Servant-Messiah in \mathfrak{F}^J 42:1–7, then, is to bring about global justice in conformity to the Torah.¹⁰

The most obvious difference between \mathfrak{M} and \mathfrak{F}^J in Isa 42:1–7 is that \mathfrak{F}^J removes any suggestion that the Servant-Messiah might suffer. This possibility is hinted at in \mathfrak{M} 's לֹא יְרוּץ וְלֹא יִכָּהּ . . . “not dim and not crushed” (v. 4, the same words used to describe those whom the Servant treats gently in v. 3). \mathfrak{F}^J removes the verbal links between v. 3 and v. 4 by describing the Servant-Messiah with milder terms in v. 4, as וְלֹא יִלָּא . . . לֹא יִהְיֶה לָא (“not tired and not weary”; cf. 49:4). The result is that the Servant exerts himself to show compassion to the weak and suffering,¹¹ rather than suffering himself.¹² This interpretive arc will continue in 52:13–53:12.

* * * *

The principle text in \mathfrak{F}^J Isaiah to speak of the Servant-Messiah is, of course, 53:13–53:12. Two systemic differences between \mathfrak{M} and \mathfrak{F}^J are obvious at a casual reading. In \mathfrak{M} , the whole poem is descriptive of the Servant. Even when other characters or voices appear, their presence serves to add detail to the description of the Servant (e.g., 53:6). In \mathfrak{F}^J , the poem describes past and future conditions of several characters: the Messiah, Israel, the nations, the kingdoms, and the wicked. In \mathfrak{M} , the Servant suffers, as he does in \mathfrak{M} Isa 42:1–7. In \mathfrak{F}^J , the Servant-Messiah advocates and restores, as he did in \mathfrak{F}^J Isa 42:1–7. In both texts there is vindication, but in \mathfrak{F}^J *righteous* suffering is endured only by some of the exiles of Israel.

Isaiah 52:13–53:12

\mathfrak{M}

\mathfrak{F}^J

¹⁰ The theme of universal divine justice also appears in \mathfrak{F}^J Isa 26:9 and 51:4, where it is also equated with divine truth, Torah observance, and light: 26:9b: For when your justice (דִּין) is firm in the earth, they will learn truth (קוֹשֵׁט), in order to act justly in the world; 51:4: Receive my Memra, my people, and my congregation heed my worship. For the Torah (אִוֵּרִית) will go out from before me, and my justice (דִּין) will go forth like a light (נִיְהוֹר); nations will be gathered to it.”

¹¹ In \mathfrak{F}^J , the pair “humble” (עֲנוּתָן) and “poor” (חֲסִידִים) are interpreted as a metaphor for the righteous. \mathfrak{F}^J Isaiah 26:6, for example, glosses the pair עֲנוּתָן + חֲסִידִים with צְדִיקִים: “[With] feet, he will trample *the feet of the righteous* (צְדִיקִים), the foot of the humble (עֲנוּתָן), the poor (חֲסִידִים) of the people.” The distressed and oppressed are associated with righteousness in \mathfrak{M} too; for example, 50:10; 51:12–16; 59:1–21; 60:14–22.

¹² The absence of suffering by the servant, especially in Isa 52:13–53:12, has led some to propose that the translators of \mathfrak{F}^J were motivated by an anti-Christian sentiment. See, e.g., Jeremias, “*παλις θεου*,” 695; and Hagermann, *Jesaja 53*, 66–94, 115–22, esp. 121.

¹³Behold, my servant will prosper;
 he will be honoured, and raised up, and be
 greatly exalted.
¹⁴Just as they were frightened at you, the
 many
 so marred,¹³ *more than any man*, was his
 appearance
 and his form more than [that of] sons of
 men,

¹³Behold, my servant, *the Messiah*,¹⁵ will
 prosper,
 he will be honoured, and will multiply,
 and be very powerful.¹⁶
¹⁴Just as they hoped for him,¹⁷ *the house of*
Israel, many *days*
*who were in darkness among the nations*¹⁸
their appearance and their splendour¹⁹
 was more than [that of] the sons of men²⁰

¹³ משחה, “marred, disfigured,” may have been identified as a pun on משיח by the Targumic scribes, corresponding with their identification of the Servant with the Messiah in 52:13.

¹⁵ Roger Syrén observes a number of shared locutions between the description of the Servant in \mathfrak{T}^J Isa 52:13 and David in \mathfrak{T}^J 1 Sam 18:30, undergirding the identification of the Servant with the Davidic Messiah. “Targum Isaiah 52:13–53:12,” 203.

¹⁶ The word–substitutions in \mathfrak{T}^J v. 13b, appear to be influenced by Gen 12:2. Compare \mathfrak{T}^J with \mathfrak{T}^O : Isa 52:13b: יראם ויסג ויתקף לחדא || Gen 12.2: ואעבדינד לעם סג ואברכינד וארבי שמד ותהי מברך (Also, Aram. תקף, “powerful,” is a legitimate equivalent for Heb. גב״ה)

¹⁷ Hans Dieter Betz and Jostein Ådna have argued that the shift in Hebrew from 3rd person singular in 53:13 to 2nd person singular in the Hebrew of 53:14a (“many who were frightened at *you*”) persuaded the Aramaic translator that statements of suffering and death in 52:13–53:12 must apply to others than the Servant-Messiah. This inference, they argue, allowed the Targumic scribe to render the servant as a triumphant Messiah. As we have seen, \mathfrak{T}^J Isaiah 42:4 does the same. The translator(s) of 52:13–53:12 seem to be moving along an interpretive pathway that started in 42:4. The translator(s) of 52:13–53:12 seem to be moving along an interpretive pathway that started in 42:2. Hans Dieter Betz, “Die Übersetzungen von Jes 53 (LXX, Targum) und die Theologia Crucis des Paulus,” in *Jesus, Der Herr der Kirche: Aufsätze zur biblischen Theologie II*, ed. idem (WUNT 52; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1990), 197–216; Jostein Ådna, “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 Messiah,” in *The Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 in Jewish and Christian Sources*, eds. Bernd Janowski and Peter Stuhlmacher (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004 [German original 1996])189–224.

¹⁸ The plus דאנון עגינין באסירי קבל further aligns this oracle with 42:1–7, esp. vv. 6–7.

¹⁹ “Splendour,” זיו, is used almost exclusively of God in \mathfrak{T}^J Isa (2:10, 19, 21; 6:1, 3; 30:30; 35:2, etc.). It is used of the Servant-Messiah in 53:2, and for Israel here. Israel’s splendour appears to be a result of their hope in the Messiah; it is what distinguished them from the “sons of men.”

²⁰ I.e., even in the darkness of diaspora, Israel is more ‘splendid’ than the surrounding peoples (comparative מן). The splendour (זיו) of Israel accords with the splendour (זיו) of the Servant-Messiah in 53:2.

¹⁵so he will splatter¹⁴ many nations;
because of him kings will shut their
mouth;

for that which had not been told them,
they have seen;
and that which they had not heard, they
perceive.

^{53:1}Who has believed our report?
And the arm of Yhwh been revealed to
whom?

² For he grew up like a young plant before
him,

and like a root from dry ground.

No form he did have ...

and *no* majesty

and should we look at him *when* [he has]
no appearance that we should desire
him?²³

³ Despised and rejected by men,
a man of pain and acquainted with illness;

¹⁵so he will scatter many peoples;²¹
because of him kings will be silent,
they will place their hand upon their
mouth;²²

for that which had not been told them,
they have seen;
and that which they had not heard, they
have perceived.

^{53:1}Who has believed *this*, our report?
And *the strength of the mighty* arm of
Yhwh been revealed to whom?

² And *the righteous* will be great before
him.²⁴

Behold, like sprouts *which fruit*,
and like *a tree which sends its roots to*
streams of waters,²⁵
so will increase generations of the Holy
One on the land which was in need of
him.

not *a common* appearance is his
appearance
and his terror is not an ordinary terror,
and his splendour will be a holy
splendour,
that anyone who looks at him will
consider him.²⁶

³ *Then* it will be scorned and cease, *the*
glory of all the kingdoms;
they will be weak and mournful,
behold, like a man of pain and appointed
for sicknesses

¹⁴ The *hiphil* of זָרַק means “sprinkle, splatter” and is used both in cult contexts (e.g., Lev 16:14) and in vivid descriptions of bloodshed (e.g., 1 Kings 9:33). Both uses are appropriate to the song (Friedrich Delitzsch, *Isaiah 28–66* [Grand Rapids: Hendrickson, 1989; German original 1877], 307–9). The typical English translation “astonished” is derived from זָרַק ¹¹, “spring up, leap,” which is proposed based on Arabic *naza* and $\text{\theta\alpha\upsilon\mu\acute{\alpha}\sigma\omicron\nu\tau\alpha\iota}$, “they will marvel” (⊗^B). Most texts and versions read with $\text{\textcircled{M}}$ (1QIs^a, 1QIs^b, θ' , α' , σ').

²¹ Aramaic $\text{\textcircled{B}}\text{\textcircled{D}}$, “scattered,” appears to be an attempt to render the sense of Hebrew $\text{\textcircled{M}}$, “sprinkle, splatter,” understood as a metaphor.

²² $\text{\textcircled{J}}$ has a double reading of $\text{\textcircled{M}}$ ’s “shut their mouths,” offering “they will be silent” and “they will place their hand upon their mouth.” the second is an idiom best known from Job 40:4 (but also appearing in Judges 18:19; Prov 30:32; Job 21:5; 29:9).

²³ Translating v. 3b as an unmarked interrogative.

²⁴ The Targum supplies the antecedent of the inflected subject “he” in $\text{\textcircled{J}}$ (Heb.), making v. 2a about the righteous, not the Messiah.

²⁵ The plus in $\text{\textcircled{J}}$ is derived from Jer 17:8

²⁶ The negatives in Heb. of v. 2b are construed as comparatives in $\text{\textcircled{J}}$.

and as when faces are hidden from
someone,
[so] he was despised, and we did not
esteem *him*.

⁴ Indeed, our sicknesses he has borne
and our pains, he has carried them;

and we accounted *him* stricken, struck by
God, and afflicted.

⁵ But he ...
was pierced for our sins,
crushed for our iniquities;
the punishment that made us whole was
on him,

and by his bruises we are healed.

⁶ All we like sheep have strayed;
each to his way, we have turned
and Yhwh caused to fall on him
the sin of us all.

⁷ He was oppressed, and he was humiliated,
yet he did not open his mouth;

like a lamb to the slaughter is led,

and like a sheep that before its shearers is
silent,
so he did not open his mouth.

⁸ By a corruption of justice he was taken
away.

His future ...

and as *when* it was taken up—the face of
the Shekinah—from us,
they are despised, and they are not
esteemed.

⁴ Then concerning our sins he will entreat
and our sins, for his sake will be
forgiven;²⁷

and we were considered beaten, [with]
blows from Yhwh, and afflicted.²⁸

⁵ And he *will build the holy house*
*which was profaned*²⁹ for our sins,
[it was] handed over for our iniquities;
and by his teaching³⁰ his peace *will*
increase upon us,
and we follow his words,
our sins³¹ will be forgiven us.

⁶ All we like sheep have been scattered;
each to his road, we have gone into exile;
*and it was the will of Yhwh to forgive*³²
the sins of us all for his sake.

⁷ He requests, and he is answered,³⁴
and before he opens his mouth *he is*
accepted;

the strong ones of the nations like a lamb
to sacrifice he will hand over,
and like an ewe which before its shearers
is silent,
so there is not, *before him*, one who opens
his mouth *or speaks a word*.

⁸ Out of suffering and by vengeance he will
bring our exiles near;

The wonders which will be done for us in
his days,

²⁷ 𐤉𐤍 Isa 1:14, 2:9, and 46:4 also interpret “carry” (סבל) and/or “bear” (נשא) as “forgive.”

²⁸ The Targumic scribes interpret Hebrew ‘bear’ and ‘carry’ as metaphors for the Servant-Messiah intervening on behalf of the people (compare 53:6b, 7a, 12b). Heb. ענייה, “afflicted,” *pual* singular ≡ Aram. עניי, “afflicted,” *paal* (passive) plural.

²⁹ Heb. חלל, “pierced,” *polal* ≡ Aram. חלל, “profaned,” *ittaphel*.

³⁰ Heb. מוסר, “punishment” is rendered twice in Aramaic: once as אתמסר, “handed over,” and a second time as אולפן, “teaching.” Heb. מדכא, “crushed” is not represented in the Targum.

³¹ Heb. חביר, “bruise” ≡ Aram. חויב, “sin.”

³² The *hiphil* of פגע can be “cause to entreat,” which seems to be the understanding of 𐤉𐤍, “forgive ... for his sake.”

³⁴ 𐤉𐤍 understood the first two verbs of v. 7 differently: נגש “oppressed” as נגש “draw near [to request]” (cf. Gen 44:18 for this sense of נגש), and ענה^l “humiliate” as ענה^l “answer.”

who could have imagined?
 For he was cut off from the land of the living,
 for the transgression of my people, an affliction was his.
⁹ He made his grave with the wicked
 and the rich at his deaths,³³
 although no violence did he do,
 and no deceit was in his mouth.
¹⁰ Yhwh desired to crush him with weakness.
 If his life will constitute a reparation-offering,³⁷
 then he will see ...
his offspring, he will prolong [his] days;
 the will of Yhwh, through him, will prosper.
¹¹ From his life's toil ...

who will be able to recount?³⁵
 For he will remove the rule of the
Gentiles from the land of Israel;
 [the punishment for] the sins which my
 people sinned he will put on them.³⁶
⁹ And he will hand over the wicked to
Gehenna
 and those rich *in possessions, which they*
robbed by death, which is destruction
 because they will not be established, the
 doers of sins,
 and *they will not speak of deceptions with*
their mouth.
¹⁰ *Yet before* Yhwh it was [his] will to refine
and to purify the remnant of his
people,³⁹
in order to cleanse from sin their life;
they will see *the kingdom of their*
Messiah,
they will increase sons and daughters, and
 he will prolong [their] days;
those who perform the Torah of Yhwh
 will prosper by his will;⁴⁰
¹¹ from the slavery of the nations, he will
 deliver their life,

³³ מ' במתיו, “in his deaths,” is awkward. 1QIs^a reads בומתו (from במת, “grave, barrow”).
 Ⓞ^B τοῦ θανάτου αὐτοῦ, assumes במתו, “in/by his death.” Ⓣ^J reads במותא, “by the death.”

³⁵ Heb. שיח, “imagined” ≡ Aram., שעי, “recount.”

³⁶ The pronoun on מ' למו could be singular or plural. Ⓣ^J reads as plural, “on them,” while most English translations render as singular “was his.”

³⁷ The apodosis of the Hebrew conditional sentence, אם-תשים אשם נפשו, is problematic. Ⓞ^B reads תשים as a 2nd masculine singular (ἐὰν δῶτε περὶ ἁμαρτίας, “if you give for sin...”), as do many English translations, which requires the addition of a preposition (περὶ). A more elegant solution is that if Dahood and Battenfield who have suggested re-dividing the words to produce נפשו אשם נפשו, “truly he offered his life as a sin-offering.” M. Dahood, “Phoenician Elements in Isaiah 52:13–53:12”, in *Near Eastern Studies in Honor of William Foxwell Albright*, ed. H. Goedicke (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1971), 71; James Battenfield, “Isaiah LIII,10: Taking an ‘if’ out of the Sacrifice of the Servant,” *VT* 32/4 (1982), 485. I am reading נפשו as the subject of תשים, which I have understood as a 3rd feminine singular and translated as “constitute” (BDB, 964).

³⁹ The Aramaic phrase ית שארא דעמיה indicates the scribe’s understanding of the referent of the 3ms pronoun on דכאו (Heb.). The notion that the Messiah will refine and purify Israel when he appears is obviously derived from Mal 3:2–3.

⁴⁰ Heb. חפץ, “will,” is rendered twice: once as a cipher for אוריתא, “Torah,” which is commonly associated with the divine will, and as רעות, “will.” Syrén (“Targum Isaiah 52:13–53:12,” 202) understands differently.

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>he</u> will see, ...</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>he</u> will be satisfied;</p> <p>by his knowledge, my righteous servant will make many righteous</p> <p>and their sins he will <u>bear</u>.</p> <p>¹²Therefore I will allot for him [a portion] with the great, and from the strong he will divide the plunder because he <u>bared</u> his life to death,</p> <p>and with <u>transgressors</u>, he <u>was counted</u>; yet he <u>bore</u> the sin of many, and for the <u>transgressors</u> he will intervene.³⁸</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>they</u> will see <i>the retribution of their adversaries</i>.⁴¹</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>They</u> will be satisfied <i>with the plunder of their kings</i></p> <p>by his wisdom he will make innocents innocent, <i>to subject many to the law</i>; and about their sins he will <u>pray</u>.⁴²</p> <p>¹²Then I will divide for him <i>the plunder of many peoples</i>, <i>and the possessions of strong fortresses</i>, he will divide as plunder, because he <u>risked</u>, unto death, his own life,⁴³</p> <p>and <u>rebels</u> he <u>subjected to the Torah</u>; and for the sins of many he <u>will</u> pray, and for the <u>rebels</u>, it will be forgiven on his account.⁴⁴</p>
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The servant of מ Isa 52:13–53:12 is not identified. The reader is required to deduce his identity from the song’s contents. The opening verse (v. 13), stands as a heading over the whole song. It describes the servant as “exalted” and “honoured,” but the subsequent strophe (52:14–15) depicts him as disfigured and horrifying. Just as the reader must determine his identity for herself, she must also determine how to reconcile these competing images as the song progresses. The opening lines in the Targum are quite different. They explicitly identify the servant as the messiah, and the friction in מ has been smoothed away.

The suffering in מ has been not been removed in ז^J. Clauses describing the servant’s suffering in מ have been reapplied to other characters. Israel remains blind in diaspora (52:14 || 42:6–7). The nations will be scattered when the Servant-Messiah appears (52:15). The kingdoms of the earth will become weak and mournful (53:3). It is Israel who has been beaten and afflicted by God (53:4). The temple was profaned by the people of Judah (53:5). Israel was scattered for her sins (53:6). It is the strong of the nations will be killed like

³⁸ *Hiphil* פגע + ל = “intervene”; see Isa 59:16.

⁴¹ ז^J יראה מ, “he will see,” has no object. ז^J offers a plural verb יחזון, “they will see,” and supplies the object, בפורענות סנאיהון, “*the retribution of their adversaries*.” (1QIs^a and 1QIs^d have an object, אור, “light,” which is confirmed by G.)

⁴² Aramaic בעי, though usually translated “search” or “inquire,” can also mean “entreat,” or “pray.” Note Heb. “bear” ≡ Aram. “forgive,” in v. 4.

⁴³ The clause דמסר למותא נפשיה can be understood in two ways: “to *surrender* his life to death,” as it has typically been understood (e.g., Robert Aytoun, “The Servant of the Lord in the Targum,” *JTS* 23 [1921]: 177; Bruce Chilton, *The Isaiah Targum: Introduction, Translation, Apparatus and Notes* [ArBib 11; Liturgical, 1987], 105), or “to *risk* his life unto death.” E.g., *B. Metzia* 112a: “for what [reason] did this [person] ascend a ramp or climb a tree and risk himself unto death (מסר עצמו למיתה)?”

⁴⁴ ז^J Isa 53:12 resumes the divine first person from 52:13, which frames the poem. Beginning in 53:1 a 1st person plural voice emerged, which appears to be the voice of collective Israel (53:3, 4, 6, 8), and which referred to God in the third person (53:1, 4, 6, 10). Only 52:13(–15) and 53:12 are first person divine speech.

sacrificial animals (53:7). Israel lives in suffering in diaspora (53:8). The Gentiles will bear the punishments for Israel's sins (53:8), and the wicked and the rich will be handed over to Gehenna (53:9). Israel will be refined and purified by the Servant-Messiah (53:10), Israel who endured slavery among the nations (53:11). Thus, in harmony with 42:1–7, the Servant-Messiah of \mathfrak{T}^J Isa 52:13–53:12 does not suffer. In fulfilment of his role as Servant-Messiah, he removes suffering, and he and redistributes suffering.

Because the Servant-Messiah does not suffer, there is conceptual space in the Targum's version of 52:13–53:12 for triumphalist themes of messianic hope. The Servant-Messiah will subdue the nations (52:15; 53:3, 7, 8, 11 || 42:6–7). He will protect the righteous, establishing them and making them prosper (53:2). He will rebuild the temple (53:5) and regather diaspora (53:8 || 42:6–7). He will teach and subject “rebels” to the Torah (53:5, 12 || 42:1–4).

Summing up the argument of \mathfrak{T}^J in these two ways—as a reapplication of the servant's suffering and the addition of messianic triumph—would be misleading. In developing its argument, \mathfrak{T}^J Isa 52:13–53:12 enlarges on two additional themes that are intertwined in complex ways, the themes of justice and forgiveness.

1. Justice. The logic of justice in \mathfrak{T}^J Isa 52:13–53:12 is multifaceted and changing. Moving through the poem, from top to bottom, we encounter numerous turns in the poem's description of the Servant-Messiah's justice. Each step, each assertion follows from the preceding one, but the operative logic changes at each step. Right away in 52:14–15 the Targum presents an analogy between Israel's hope and the nations' lack thereof. The nations will receive their own diaspora for not hoping in the Messiah (“not told” and “not heard”), which corresponds with Israel who did hope while in diaspora. This analogy is not expressed as causal. The nation's fate is not described as punishment for their ignorance or for scattering Israel. The two are merely expressed as symmetrical circumstances. It is akin to measure-for-measure justice but lacks the punishment dimension. If the peoples and kings (52:15) did not know about the coming of the Servant-Messiah, who did? The righteous anticipated his coming and will be rewarded for their hope (52:14a; 53:2). Their reward is expressed in metaphors of thriving and fertility, occluding the reward's substance. What is clear is that the reward will be received in the land. The righteous will live in the Servant-Messiah's kingdom in the land of Israel. This seems to narrow the recipients of the Servant-Messiah's rewards from the whole house of Israel (52:14) to the righteous among Israel (53:2).

A second and different symmetry appears 53:3. The reader was told already that Israel has a splendour that cannot be shrouded even under the cloud of diaspora (52:14). Likewise, she knows that the Servant-Messiah has his own splendour, the splendour of holiness (53:2). In 53:3, the Targumist announces that the kingdoms too have a splendour, a glory of their own. When the Servant-Messiah arrives, though, it will fade away until the nations appear like people who are sick and in pain (53:3). The loss of their glory is equated with Israel's loss of the divine glory, the Shekinah. Again, no clausal link is established between Israel's loss and the nations' loss. The nations' weakness and illness are not expressed as punishments. At this point, the reader is not told why the nations must suffer. The Targum does not explain the logic of the symmetry. It is clear from the next two verses though (53:4–5) that the loss of the Shekinah and Temple were acts of divine justice, the results of Israel's sins.

An assortment of wicked persons and punishments appear in verse 7–9. \mathfrak{T}^J Isa 53:7 announces the destruction of the “strong ones” (תקוה). In \mathfrak{T}^J being “strong” is identified as “strength of wickedness” (1:31 and 5:18) and with “pride” (2:11–13, 17; 5:14–16), so v. 7

appears to have a rather wide perspective.⁴⁵ Verse 8 turns to theodicy. Israel has suffered in diaspora for her sins. But she suffered at the hand of nations that were as sinful, if not more sinful than she. Verse 8 assures the reader that the gentiles who inflicted punishment on Israel will be punished too. Those gentile nations who have ruled the land of Israel will have the same punishments laid on them as were laid on Israel (53:8b).⁴⁶ Verse 9 then shifts from the Gentile rulers of the land to the wicked and the rich. They will be sent to Gehenna by the Servant-Messiah “lest they be established.”

Judgement and justice are not reserved for the rich, the powerful, and gentiles. There is judgement and justice for the remnant in diaspora, and there is a just reward for the Messiah himself. According to \mathfrak{J} Isa 53:10–11, the survivors of Israel will be smelted, purified of sin.⁴⁷ This was implied in 53:1–2, but it is now made explicit. As a result, it is only the righteous who will see the kingdom of the Messiah (cf. 28:5). The purified survivors will experience a new Exodus. Like Moses’ generation, they will be redeemed from slavery, see their adversaries punished, and plunder their captors. The second line “they will see the retribution (פֹּרְעָנוֹת) of their adversaries” implies that those nations who rule Israel in diaspora deserve punishment for it (a conclusion not drawn in 52:14–15 and 53:3). The suffering endured by the nations is in fact a punishment, the righting of a wrong done to Israel. Because they were God’s tools, carrying out his punishments on Israel, does not absolve them of the consequences of their actions against Israel. The Servant-Messiah not only delivers justice, he will be rewarded for his actions too. Alongside the purified survivors, he will receive a portion of plunder, a reward for risking his life on Israel’s behalf (53:12). How he will risk his life is not revealed, only that God will not overlook the risks that he takes on Israel’s behalf.

The justice of the Servant-Messiah is many-sided. The righteous will receive all their hopes: restoration, regathering, prosperity, fertility, and power in the messianic kingdom. These rewards are reserved for the remnant who will be purified by the messiah. (Their identity is discussed below.) The nations, particularly those who enslaved Israel in diaspora, will be weakened, punished, and plundered, while the wicked and the rich will be condemned to Gehenna. The Servant-Messiah will receive his own reward for the risks that he will run, being granted a share of the plunder of the kingdoms. This role accounts for everyone: Jews and Gentiles, wicked and righteous, rich and poor. Even God receives his day in court, absolved of any charge of unfairness in his dealing with humans (esp. 53:8) by providing for the judgement of Israel’s persecutors. In the end, almost everyone receives their just rewards. I say ‘almost’ because one group remains: the wicked among Israel. Their fate falls under a different economy altogether.

⁴⁵ Humbling the strong and powerful is as common a motif in \mathfrak{M} Isa as it is in \mathfrak{J} Isa. Isaiah 53: 7, then, merely repeats an idea that is common in both the Hebrew and Aramaic versions of the book.

⁴⁶ It is impossible to determine if the expression “out of suffering” (v. 8a) indicates only that the suffering will cease or also that the suffering was sufficient to satisfy the debt incurred by Israel’s sins. See the discussion of forgiveness below.

⁴⁷ The lexeme שְׂרִיטָה, “remnant,” is used most often in \mathfrak{J} Isa for the survivors of the destruction of the two kingdoms, Israel and Judah (e.g., 10:19; 11:11, 16; 37:4; 46:3), who will be purified and restored by the Messiah one day (e.g., 28:5; 53:10). When the righteous among the remnant are in view, they are specified (e.g., 37:32).

2. *Forgiveness*. If bringing justice to the world is the first of the Servant-Messiah's tasks, the second is to secure divine forgiveness for the largest number of Jews possible. The two themes are not always compatible. Forgiveness may be granted when enough punishment has been endured to satisfy the moral debt incurred by the sinner. This is an act of justice, not requiring too much or too little punishment but exactly the amount that is proportionate to one's sin. However, forgiveness can also be granted freely, absolving a debt rather than requiring its repayment, which is not an act of justice but mercy. Finally, forgiveness can be granted by surrogacy. A substitute can be offered to receive punishment on one's behalf (e.g., sacrifice) or credit can be extended to a person in need (e.g., the merits of David extended to others; Psa 18:50; 132:10). If one person has accumulated a surplus of merit with God, that credit can be extended to another who is in deficit. Because it requires an act of divine accountancy, it also requires divine permission. God must sign off on the transfer. Supplication is required. A transfer of merit is another act of mercy but it is not unjust per se. It is contrary to personal justice, but it is not contrary to collective justice. J Isaiah 52:13–53:12 appeals to the first and last of these possibilities on behalf of diaspora Judaism.

Two verses suggest that those in diaspora have suffered or will suffer enough to balance the books. “Out of suffering and by vengeance he will bring our exiles near ... For he will remove the rule of the Gentiles from the land of Israel; the punishment for the sins which my people sinned he will put on them” (53:8). There is nothing explicit in this about the exiles having fulfilled God's punishment, but it seems to imply that the Servant-Messiah will be able to shift punishment to those nations who ruled over Israel in diaspora because her term of punishment is up. J Isaiah 53:10a, though, is plain. The Servant-Messiah will bring his own judgements to Israel. “Yet before Yhwh it was his will to refine and to purify the remnant of his people, in order to cleanse from sin their life.” The Targum does not describe the removal of wicked persons from Israel, persons who are themselves dross and slag. Rather, it refers to the removal of sin *from* the people.⁴⁸ In other words, Servant-Messiah will judge his own people, and having endured the purification the people will be innocent before God.

Not all have or will earned their forgiveness, though. The Servant-Messiah petitions God to forgive Israel's sins three times (53:4, 6, 11). The poem's speaking voice is confident that his requests will be granted: “our sins, for his sake [the Servant-Messiah's], will be forgiven” (v. 4); “it was the will of Yhwh to forgive the sins of us all for his sake” (v. 6); “he requests, and he is answered; before he opens his mouth, he is accepted” (v. 7). The speaker is confident that God will forgive, not because forgiveness has been secured by punishments endured or because he is merciful but because it is the Servant-Messiah who makes the request. For his sake and because of his merits, the speaker will be forgiven. But who is the “us” whom the speaker represents? They appear to be Jews in diaspora. The Shekinah departed from “us” (53:3). The Jerusalem Temple was handed over to Gentiles for “our sins” (53:5), and “we” went into exile (53:6). The liberality of the Servant-Messiah's forgiveness is most evident in 53:12b: “and rebels (*מרודיא*) he subjected to the Torah; and for the sins of many he will pray, and for the rebels (*מרודיא*), it will be forgiven on his account.” The *מרודין* in J Isa are always the disobedient of the house of Jacob (Isa 30:1–2; 57:3–4; 59:20), including idol worshipping Israelites (46:8). The Servant-Messiah does not restrict his offer of credit to some in diaspora; he petitions God for the forgiveness of all Israel. He will include Israel's rebels among those who can draw upon his account. (As we will see in a

⁴⁸ The image of God smelting his people is derived from texts like Isa 1:24–26; Jer 6:27–30; 9:6–8; Ezek 22:15–22; and Mal 3:1–5. Of these, though, only Ezek 22:15–22 and Mal 3:1–5 combine the images of impurity and smelting.

moment, the credit extended to the rebels will incur a different kind of debt, a debt of subjection.) Trito-Isaiah is sometimes identified as one of the first sectarian works of ancient Judaism, reserving God's approval for the righteous remnant, the followers of the servant.⁴⁹ The rewriting of Isaiah in \mathfrak{J} , though, extends divine forgiveness to all Israel for the Servant-Messiah's sake.

Ultimately though, securing the forgiveness of Israel is a vain act if they are allowed to return to their sinful ways and their unforgiven condition. As a result, the Servant-Messiah will undertake three tasks to enable Israel to maintenance her newfound divine acceptance. In terms of prevention, he will become a teacher, instructing Israel in Torah piety (53:5b; cf. 42:4). His efforts will not be reserved for those who willingly accept his instruction. Just as he will petition God on behalf of all Israelites, pious and rebellious alike, so he will teach all Israel. Under his tutelage, the righteous will enjoy the peace of the messiah (53:5b). Likewise, the more recalcitrant among Israel (the מרודין) will be forced to submit to Torah observance (53:12b).⁵⁰ They too will be protected from future punishment by their observance, even if it is not performed willingly. It is important to note that the Servant-Messiah's efforts on behalf of the wicked among Israel and the expectation that those efforts will be successful (53:12) effectively removes them from his judgement. By seeking the forgiveness of rebel Israelites, the "wicked" who are punished are (*de facto*) reduced to the Gentile wicked (52:15; 53:3, 7, 8, 9). Evil Jews are not included.

Neither punishment, nor purification, nor transfer of merit, though, will result in a sinless Israel. As a remedy for future sins, the Servant-Messiah will rebuild the Jerusalem temple enabling sacrifices to be offered once again, including the *ḥaṭṭa't* and the *'ašam*. (53:5a).⁵¹ Thus the cultic surrogacy-cycle will be re-established.⁵²

The Messiah's Servants in \mathfrak{J} Isaiah

⁴⁹ E.g., Shemaryahu Talmon, "The Emergence of Jewish Sectarianism in the Early Second Temple Period," chap. in *King, Cult, and Calendar in Ancient Israel* (Jerusalem and Leiden: Magnes and Brill, 1986), 165–201; Joseph Blenkinsopp, "The 'Servants of the Lord' in Third Isaiah," *PIBA* 7 (1983): 1–23; idem., *Opening the Sealed Book: Interpretations of the Book of Isaiah in Late Antiquity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 64–72.

⁵⁰ Betz, "Übersetzungen," 207–08.

⁵¹ Koch argued that the Servant-Messiah offered forgiveness of past sin and provided a new Temple to deal with future sin ("Messias und Sündenvergebung," 117–48, esp. 136, 148). He under-emphasized the Servant-Messiah's role as a supplicant on Israel's behalf, because he interpreted the poem's language about prayer and supplication as the Servant-Messiah's performance of priestly duties. Cf. idem., "Sühne und Sündenvergebung um die Wende von der exilischen zur nachexilischen Zeit," *EvT* 26 (1966): 217–39; R. le Déaut, "Aspects de l'intercession dans le Judaïsme ancien," *JSJ* 1 (1970): 35–57.

⁵² \mathfrak{J} Isaiah 42:1–7 and 52:13–53:12 are coordinated with \mathfrak{J} Isa 11:1–16, together presenting a tolerably complete portrait of the Messiah. In \mathfrak{J} Isa 11:1–5, the Messiah is described as a descendant of David, who is supernaturally wise – like Solomon – and who fears Yhwh. These gifts empower him to provide true justice for behalf of the poor and humble and to judge the wicked, killing them with "the Memra of his mouth" and "the speech of his lips." He regathers Israel from diaspora, bringing piety and divine fear to the land and judgement to the nations. The resulting justice and peace are global. He is surrounded by the righteous, his retainers. \mathfrak{J} Isa 11:1–16 is not analyzed here because it does not refer to the Messiah as "Servant."

Just as “servant” (עבד) is used for numerous individuals in \mathfrak{F}^J , the same can be said for its plural “servants” (עבדין). In agreement with \mathfrak{M} , the prophets are named God’s “servants” in \mathfrak{F}^J :

Who among you from those who fear Yhwh heeds the voice of his servants the prophets (עבדוהי נבייא)? (Isa 50:10a)

In most cases, the servants are the righteous among Israel. They are explicitly named “the righteous,” צדיקיא, on ten occasions (all plusses in \mathfrak{F}^J): 44:26; 63:17; 65:8, 9, 13 (3x), 14, 15; 66:14.⁵³ The righteous have been prominent characters in \mathfrak{F}^J , to this point (e.g., 3:10; 5:17, 20; 11:15; 17:6; 21:12; 24:13, 15–16; 25:5; 26: 6–7; 27:10; 28:16; 30:18, 23; 32:1–8, 20; 33:15; 37:32; 40:13, 29; 44:4). They are the Torah pious among Israel who hope for the world to come and will inherit it when the wicked are destroyed. The servants, then, are not new characters in the book. “Servants” is a new title applied to the righteous.⁵⁴

Because they are righteous, the servants are God’s heirs. They are “your people” from whom God will recreate the “tribes of your [God’s] inheritance.” “Return your Shekhinah to your people for the sake of your servants, the righteous, whom you established by your Memra to make their sons the tribes of your inheritance” (63:17b). Because they will inherit the new world, the servants are equated with Noah, who survived the destruction of one world to establish another. The righteous servants will enjoy restoration beyond exile and diaspora in the new heavens and earth, while the wicked of Israel endure the second death, מותא תנינא (65:15).

65:8–15: ⁸Thus says Yhwh: “Just as I found Noah righteous among the generation of the flood, and I said [I would] not destroy him so as to re-establish the world from him, so I will do for my servants’, the righteous’, sake, so as not to destroy everything. ⁹I will bring forth from Jacob offspring, and from Judah the heir of my mountains. He will cause my chosen ones to inherit, and my servants, the righteous, will dwell there. ¹⁰Sharon will be a dwelling place for flocks of sheep and the valley of Achor a stable for herds of cattle, for my people who seek my fear ... ¹³Then Yhwh God said, “Behold, my servants, the righteous, will eat, but you, the wicked, will go hungry. Behold, my servants, the righteous, will drink, but you, he wicked, will go thirsty. Behold, my servants, the righteous, will rejoice, but you will be ashamed. ¹⁴Behold, my servants, the righteous, will praise from a glad heart, but you will cry from pain of heart and lament from a broken spirit. ¹⁵You will leave your name to my chosen ones as an oath, and Yhwh God will kill you with the second death, but his servants, the righteous, will be called by another name. ¹⁶He who makes a blessing in the land will bless by the living God, and he who swears an oath in the land will swear by the living God.⁵⁵ Former miseries will be forgotten because

⁵³ \mathfrak{M} Isaiah 44:26 associates the servant (sg.) with God’s messengers, מלאכים, the prophets. In \mathfrak{F}^J , this servant becomes the “his servants (pl.) the righteous.”

⁵⁴ In a few contexts, the title “servants” is granted to those who return from diaspora and restore the land, e.g. 48:20; 49:6–7; 54:15–17. From contextual clues, these also appear to be the righteous among diaspora.

⁵⁵ Note the wordplay based on קוים. In the new world, the name of the wicked will be an “oath” (קיימא) and they will die, but the name of the “living” (קיימא) God will be a blessing. In those days, the righteous will swear (יקיים) oaths (קיימא) by the living (קיימא) God.

they will be hidden from me. ¹⁷For behold, I am creating a new heavens and a new earth, and the former things will not be remembered or enter one's mind.⁵⁶

ⲫ^J Isaiah 65 appears discordant with ⲫ^J Isa 52:13–53:12. In the latter, the Servant-Messiah petitions God for the forgiveness of all Israel, even Israel's rebels, and he secures it. Here, the wicked among Israel (whose crimes are itemized in vv. 3–5) appear doomed. In ⲫ^J Isa 65:6 God announces “I will not give respite in life to them, but I will repay them the reckoning of their sins, and I will hand over their bodies to the second death.” But the discord is not as absolute as it might appear from chap 65 alone. Elsewhere in ⲫ^J Isaiah, hope is extended to wicked Jews who can learn repentance and piety. Likewise, the dichotomy between Israel and the nations becomes less absolute as the book progresses, and these two pairs—righteous and wicked, Israelites and gentiles—are mutually implicating. Hope for the wicked is clearly expressed in 42:19:

Will it not be that if the wicked repent they will be called my servants, even the guilty whom I sent my prophets to them? But the wicked are about to be repaid the recompense of their sins, unless they repent. Then they will be called the servants of Yhwh (cf. 53:12b).

Isaiah 42:18–24 is a major turning point in Ⲙ. A subplot begins here in which the God's servant Israel is discovered to be blind and deaf, unfit for purpose. As the plot progresses, readers learn that God requires a new servant who can bring light, not just to Israel but to the nations (see 49:6). ⲫ^J has conformed chap 42 to this plot line. The “servant” of 42:19b is no longer Israel, as in Ⲙ. The singular “servant” is adjusted to plural “servants,” the followers of the new servant who will appear later in the book. Likewise, the wicked who are challenged to become servants are not restricted to Israelites. Any human who gives glory to the God of Israel and sings his praises can be included. ⲫ^J Isaiah 42:9–12:

⁹The first things, behold, they have come to pass, and new things I now declare. Before they come, I announce [them] to you. ¹⁰Praise Yhwh [with] a new song. Speak his praise from the end of the earth, O those who go down to the sea and its fullness, the islands and their inhabitants. ¹¹Let the desert and the cities that inhabit it praise. Let the towns inhabit the desert of the Arabs. Let the dead praise when they come out of their tombs. From the peak of the mountains let them lift their voice. ¹²Let them ascribe glory to Yhwh and declare his praise in the islands.⁵⁷

The inclusion of gentiles among the servants is made explicit in Isa 56, both in Ⲙ and ⲫ^J. Eunuchs can become priests in the new world, and Gentiles “who have been added to the people of Yhwh” will be counted among the servants.

56:4–7: ⁴For thus says Yhwh to the eunuchs who keep my sabbath days, who are pleased with [what] I wish and hold to my covenant: ⁵I will give them a place in my temple and in the land of the house of my Shekhinah, and [I will give them] a name that is better than sons and daughters. I will give them an eternal name that will not be cut off. ⁶And the

⁵⁶ Also ⲫ^J Isa 66:12–14. Compare ⲫ^J Isa 11:1–8; 17:6; 24:13, where the same things are said of the righteous.

⁵⁷ The horizon of 42:9–24 is not just global in ⲫ^J, it is also trans-temporal with the inclusion of מתיא, “the dead” in v. 11.

people of the gentiles who have been added to the people of Yhwh, to minister to him, to love the name of Yhwh, and to be his servants (עבדין), everyone who keeps the sabbath from defiling it, and holds fast my covenants, ⁷I will bring them to my holy mountain, and I will let them praise in my house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their holy sacrifices will be pleasing on my altar, because the temple will be called a house of prayer for all peoples.

Ultimately, in \mathfrak{J} , the only criteria for being counted among the servants is Torah piety: not birth, ethnicity, physical condition, or the cumulative demerits of one's deeds. Even the lifelong wicked can become servants if they change their ways. Eunuchs and Gentiles can be counted among the servants and live in the restored Jerusalem, if they keep the Sabbaths, and adhere to the covenant. This is why "the servants" (עבדין) are repeatedly glossed as "the righteous" (צדיקיא) in \mathfrak{J} . They are one and the same.

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A question remains regarding the relationship of the servants to the חרדים, "tremblers" (Isa 66:2, 5).⁵⁸ \mathfrak{M} Isa 66:1–6 rejects the *assumption* that it is necessary for the temple to be restored (though chaps 56 and 60 assert that it will be). The universe is God's throne room; he needs no other. His attention is reserved for those who "tremble at his word," not those who bring him sacrifices. "Tremblers" appears to be another name for the servants in \mathfrak{M} . In chap 65, God, addressing the wicked, speaks about the servants. Here in 66:1–16 he addresses the tremblers about the wicked. In this way, the tremblers and the servants are coordinated.⁵⁹

The designate "tremblers" does not appear in \mathfrak{J} Isa 66:1–7. Instead, they are called the "righteous" and the "subservient":

\mathfrak{M} Isa 66:2b, 5a: But this is the one to whom I will look, to the one who is humble (עני) and contrite in spirit (נכה־רוח), who trembles (חרד) at my word ... Hear the word of Yhwh, O tremblers (חרד) at his word.

\mathfrak{J} Isa 66:2b, 5a: And this pleasure is mine, to look on him, on the one who is humble (ענותן) and lowly of spirit (מכיד רוח), *and the one who is subservient* (משותן) *before* my word ... Accept the word of Yhwh, O *righteous ones* (צדיקיא) who are subservient (משותן) *before the words of his will*.

Are the "righteous/subservient" equated with the servants, as the "tremblers" are in \mathfrak{M} ? The humble are identified as the righteous in \mathfrak{J} , as we have seen (see discussion of 42:1–7 and n. 10). Likewise, the servants are consistently glossed as "the righteous" (44:26; 63:17; 65:8, 9, 13 (3x), 14, 15; 66:14). In as much as the subservient are identified as the humble (66:2b) *and* the righteous (66:5a) in \mathfrak{J} , they can be considered servants just as they are in \mathfrak{M} . The Targumic scribes appear to have recognized the connection between the servants and the tremblers, and identified both with "the righteous."

⁵⁸ The religious zealots in the Book of Ezra also name themselves the "tremblers" (9:4 and 10:3).

⁵⁹ Beuken, "Main Theme," 83.

