Liberty University

Isaiah 53:

Grammatical, Structural and Exegetical Observations

A Thesis Submitted to

John W. Rawlings School of Divinity

in Candidacy for the Degree of

M.A. in Biblical Languages

by

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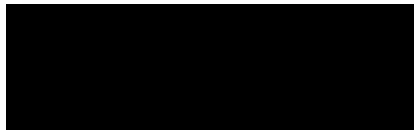
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Abstract

Isaiah 52:13-53:12 is a famous passage from the Tanakh that contains important grammatical constructions in Hebrew which, if translated incorrectly, can lead to erroneous exegetical and theological conclusions. Among these problems, the Servant's relationship with the other characters in the passage is addressed. Through an analysis of the literary context and the structure of the text, not only are several exegetical possibilities substantiated, but two prototype translations are also provided, one based on the Leningrad Codex and another based on the Great Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa).

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Isaiah 52:13-53:12 is a famous passage of the Hebrew Bible (Tanakh) that talks about the Servant of God. Three of the most popular English translations of the Tanakh[1] present some conflicting word choices among themselves and also when compared with Hebrew versions, for example, the Leningrad Codex (LC) and the Great Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa).

In the process of translation sometimes the semantics of words and syntax of sentences can vary significantly, resulting in different interpretations. Some of these interpretations are not viable due to the contextual meaning of words, instantiated in their usage. The literary structure of the passage also adds to the cumulative case for specific interpretations while discarding other unlikely interpretations.

The main objective here is to investigate the grammar and structures in Isaiah 52:13-53:12 and analyze possible readings that may fit the context of the Tanakh.[2]

This Thesis has five chapters, the first is this Introduction. The second is the Literary Context, where there is an analysis of the grammar verse-by-verse (mainly morphology, semantics and syntax) in combination with some important semantic

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[1] The three English translations are: the King James Version (KJV), the New International Version (NIV), and the English Standard Version (ESV).

[2] Note that this Thesis does not focus on Text Critical issues of all ancient manuscripts or translations. The main comparisons are among LC, 1QIsa and three English translations. So there is still room to find the best reading of the text, considering other manuscripts and comparing them with the grammatical and structural findings and contributions of this Thesis.

and syntactic problems of English translations. At the same time, some commentaries are referenced to illustrate how certain exegetical choices result in different interpretative outcomes.[3] In the latter case, alternative interpretations are given. At the end of each verse or group of verses, there are tables presenting the conclusions of the section, summarizing the findings.

The third is the Literary Structure chapter, which focuses on Devices of Disclosure, particularly those related to Repetition and Paradoxes, the latter being rarely used in commentaries but frequently present in the Tanakh. The Devices of Disclosure are accompanied by the analysis of themes (Theme and Variation) in Isaiah 52:13-53:12. The themes are derived from the context and structures of the passage. Few commentaries mention any aspect of the literary structures of the passage in question, however, with the use of Ryken's book, "A Complete Handbook of Literary Forms in the Bible," many of these structures can be found within the passage and, consequently, help with contextual analysis and exegesis of Isaiah 52:13-53:12.

The fourth chapter is the Translations. After the analysis of context and structure, a branched translation is presented, showing a primary translation of the LC and 1QIsa and marking locations where alternate translations may be viable, with a summarized explanation for each alternative. All based on elements discussed in the previous chapters.

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[3] It is worth noticing that there will be no discussion concerning the existence or non-existence of a "Deutero-Isaiah." Likewise, no discussion will be made about the exact period of the author or the passage because of the focus on grammar, syntax, content and structure of the passage.

The fifth chapter is the Conclusion, were some results are mentioned.

It is worth highlighting that the NIV will be used throughout this work and the KJV and ESV appear in sections were there is disagreement among them or with the Hebrew manuscripts (LC and 1QIsa), which may produce important exegetical differences. These choices of translations were made primarily because of their popularity, and some arguments concerning word choices, word meanings, or syntax, may not apply to other translations.

CHAPTER 2

Literary Context

Following Klein's principles of literary context,[1] this chapter unites grammar (mainly the morphology, semantic and syntax of words and sentences) with context. Context is subdivided into immediate context (Isaiah 52:13-53:12 passage), book context (Isaiah), and non-immediate context (other books of the Tanakh).[2] A basis for the interpretation of Isaiah 52:13-53:12 will be formed in this chapter using observations on the literary context.

In each section, the corresponding verse(s) will be shown in the NIV translation and in the Hebrew of the LC. Only in Isaiah 53:5 and 53:10 the KJV and the ESV translations will be compared with the NIV, LC and 1QIsa.

For Hebrew words, the LC will be used[3] and occasionally the 1QIsa scroll.[4] Below follows a complete transcription of Isaiah 52:13-53:12 passage, in the LC version, so that when a word or root is mentioned it can be compared with the text.

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[1] William W. Klein, Craig L. Blomberg, and Robert L. Hubbard. *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation.* Third edition. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2017). 295.

[2] Ibid., 294-312.

[3] Shemu'el ben Ya'akov, Aharon ben-Moshe ben-Asher, "Unicode/XML Leningrad Codex (UXLC)," Christopher V. Kimball, July 4, 2023, https://www.tanach.us/Tanach.xml.

[4] George Blumenthal, and the Center for Judaic Studies, "The Great Isaiah Scroll," The Israel Museum, Jerusalem, (2011), http://dss.collections.imj.org.il/isaiah.

52:13 הִנֵּה יַשְׂכִּיל עַבְדִּי יָרוּם וְנִשָּׂא וְגָבַהּ מְאֹד

14 כַּאֲשֶׁר שָׁמְמוּ עָלֶיךָ רַבִּים כֵּן־מִשְׁחַת מֵאִישׁ מַרְאֵהוּ וְתֹאֲרוֹ מִבְּנֵי אָדָם

15 כֵּן יַזֶּה גּוֹיִם רַבִּים עָלָיו יִקְפְּצוּ מְלָכִים פִּיהֶם כִּי אֲשֶׁר לֹא־סֻפַּר לָהֶם רָאוּ וַאֲשֶׁר לֹא־שָׁמְעוּ הִתְבּוֹנָנוּ

53:1 מִי הֶאֱמִין לִשְׁמֻעָתֵנוּ וּזְרוֹעַ יְהוָה עַל־מִי נִגְלָתָה

2 וַיַּעַל כַּיּוֹנֵק לְפָנָיו וְכַשֹּׁרֶשׁ מֵאֶרֶץ צִיָּה לֹא־תֹאַר לוֹ וְלֹא הָדָר וְנִרְאֵהוּ וְלֹא־מַרְאֶה וְנֶחְמְדֵהוּ

3 נִבְזֶה וַחֲדַל אִישִׁים אִישׁ מַכְאֹבוֹת וִידוּעַ חֹלִי וּכְמַסְתֵּר פָּנִים מִמֶּנּוּ נִבְזֶה וְלֹא חֲשַׁבְנֻהוּ

4 אָכֵן חֳלָיֵנוּ הוּא נָשָׂא וּמַכְאֹבֵינוּ סְבָלָם וַאֲנַחְנוּ חֲשַׁבְנֻהוּ נָגוּעַ מֻכֵּה אֱלֹהִים וּמְעֻנֶּה

5 וְהוּא מְחֹלָל מִפְּשָׁעֵנוּ מְדֻכָּא מֵעֲוֹנֹתֵינוּ מוּסַר שְׁלוֹמֵנוּ עָלָיו וּבַחֲבֻרָתוֹ נִרְפָּא־לָנוּ

6 כֻּלָּנוּ כַּצֹּאן תָּעִינוּ אִישׁ לְדַרְכּוֹ פָּנִינוּ וַיהוָה הִפְגִּיעַ בּוֹ אֵת עֲוֹן כֻּלָּנוּ

7 נִגַּשׂ וְהוּא נַעֲנֶה וְלֹא יִפְתַּח־פִּיו כַּשֶּׂה לַטֶּבַח יוּבָל וּכְרָחֵל לִפְנֵי גֹזְזֶיהָ נֶאֱלָמָה וְלֹא יִפְתַּח פִּיו

8 מֵעֹצֶר וּמִמִּשְׁפָּט לֻקָּח וְאֶת־דּוֹרוֹ מִי יְשׂוֹחֵחַ כִּי נִגְזַר מֵאֶרֶץ חַיִּים מִפֶּשַׁע עַמִּי נֶגַע לָמוֹ

9 וַיִּתֵּן אֶת־רְשָׁעִים קִבְרוֹ וְאֶת־עָשִׁיר בְּמֹתָיו עַל לֹא־חָמָס עָשָׂה וְלֹא מִרְמָה בְּפִיו

10 וַיהוָה חָפֵץ דַּכְּאוֹ הֶחֱלִי אִם־תָּשִׂים אָשָׁם נַפְשׁוֹ יִרְאֶה זֶרַע יַאֲרִיךְ יָמִים וְחֵפֶץ יְהוָה בְּיָדוֹ יִצְלָח

11 מֵעֲמַל נַפְשׁוֹ יִרְאֶה יִשְׂבָּע בְּדַעְתּוֹ יַצְדִּיק צַדִּיק עַבְדִּי לָרַבִּים וַעֲוֹנֹתָם הוּא יִסְבֹּל

12 לָכֵן אֲחַלֶּק־לוֹ בָרַבִּים וְאֶת־עֲצוּמִים יְחַלֵּק שָׁלָל תַּחַת אֲשֶׁר הֶעֱרָה לַמָּוֶת נַפְשׁוֹ וְאֶת־פֹּשְׁעִים נִמְנָה וְהוּא חֵטְא־רַבִּים נָשָׂא וְלַפֹּשְׁעִים יַפְגִּיעַ

There are three main subjects in the passage: God, the Servant, and Men (human beings who have sinned, which can be subdivided further according to context). God appears in some first person singular conjugations or suffixes (1cs) and by the use of His name (יהוָה). The Servant typically appears when third person singular conjugations or suffixes (3ms) are used and by his title (עֶבֶד, meaning

servant).[5] The subject that will be named Men, normally appears in the text through the use of first person plural conjugations and suffixes (1cp), third person masculine plural conjugations and suffixes (3mp), as well as one instance of a second person masculine singular conjugation and one instance of a second person masculine singular suffix (2ms). This scope of people for the subject Men is being used to differentiate specific characteristics and actions of the Servant from those that make up the subject Men, for instance,

- Israel (e.g. LC's "my people" or 1QIsa's "his people" in Isaiah 53:8).
- kings from other nations (Isaiah 52:15).
- the character "you" in Isaiah 52:14 and 53:10 who may be related to the prophet Isaiah, the nation of Israel, or those who make guilt offerings as repentance from sin.

In the end, all who fall into the Men categorization have the need to repent of sins (the need for sins to be "carried"),[6] while the Servant does not have this explicit need to repent and, moreover, is able to carry the guilt and sins of others. These categories (Men and Servant) will be used throughout this text with the first letter capitalized, so that the basic meaning of each word can be differentiated (e.g. "Servant" is one of the subjects of the passage, while "servant" refers to any person serving someone).

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[5] Francis Brown, Samuel Rolles Driver, Charles Augustus Briggs. *Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon.* (Logos Research Systems, 2002), ע, עֶבֶד, 713.2.

[6] The Literary Context of verses 4, 11 and 12 gives possible interpretations for this phrase, i.e. "carry sin" or "carry guilt."

The verses can be divided into three speeches that depend on the manuscript. Isaiah 52:13-15 is God's first speech. Isaiah 53:1-7 (LC) or 53:1-10 (1QIsa) is the prophets speech and it blends with Isaiah 53:8-12 (LC) or 53:10-12 (1QIsa), which appears to be God's second speech in each manuscript. Although some commentators may confuse who is speaking,[7] the conclusion of who speaks is evident through context and different nouns and pronouns that identify each speaker and referent. At the end of the Literary Context of each verse, or group of verses, there will be a table summarizing who the speaker is and whom he is referring. For example, "our transgressions" is spoken by the prophet with reference to his people, both categorized as Men, and "my Servant" is spoken by God with reference to the Servant, therefore an example table would be,

SPEAKER	REFERENT	NOUNS and PRONOUNS
Men	Men	Our (v.?)
God	Servant	My (v.?)

Table 1: Character division example.

There are also two more tables that can appear in each section. One showing the Servant's roles, and one showing the corrected and/or alternative translation(s).

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[7] Gary V. Smith, *Isaiah 40-66*, vol. 15B, The New American Commentary, (Nashville: B & H Pub. Group, 2009), 400.

Literary Context of Isaiah 52:13-15

52:13 הִנֵּה יַשְׂכִּיל עַבְדִּי יָרוּם וְנִשָּׂא וְגָבַהּ מְאֹד
14 כַּאֲשֶׁר שָׁמְמוּ עָלֶיךָ רַבִּים כֵּן־מִשְׁחַת מֵאִישׁ מַרְאֵהוּ וְתֹאֲרוֹ מִבְּנֵי אָדָם
15 כֵּן יַזֶּה גּוֹיִם רַבִּים עָלָיו יִקְפְּצוּ מְלָכִים פִּיהֶם כִּי אֲשֶׁר לֹא־סֻפַּר לָהֶם רָאוּ וַאֲשֶׁר
לֹא־שָׁמְעוּ הִתְבּוֹנָנוּ (LC)

13 See, my servant will act wisely; he will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted. 14 Just as there were many who were appalled at him - his appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any human being and his form marred beyond human likeness - 15 so he will sprinkle many nations, and kings will shut their mouths because of him. For what they were not told, they will see, and what they have not heard, they will understand. Isaiah 52:13-15 **(NIV)**

Starting with Isaiah 52:13, this verse contains these words concerning the Servant of God יָרוּם וְנִשָּׂא וְגָבַהּ מְאֹד, which means "he will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted" (NIV) or "he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high" (KJV). This exaltation, when given by God, is a blessing (Num 24:7, Isa 52:13). However, if self given, it becomes a hindrance (Psa 138:6). Moreover, God uses these words to describe His own exaltation (Isa 33:10, Isa 55:9, Isa 57:15). Therefore, this Servant, whoever he is, is gaining an honor from God that is normally given only to God Himself because of the verbs גָּבַהּ, נִשָּׂא and רוּם.[8] This could point to the Servant's role as Messiah (Son of David, as in 2 Samuel 7:12-16, and Son of Man, as in Daniel 7:13-14). It is important to highlight that the title of Messiah (anointed) is also used for priests, in this case the title "Messiah Priest" will be used, or just "priest."

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[8] Jaap Dekker, "The High and Lofty One Dwelling in the Heights and with his Servants: Intertextual Connections of Theological Significance between Isaiah 6, 53 and 57," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*, 41 no. 4 (2017): 480, https://doi-org.ezproxy.liberty.edu/10.1177/0309089216661172.

In Isaiah 53:14 there is the introduction of the character "you" by עָלֶיךָ (2ms pronoun in the LC), which is neglected by the NIV, as it assumes an interchangeability in addressing the Servant with 3ms and 2ms verbs and pronouns along the same verse (later in the NIV translation of Isaiah 53:10 the character "you" changes again, however, to God rather than the Servant). The ESV and KJV make no assumptions and keep the 2ms pronoun in this verse (in the ESV as "As many were astonished at you [...]"). However, only the KJV will maintain this 2ms character in Isaiah 53:10 (תָּשִׂים), which may be related to this verse.

Verse 14 starts with a comparative clause because of the preposition כַּאֲשֶׁר, which frequently has the adverb כֵּן (so/thus)[9] in the apodosis.[10] A comparison necessarily needs two distinct things (A and B are different elements of the set "letters"), which could possibly be similar or equal in another aspect (A and B belong to the set "letters"). The first comparison is between the Servant (מִבְּנֵי אָדָם מַרְאֵהוּ וְתֹאֲרוֹ) and the character "you" (עָלָיו). Most commentaries focus on another comparison that happens in the verse due to מֵאִישׁ and מִבְּנֵי אָדָם, both of which compare the Servant with Men.[11]

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[9] Brown, Driver, Briggs, *Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*, כ, כֵּן, 485.2.

[10] E. Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar and Davidson's Hebrew Syntax*, (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2008), 499.

[11] J. A. Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah: an Introduction & Commentary*, (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2015), 425.

Some commentaries[12] attempt to resolve the rare appearance of the character "you" as a stylistic device that transitions abruptly from one person to another.[13] In this view, the character "you" would be the same as the Servant (a change from 2ms to 3ms). However, this is not possible because of the nature of comparative clauses mentioned above (one usually does not compare the element A with itself, but with a different element). This can be illustrated with a change of pronouns which are being called elements "A" and "B."

- Just as something happened to A, so it happened to A. (Most commentaries).

- Just as something happened to A, so it happened to B. (Natural comparison).

Comparing with other instances of "כַּאֲשֶׁר...כֵּן," Numbers 15:14 and Judges 1:7 also give an idea of a comparison between different subjects (A and B).

In 1QIsa, the "astonishment" (שממו) is paralleled with משהתי ("I have anointed"),[14] which continues the exaltation trend of verse 13. This is the opposite of the LC, which makes a distinction from verse 13 to verse 14 (astonishment

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[12] Christopher R. North, *The Second Isaiah: Introduction, Translation and Commentary to Chapters XL-LV.* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), 227.

[13] Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar and Davidson's Hebrew Syntax,* 462.

[14] Joseph Blenkinsopp, "The Sacrificial Life and Death of the Servant (Isaiah 52:13-53:12)." *Vetus Testamentum* 66, no. 1 (2016): 10. http://www.jstor.org/stable/43894343.

because of the "marred appearance," not because of the "exaltation"). Reider and

Bownlee discuss their different results in the translation of משהתי.[15]

The character "you," presented with a 2ms pronoun, could be prophet Isaiah

himself, and therefore, could be an introduction to the Servant's role as a prophet,

attributing to the Servant similar events that happened to Isaiah or to the prophets

in general ("marred" in this verse, as well as "rejected" in Isaiah 53:3 and killed or

"cut off" in Isaiah 53:8). But it could also be Israel,[16] which suffered many times

from the time of Joseph to the time of Isaiah (Isaiah 63:7-14). This last option

could make the character "you," in Isaiah 53:10 (considering the verb as 2ms), to be

Israel, and would imply a national repentance (guilt offering), similarly to Rashi's

interpretation.[17] This repentance would be necessary after the actions of Men (with

Israel as a subcategory of the subject Men). The subject Men is used as a general

term that encompasses Israel, the prophet(s), or those who serve God as Motyer

points out,[18] among other subcategories that could be represented by the former

examples.

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[15] Joseph Reider, and Wm. H. Brownlee. "On 'MŠHTY' in the Qumran Scrolls," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*, no. 134 (1954).

[16] Joanna Bauer, "The Consequence of the Servant's Suffering for the Relationship Between God and the Others in Isaiah 53," Master's Thesis, NLA University College, Bergen, 2017: 45, https://nla.brage.unit.no/nla-xmlui/handle/11250/2487976.

[17] "Isaiah 53:10," Rashi's commentary, Sefaria, last accessed December 06, 2023, https://www.sefaria.org/Isaiah.53.10?lang=bi&with=Rashi&lang2=en.

[18] Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah*, 439-440.

In Isaiah 52:15 there is a connection between the Servant and the action of sprinkling (from the root נָזָה in the *Hifil* stem).[19] This action is related to the Hebrew sacrificial system and process of consecrating objects and people (e.g. Exodus 29:21, Leviticus 4,5,6 and Ezekiel 36:24-27). This imagery attributed to the Servant could add a new role to him, that of Messiah Priest.

Furthermore, נָזָה can mean "startle," and despite the rarity of this meaning and its foreign derivation,[20] Bauer asserts that the chiastic structure of verses 14 and 15 may substantiate this change of meaning.[21] Verse 15 continues the apodosis of verse 14 by using כֵּן so that the idea of astonishment could make "startle" a tempting substitution for "sprinkle," nonetheless, the fact that "sprinkle" has an established meaning and that "startle" does not have one, cannot justify the substitution of "sprinkle."[22] The word נָזָה, in the *Hiphil* stem, usually precedes a preposition that will introduce the object being sprinkled, for instance, Leviticus 4:6, 8:11 and 14:51 use different prepositions to introduce the object (מִן ,עַל and אֶל, respectively). Therefore, only the substance that is sprinkled is mentioned

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[19] Brown, Driver, Briggs, *Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*, נָזָה ,ן, 633.1.

[20] Alec J. Motyer, *Isaiah an Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 20, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, (Nottingham, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 1999), 375-376.

[21] Bauer, "The Consequence of the Servant's Suffering for the Relationship Between God and the Others in Isaiah 53," 20-21.

[22] Motyer, *Isaiah an Introduction and Commentary*, 375-376.

(nations), not the object or place where the substance is sprinkled. Although this makes interpretation difficult,[23] the word is attested in 1QIsa and LC.

The role of priest, which the Servant plays, cannot be discarded outright (see next verses), contrary to Childs' assertion that it is something that does not come to the foreground,[24] even if one considers נָזָה to mean "startle." Moreover, the "startling" of the nations and the inferiority of kings in relation to the Servant (understanding what was not understood beforehand because of the Servant), could also point to the Servant's role as Messiah King, a king above other kings (although it could be argued that prophets often knew more than kings and could proclaim divine messages to other nations). Isaiah 52:13-15 parallels the conclusion in Isaiah 53:10-12, by affirming the Servant's success in his role(s) and his well-being after suffering and death.[25]

There is also the possibility of עָלָיו being translated as "on account of him" or "because of him" (e.g. Leviticus 19:17, 1 Samuel 17:32) without changing the overall meaning of the sentence.

Dekker points out a connection between Isaiah 6:9-10, 32:3-4, 52:15 and 53:5 as a progressive message of healing that affects not only the kings, but the character

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[23] Even though the word sprinkle is mostly used in priestly rituals, no interpretation will be given on the union of "sprinkle" and "nations" or how this would correspond to a priestly duty. Disconsidering the punctuation marks, the following preposition (at/upon him) could give the place of the sprinkling (possibly related to Isaiah 63:3), nonetheless, interpretation would remain difficult.

[24] Brevard S. Childs, *Isaiah a Commentary*, The Old Testament Library, (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000), 412-413.

[25] Walter Brueggemann, *Isaiah 40-66*, Westminster Bible Companion, (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998), 142.

"we" in Isaiah 53:5.[26] As for the character "we" and kings in the generic subject

Men, it helps to understand that everyone needs healing, because everyone has

sinned, regardless of representation (e.g. Moses representing the people, or Israel

representing other nations).

SPEAKER	REFERENT	NOUNS and PRONOUNS
God	Servant	My (v.13) and He (v.13-15)
God	Men	Their/Them (v.15), You (v.14), רַבִּים (v.14-15), מֶאִישׁ (v.14), מִבְּנֵי אָדָם (v.14), מְלָכִים (v.15)

Table 2: Character division in Isaiah 52:13-15.

RESEMBLANCE	CONTENT
Prophet	Marred (v.14) and "Startle" (v.15)
Priest	Sprinkle (v.15)
King	Exalted (v.13) and "Startle" (v.15)

Table 3: Who the Servant resembles in Isaiah 52:13-15.

Literary Context of Isaiah 53:1

53:1 מִי הֶאֱמִין לִשְׁמֻעָתֵנוּ וּזְרוֹעַ יְהוָה עַל־מִי נִגְלָתָה (LC)

1 Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the Lord been
revealed? Isaiah 53:1 (NIV)

The first part of the verse (מִי הֶאֱמִין לִשְׁמֻעָתֵנוּ or "who has believed our

message") may have and interesting parallel with Isaiah 28:9-13. The message is

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[26] Dekker, "The High and Lofty One Dwelling in the Heights and with his Servants," 482-483.

given but not all understand it or obey it. Isaiah 28 implies that children understand the message and that, in general terms, the people did not obey regardless of them hearing the message (Isaiah 28:12 uses the expression "not hearing" to denote disobedience). Given the context, specifically with regard to what Men do throughout the passage, the statement can become a rhetorical question,[27] with the negative answer implied. This could initially point toward a lack of belief in the message on the part of the majority of Men (e.g. 2 Chronicles 36:16, Isaiah 6:9-10). Later, some within the Men category may believe (the "many" in Isaiah 53:11,12). However, lack of belief does not cover the prophets who speak according to God ("our message").

The second part of the verse has a description of a complicated time frame if other passages in Isaiah are taken into consideration. The arm of God typically relates to God's deliverance and salvation (e.g. Isaiah 51:9, 52:10, 62:8). In Isaiah 51:9 it implies that the arm was revealed in the past, for instance, in the Exodus. In Isaiah 52:10 the arm will be revealed in the future to all nations. Given these possibilities, and the chapter itself (Isaiah 52:13-53:12), the specific statement in Isaiah 53:1 seems ambiguous concerning the three generic time frames (past, present, future). Motyer exemplifies the three time-frames but focuses on the present time-frame because of previous passages.[28] The ambiguous time-frame could imply that the outcome of the deliverance has not been revealed, although the

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[27] Brueggemann, *Isaiah 40-66*, 144.

[28] Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah*, 427.

message about the salvation is being revealed in the present, by Isaiah himself, as well as having been revealed in past events. This does not eliminate the possibility that Isaiah was simply asking a rhetorical question[29] (calling Israelites to remember past deliverances), which further shows the incredulity of Men toward the message of the prophets (many deliverances and still in unbelief). It is possible that the revelation of the arm of God, like the message (לִשְׁמֻעָתֵנוּ), has also occurred, but not all have believed the revelation or obeyed God because of it. Moreover, the revelation of the arm of God can be related to what happens with the Servant in the future (Isaiah 52:13-15 and 53:10-12).

Isaiah 53:1 continues the trend from Isaiah 52:15 (what was not heard will be understood) and introduces the rest of the passage by displaying the arm of God through the Servant who carries the sins of many (e.g. Isaiah 53:10-12). Childs even considers this verse to form a chiastic structure with the previous verse.[30]

Below follows one table, summarizing the character division in Isaiah 53:1.

SPEAKER	REFERENT	NOUNS and PRONOUNS
Men	God	She and וּזְרוֹעַ יהוָה
Men	Men	Our

Table 4: Character division in Isaiah 53:1.

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[29] Smith, *Isaiah 40-66*, 400.

[30] Childs, *Isaiah a Commentary*, 413.

Literary Context of Isaiah 53:2-4

2 וַיַּעַל כַּיּוֹנֵק לְפָנָיו וְכַשֹּׁרֶשׁ מֵאֶרֶץ צִיָּה לֹא־תֹאַר לוֹ וְלֹא הָדָר וְנִרְאֵהוּ וְלֹא־מַרְאֶה וְנֶחְמְדֵהוּ
3 נִבְזֶה וַחֲדַל אִישִׁים אִישׁ מַכְאֹבוֹת וִידוּעַ חֹלִי וּכְמַסְתֵּר פָּנִים מִמֶּנּוּ נִבְזֶה וְלֹא חֲשַׁבְנֻהוּ
4 אָכֵן חֳלָיֵנוּ הוּא נָשָׂא וּמַכְאֹבֵינוּ סְבָלָם וַאֲנַחְנוּ חֲשַׁבְנֻהוּ נָגוּעַ מֻכֵּה אֱלֹהִים וּמְעֻנֶּה (LC)

2 He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. 3 He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain. Like one from whom people hide their faces he was despised, and we held him in low esteem. 4 Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. Isaiah 53:2-4 (**NIV**)

Verse 2 contains allusions to Isaiah 11 by the use of the word שֶׁרֶשׁ, which means "root."[31] Isaiah 11 speaks of a descendant of Jesse (Messiah, the king descendant of David), who is righteous and in whom the Spirit of God rests. This reinforces the role of Messiah King that appeared in Isaiah 52:13,15. Moreover, Bock mentions several rabbinic interpretations of a Messianic figure within Isaiah 52:13-53:12, which includes verse 2.[32]

Verse 3 contains descriptions of how Men despised the Servant, for example, "and we held him in low esteem" (NIV) or "and we esteemed him not" (KJV). The word חֲשַׁבְנֻהוּ (root חָשַׁב, in the context meaning "esteem" or "regard")[33] has the negative particle לֹא before it (meaning "no" or "not") and shows what Men did not do (did not esteem the Servant). This response from Men is not desired by God,

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[31] Brown, Driver, Briggs, *Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*, שׁ, שֹׁרֶשׁ, 1057.2.

[32] Darrell Bock, and Mitch Glaser, *The Gospel according to Isaiah 53: encountering the suffering servant in Jewish and Christian Theology*, (Kregel Academic & Professional, 2012), ch.2, 60-62.

[33] Brown, Driver, Briggs, *Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*, ח, חָשַׁב, 362.2.

just as despising (Isaiah 53:3), rejecting (Isaiah 53:3), and wounding the righteous Servant (Isaiah 53:5) who is exalted by God (Isaiah 52:13). In fact, this verse comes into a sequence of bad decisions made by Men ("We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way" Isaiah 53:6). Not only that, but this rejection (as well as the death in the following verses) is similar to the rejection of the prophets (2 Chronicles 36:16), pointing to the Servant being compared to a prophet.

Verse 4 brings the same word, חֲשַׁבְנֻהוּ, as in Isaiah 53:3. However, considering that all that Men do between Isaiah 52:13 and 53:12 is wrong (going our own way, despising, rejecting, wounding and killing the Servant), it is within the context to interpret that verse 4 talks about something that Men considered a reality (considering the Servant stricken by God), but actually it was not.[34] In Men's perspective this appeared to be God's doing, but this perspective is wrong just as unbelief in the message (Isaiah 53:1), despising (Isaiah 53:3) and killing (Isaiah 53:5,8). Isaiah 53:4 actually emphasizes God not striking the Servant by stating Men's wrong perspective on the situation. Belousek concludes the same thing, namely, that the Servant is not stricken by God. Belousek utilizes an argument based on the contrast and alternating perceptions that are brought by the use of אָכֵן ("surely") and "yet" (the conjunction in וַאֲנַחְנוּ), as well as הוּא ("he") and אֲנַחְנוּ ("we"), which compares the wrong estimation of Men and the Servant's action.[35] He

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[34] Motyer, *Isaiah an Introduction and Commentary*, 377.

[35] Darrin W. Snyder Belousek, *Atonement, Justice and Peace: The Message of the Cross and the Mission of the Church*, (Grand Rapids, Mich: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2012), 235-236.

also connects verse 4 and 5 so that the first conjunction of verse 5 shows another perspective shift, now to a true account of the Servant's suffering.[36] The opposite view is defended by Childs, who does not recognize the statement beginning with וַאֲנַחְנוּ as a false statement, concluding that what Men esteemed is correct, namely, that God has stricken the Servant.[37] Child's view in verse 4 affects his exegesis of the following verses concerning which subject bruised the Servant.

The word נָשָׂא can mean "to lift" or "to carry," but it can also mean forgiveness (forgiving the guilt of others).[38] An example of this meaning can be found in Exodus 34:7 (God forgives), or in Exodus 32:32 (God is asked to forgive through the intercession of Moses). Yet another example shows a connection of נָשָׂא with atonement (כפר), which is also related to the concept of forgiveness (e.g. Leviticus 10:17, Numbers 14:18). The synonym, סָבַל, which means "to bear" or "to carry"[39] may have similar connotations to נָשָׂא, although it is not often used in comparison with the latter (see Word Pair in the Literary Structure chapter). Both words, נָשָׂא and סָבַל, may have connections with the forgiveness of the iniquities of Men or the suffering from these iniquities, in Isaiah 53:11 (סָבַל), and the forgiveness of the sins of Men or the suffering from these sins, in Isaiah 53:12 (נָשָׂא). They may be related to Isaiah 46:3-4 which is an example of both words being used within the

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[36] Belousek, *Atonement, Justice and Peace*, 236.

[37] Childs, *Isaiah a Commentary*, 415.

[38] Brown, Driver, Briggs, *Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*, נ, נָשָׂא, 669.2.

[39] Ibid., ס, סָבַל, 687.2.

context of deliverance, or both may be related to suffering given all instances where the Servant is said to suffer in the text (Isaiah 53:3,5,8,9).

The meaning in Isaiah 53:4 of נָשָׂא and סָבַל can be related to:

1. Deliverance of Men (Isaiah 46:3-4; Genesis 18:24,26) from pain and sickness.

2. Forgiveness of sin(s) (Exodus 32:32, 1 Samuel 25:28) that causes such pain and sickness.

3. Suffering (Genesis 49:15, Lamentations 5:7) because of how the Servant was despised, wounded and killed (Isaiah 52:14,53:3,5,8,9,11,12).

4. Suffering from the responsibility of leadership (Numbers 11:10-17).

Verse 4 may parallel verses 11 and 12 in relation to these four possibilities. The context of Isaiah 52:13-53:12 focuses on the sin of Men, the Servant's exaltation, the justification of many (Isaiah 53:11), as well as the suffering that the Servant endured due to the sins and iniquities of Men. Therefore, it is possible that the meaning of נָשָׂא and סָבַל is somewhat ambiguous. Whybray points out the multiple uses of וּמַכְאֹבֵינוּ and חֳלָיֵנוּ (both words referencing what the Servant carries), although he only sees it as points three and four.[40] Hooker, in her Messianic interpretation, is assertive in saying that there is no transference of ailments[41] and her conclusion resembles the first meaning (deliverance).

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[40] R. N. Whybray, *Thanskgiving for a Liberated Prophet: An interpretation of Isaiah Chapter 53*, Series 4, Journal of the Study of Old Testament, (Sheffield, 1978), 73.

[41] Morna Dorothy Hooker, *Jesus and the Servant: The Influence of the Servant concept of Deutero-Isaiah in the New Testament*, (London: S.P.C.K., 1959), 83.

Looking at the context, the third meaning would be a straightforward explanation for the meaning of "carry," that is, the Servant suffers "our suffering" (v.4) and also from the sins of others (v.11-12). Much like a burden, the Servant is burdened by similar sufferings and also by the sins against him. Although this is the best meaning due to the closest verses mentioning the Servant's suffering, it is important to speak about any ambiguous meaning, since prophetic texts can have ambiguous language and many levels of fulfillment. The deliverance and forgiveness meanings cannot be discarded because of contextual clues of the Servant's intercession (Isaiah 53:6,12) and justification of others (Isaiah 53:11). The Servant could resemble the duties of a priest in regard to the participation in deliverance and forgiveness (points 1 and 2) and/or he could resemble both, a priest and a prophet, if the suffering interpretation is used (points 3 and 4).

The priest had medical duties, which could lead to an interpretation related to deliverance from physical/spiritual illnesses (an example of spiritual illness can be seen in Isaiah 1:5). The priest also participated in the atonement process (which results in the forgiveness of sins) and, therefore, participated in Israel's deliverance from the consequences of its sins. Note that the priest can "carry sin" or "carry guilt" in the sense of participation in atonement, resulting in forgiveness (e.g. Leviticus 10:16-18), likely with a "sin removal" connotation.[42]

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[42] In Leviticus 10:17 and Exodus 28:38 the characters that "carry the guilt/iniquity" are acting in accordance to the rituals that result in sin or impurity removal (atonement). If transference is presumed, guilt still exists and rests on another being and as a consequence, there would be no forgiveness in the complete system ("conservation of guilt"). A transference interpretation would also have problematic logical conclusions (see, for example, the logical propositions in "God's desire or will to crush" Subsection).

The word סָבַל can be related to suffering, that is, because of the sins of others, the present situation is dire (Lamentations 5:7). Note, in the context of Lamentations 5:7, that even if the present generation sins, the ancestral sins are considered the initial reason for the present situation. The past sins still need to be remebered and forgiven. In the case of Genesis 49:15, there is no explicit mention of sin, but there could be a suffering implication, given that Issacar is prophesied to submit to forced labor.

The word נָשָׂא can be related to someone's sin (e.g. Genesis 4:13). However, Genesis 4 is an example where נָשָׂא does not have the same contextual meaning compared to Isaiah 53:4,12. Genesis 4, unlike Isaiah 53, maintains the same character for both the guilty and the one "carrying the guilt or sin" (e.g. "I carry my sin," "you carry your sin," "they carry their sins"). Isaiah 53:4,11,12 follows a different pattern. The one carrying the sin or guilt is different from the one who actually has sinned ("he carries their sins", "you carry his sin"). One example to illustrate this is concerning the intercessors in leadership roles (e.g. priests), which do not need to be guilty themselves of any sin, nonetheless, they participate in the carrying process for others. This is an important consideration because, for instance, the priest is not guilty of the sins of the people, but he commits sin if he does not "carry the guilt of others," which finalizes the atonement process (Leviticus 10:16-18). Another similar example occurs when God carries the people's sins, but by carrying the sins of others (forgiving), God Himself is not guilty of any sin (Numbers 14:18). Therefore, the priest that "carries the guilt of the

congregation" is removing sin or atoning for sin[43] (Sifra Shemini Chapter 2:4), while not becoming guilty of the same sin.[44]

- "I carry my guilt," "you carry your guilt" and "they carry their guilt" are reflexive sentences that attribute guilt to the sinner(s).

- "he carries their guilt," "he carries our guilt" and "you carry his guilt" are non-reflexive sentences that can demonstrate the suffering of one person/group because of the sin of another person/group, or attribute forgiveness to the sinner(s).

However, the functionality of the carrying process not only depends on the equality or inequality of the one carrying and the one who is guilty, but also the capability of the one who is "carrying the guilt" to participate in the forgiveness process. Below follows a list of characters that have the capability to participate in the forgiveness process without having the guilt of the sinner transferred to them.

- The Levitical priest is not guilty of any sin if he carries the guilt of the congregation correctly (Leviticus 6:6-7, 10:16-18 and Exodus 28:36-38).

- The sinner can directly ask for the one who suffered from his/her sin to carry (forgive) the sin (Genesis 50:17; Exodus 10:17; 1 Samuel 15:25).

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[43] John E. Hartley, *Leviticus.* vol. 4, Word Biblical Commentary, (Dallas, Tex: Word Books, 1992), 136. Note that there is no need for the sacrifice to have absorbed the sin for there to be sin removal, contrary to Hartley's view. The atonement happens after every aspect of the sacrifice is fulfilled, which would include eating the sacrifice, contrary to Janowski's view.

[44] Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16: a New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 20, The Anchor Yale Bible, (New York: Doubleday, 1991), pg595-640.

- An intercessor, often related in some manner to the sinner, can ask for the one who was sinned against to carry/forgive (1 Samuel 25:28).

- The "scapegoat" is not guilty of the sins of the congregation, and the exile of the goat cannot be automatically assumed to have suffered a punishment from God, even if one considers the exile as a suffering (Leviticus 16:21-22 only mentions exile, but one could only speculate concerning what God thinks about the goat and considering the suffering or punishment of an animal). Ibn Ezra considers that the goat carries the sins to a place were they will not be remembered (nothing is said about the goat being guilty of the "transferred sins").[45] Maimonides is emphatic in his refusal of transference of sin.[46]

- The blood of the sacrifice atones or covers the sins of the sinner (Leviticus 17:11). Although the animal dies, the death cannot be automatically assumed to be a punishment from God, even if one considers it a suffering. Maimonides,[47] Saysell,[48] Fox[49] and Botner[50] all

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[45] "Leviticus 16:21," Ibn Ezra's commentary, Sefaria, last accessed December 06, 2023, https://www.sefaria.org/Leviticus.16.21?lang=bi&with=Ibn%20Ezra&lang2=en.

[46] Moses Maimonides, *The Guide for the Perplexed*, translated by M. Friedlander, (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian Classics Ethereal Library, 1904), 538.

[47] Ibid., 538.

[48] Csilla Saysell, "The Blood Manipulation of the Sin Offering and the Logic of Defilement," *Pacific Journal of Baptist Research* Vol.13, no.(2) (2018), 62.

[49] Gary A. Fox, *Understanding Atonement: Maybe It's Time to Rethink Atonement without Giving Up Jesus.*, (Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2019), 74-75.

[50] Max Botner, Justin Harrison Duff and Simon Dürr, ed., *Atonement: Jewish and Christian Origins*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2020), 20.

agree in the inexistence of transference of guilt, therefore, inexistence of punishment by transfer.

A guilt transference would entail one party being guilty of a sin and transferring such guilt to another, innocent party (imputation of guilt to an innocent being). If one considers that a sacrifice received, by transference, the guilt of the sins of the ones confessing, then many problematic aspects start to appear, for example, the defilement of the sacrifice and the disproportionality of the death of the animal compared to the inadvertent sin or defilement of the person (both of which do not deserve the death penalty).[51] Transference of guilt would also imply a logical contradiction, which will be discussed in the "God's desire or will to crush" Subsection of the Paradox Section. The focus of the sacrifice is that life is in the blood and it was given to Israel to make atonement for their sins upon the altar (Leviticus 17:11), not to transfer their guilt to the sacrificial animal or to punish it.

Guilt transference also goes against, for example, the non-transference of sin mentioned in Exodus 32:32-33 or Ezekiel 18:19-32. Orlinsky uses Exodus 32, Genesis 18 and Ezekiel 14 to show that transference of punishment was not found in other passages of the Tanakh.[52] Any apparent transference when looking at the priest, scapegoat or sacrificed animals, is actually a destruction of guilt. The guilt of

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[51] Saysell, "The Blood Manipulation of the Sin Offering and the Logic of Defilement," 62.

[52] Harry M. Orlinsky, and Norman H. Snaith, *Studies on the Second Part of the Book of Isaiah*, Vol. 14, Supplements to Vetus Testamentum, (Leiden: EJ Brill, 1967), 55.

the sinner ceases to exist instead of being transferred.[53] While studying atonement in the context of sacrifice, Gary Fox concludes that there was no transference of guilt or sin to the animal.[54] Moreover, according to Botner, Duff and Dürr, "No biblical text warrants the interpretation that existential substitution for a human life occurs in sacrificial rituals of the Hebrew Bible."[55]

As Maimonides writes: "There is no doubt that sins cannot be carried like a burden, and taken off the shoulder of one being to be laid on that of another being."[56]

However, even though guilt and punishment cannot be transferred, it can be "added." An addition occurs when a second party commits a sin related to the first party's sin, leading the second party to also incur in guilt (an unrighteous omission can lead to the addition of guilt, e.g. Leviticus 5:1, Numbers 30:15 and Ezekiel 33:6).

Bauer disregards most of the above considerations to say that this carrying process is solely related to punishment,[57] probably due to the presupposition that suffering is necessarily related to punishment,[58] which is a fallacy. Westermann cautions the reader in equating suffering and punishment (Westermann uses the

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[53] Eitan Bar, *The "Gospel" of Divine Abuse: Redeeming the Gospel from Gruesome Popular Preaching of an Abusive and Violent God*, (n.p. 2013), 77-78.

[54] Fox, *Understanding Atonement*, 74-75.

[55] Botner, Duff and Dürr, ed., *Atonement: Jewish and Christian Origins*, 20.

[56] Maimonides, *The Guide for the Perplexed*, 538.

[57] Bauer, "The Consequence of the Servant's Suffering for the Relationship Between God and the Others in Isaiah 53," 19-20.

[58] Claus Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66 a Commentary*, The Old Testament Library, Translated by David M. G. Stalker, (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1969), 262-263.

book of Job as an example),[59] but writes: "[...] two things are involved in what the Servant bears, what he has loaded up upon him-the sins of the others and the punishment which results upon them."[60] Watts also joins punishment with "carrying the sins of others."[61] This conclusion is made by many commentators, although the Tanakh never talks about transference of guilt, punishment or the existential substitution of one life for another in a ritualistic manner.[62] The Tanakh also provides some counterexamples to refute non-ritualistic transference of guilt (Exodus 32:32-33 and Ezekiel 18:19-32) and also gives examples of suffering without punishment, for example, the lives of Job and Joseph. As mentioned before, Orlinsky gives many examples concerning the nonexistence of the transference of guilt from a guilty party to an innocent party, and that the suffering of the Servant cannot be equated with a punishment from God, even alluding to the prophets of the Tanakh.[63]

Below follows two tables, summarizing the character division and Servant's roles in Isaiah 53:2-4.

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[59] Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66 a Commentary*, 262-263.

[60] Ibid., 263.

[61] R. E. Watts, "Echoes from the Past: Israel's Ancient Traditions and the Destiny of the Nations in Isaiah 40-55." *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*, 28(4), (2004): 481-508, https://doi.org/10.1177/030908920402800406.

[62] Botner, Duff and Dürr, ed., *Atonement: Jewish and Christian Origins*, 20.

[63] Orlinsky and Snaith, *Studies on the Second Part of the Book of Isaiah*, 54-58.

SPEAKER	REFERENT	NOUNS and PRONOUNS
Men	God	אֱלֹהִים (v.4)
Men	Servant	He/Him (v.2-4) and אִישׁ (v.3)
Men	Men	We/Our (v.2-4) and אִישִׁים (v.3)

Table 5: Character division in Isaiah 53:2-4.

RESEMBLANCE	CONTENT
Prophet	Despised (v.3) and Rejected (v.4)
Priest/Prophet	Carried/Bore (v.4)
King	Root (v.2)

Table 6: Who the Servant resembles in Isaiah 53:2-4.

Literary Context of Isaiah 53:5

5 וְהוּא מְחֹלָל מִפְּשָׁעֵנוּ מְדֻכָּא מֵעֲוֹנֹתֵינוּ מוּסַר שְׁלוֹמֵנוּ עָלָיו וּבַחֲבֻרָתוֹ נִרְפָּא־לָנוּ **(LC)**

But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. Isaiah 53:5 **(KJV)**

But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. Isaiah 53:5 **(NIV)**

But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. Isaiah 53:5 **(ESV)**

This verse in the KJV, NIV and ESV was mistranslated regarding the

preposition מִן, which usually means "from" and not "for" (except when it says "too

much *for* a person").[64] This preposition appears two times as an inseparable

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[64] Brown, Driver, Briggs, *Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*, מ, מִן־, 577.2.

preposition in verse 5 of the LC and 1QIsa: the first time in the third word of the LC and 1QIsa, מִפְּשָׁעֵנוּ ("from our transgressions") and the second time in the fifth word of LC and 1QIsa, מֵעֲוֹנֹתֵינוּ ("from our iniquities"). Although the preposition could be functioning as a designator of source, the causal function will be used.[65] The second and fourth words מְחֹלָל and מְדֻכָּא, which have the same root as the words in Isa 53:10 of 1QIsa, are conjugated in the *Polal-Participle* and *Pual-Participle*, respectively, hence, they do not have the preposition מִן.

All three English translations (KJV, NIV and ESV) use the word "for" (normally used with the inseparable preposition ל), which can lead to the first interpretation (first exegesis) in Table 7. In these translations it could mean that the Servant is crushed and pierced by someone, unnamed, for some purpose related to "our" transgressions (many commentators say this someone is God, although many factors point away from this exegesis).

The second interpretation (second exegesis), aligned with the use of "from" (in a causative sense)[66] would be that the transgressions and iniquities of Men crushed and pierced the Servant (directly connected with the 1cp suffixes, "our").[67] Belousek finds the same result (מִן being translated as "from" or "because of") by looking at the Septuagint.[68] Therefore, reading the LC and 1QIsa, the reader is lead

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[65] Bill T. Arnold, and John H. Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, (New York, N.Y: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 116-117.

[66] Orlinsky and Snaith, *Studies on the Second Part of the Book of Isaiah*, 58.

[67] Motyer, *Isaiah an Introduction and Commentary*, 378.

[68] Belousek, *Atonement, Justice and Peace*, 229.

to interpret the verse with the second exegesis, because of the correct use of the inseparable preposition מִן (see the Paradox Section in the Literary Structure Chapter for an understanding of a common misconception regarding verses 4,5,10).

EXEGESIS	SUBJECT	ACTION	OBJECT
First Exegesis (for)	God	Wound and Bruise	Servant
Second Exegesis (for/from)	Men	Wound and Bruise	Servant

Table 7: The two interpretations of verse 5.

In the NIV translation (the KJV and ESV are similar) it is written "the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed." The genitive noun of the construct chain מוּסַר שְׁלוֹמֵנוּ is functioning as a genitive of purpose or result in the previous sentence.[69] However, the genitive noun (שְׁלוֹמֵנוּ) could also function as the object or recipient[70] because מוּסַר does not necessarily mean punishment. It can mean a correction or discipline,[71] and שְׁלוֹמֵנוּ (from the root שָׁלוֹם) has other meanings associated with it, for example, completeness, soundness and welfare.[72] The result would be "the correction/discipline of our peace/welfare" (the correction directed toward the peace, or lack thereof, not the Servant).[73]

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[69] Robert B. Chisholm, *From Exegesis to Exposition: a Practical Guide to Using Biblical Hebrew*, (Grand Rapids, Mich: Baker Books, 1998), 63.

[70] Ibid., 62.

[71] Brown, Driver, Briggs, *Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*, י, מִשְׂסָר, 416.1.

[72] Ibid., שׁ, שָׁלוֹם, 1022.2.

[73] Note that no commentary was found that uses or mentions this possibility.

Following the repetitive theme within Isaiah 52:13-53:12 regarding the act of carrying/bearing, it is within context to interpret the word עָלָיו as an addition to the things the Servant is "carrying" (translated as "upon" or "on"). The Servant carrying the sin does not mean that he has the sin on him nor does it mean that the guilt was transferred to him (guilt and punishment cannot be transferred to a righteous Servant).[74] The meaning of "carry" may be ambiguous given the discussion of the previous verse. The Servant seems to be primarily suffering from the sins of others, but he could also be delivering others from pain and sickness or forgiving the sins of others. The same could be said of this verse where the Servant has upon him (possibly with an implied meaning of "having authority or responsibility") the "correction/discipline of our peace/welfare."

Now, considering the genitive (absolute noun) of the construct chain functioning as an object[75] (מוּסַר שְׁלוֹמֵנוּ), the object of the correction is not the Servant (correction of the Servant), but the welfare of Men, contrary to Ward's assertion.[76] The Servant participates in the correction of lack of peace/welfare of sinners (Men), which aligns with "on account of him" or "because of him" as

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[74] Maimonides, *The Guide for the Perplexed*, 538; Botner, Duff and Dürr, ed., *Atonement: Jewish and Christian Origins*, 20. Not only there would be logical problems with the concept of justice (lack of justice for the righteous), but also with the concept of forgiveness (nothing would be forgiven since someone remains "guilty" or is punished unjustly).

[75] Chisholm, *From Exegesis to Exposition*, 62.

[76] James M. Ward, "The Servant Songs in Isaiah," *Review and expositor*, 65, no. 4 (1968): 445.

another possible meaning of עָלָיו (e.g. Genesis 26:9).[77] Furthermore, in order to make a complete sentence, a "to be" verb can be implied in the phrase "the correction of our peace (was/is) because of him."

Nonetheless, if the construct chain מוּסַר שְׁלוֹמֵנוּ is indeed "punishment that resulted in our peace" (genitive of result), then it is clear from the context that this punishment is unrighteous and that it comes from "our transgressions" (מִפְּשָׁעֵנוּ) and "our iniquities" (מֵעֲוֹנֹתֵינוּ). The punishment would be paralleled with both the following and previous sentences, directly connected to words like מְדֻכָּא, מְחֹלָל, וּבַחֲבֻרָתוֹ and עָוֹן (wounds caused by the iniquities of Men). Ward follows this genitive of result interpretation, affirming that the punishment was undeserved and that God's will was to justify others in the end (not to punish the Servant).[78]

Whether the verse is translated as "punishment that brought us peace was on him" or "the correction of our peace was because of him," the common thread is the Servant's righteousness. In the first translation, the interpretation is that the Servant suffers an undeserved punishment from Men and, with God's interference, peace can be brought. In the second translation, the Servant corrects the peace of Men. Additionally, other verses support both interpretations (e.g. Isaiah 53:9-12 shows the Servant's righteousness, Isaiah 53:2-9 shows how the Servant does not deserve punishment, and Isaiah 53:11-12 shows the Servant justifying and interceding for others).

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[77] Brown, Driver, Briggs, *Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*, ע, עַל, 752.1.

[78] Ward, "The Servant Songs in Isaiah," 444.

The phrase "by his wounds we are healed" (NIV) or וּבַחֲבֻרָתוֹ נִרְפָּא־לָנוּ, by itself, seems to say that hurting the Servant was a good thing (or a moral action) to bring healing, similar to the "punishment that brought us peace" in the previous sentence. However, the Servant is wounded from the transgressions and iniquities of Men, which are not good things (not moral actions). Therefore, the solution to this paradox (see Literary Structure Chapter for more information on paradoxes) is to understand that this occasion is a transformation of evil into good on the part of God, analogous to the events in the life of Joseph. Peace and healing cannot come directly from the unrighteous actions of Men (sins), but rather from the Servant pouring out his life for others and/or from God's desire that the sins be carried by someone (Isaiah 53:12). Otherwise, there would be an oxymoron in the interpretation, namely, sinning is profitable and, in this case, a good thing that brings peace and healing. The guilt offering in verse 10 may also suggest that many may have repented from causing wounds to the Servant (see the sections concerning verses 10, 11, and 12). Similarly, Belousek follows the interpretation that after the Servant's unrighteous punishment, the people become shocked and are moved to repentance (peace is brought through repentance).[79]

The sentence וּבַחֲבֻרָתוֹ נִרְפָּא־לָנוּ could be translated differently, since the verb is in the *Niphal* stem and is usually used in a passive form (e.g. Leviticus 13:37, Jeremiah 51:9, Ezekiel 47:8). As a 3ms passive verb, and taking into account the preposition לָנוּ (see Psalm 85:17), the translation could be "and by his wounds he

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[79] Belousek, *Atonement, Justice and Peace*, 233.

was healed for us." How exactly the Servant being healed serves the character "us" may be implied in the text and could be related, for instance, to the overall idea of carrying the sins of others (if he is seen in the priestly role), or the justification and intercession for many, or even related to the resurrection theme behind the dichotomy of a dead Servant and a living Servant.[80] However, the sentence can still be translated as "and by his wounds we are healed" if one considers the *Niphal* verb to be impersonal.[81] There are three other factors that may point to the impersonal *Niphal* usage. The first is contextual because there would be a pause in the Servant's afflictions (beginning in verse 2 and ending in the first part of verse 10). The clear break in these afflictions is found in verses 10-12 (although one could argue that this could be said about the character "Men" and "their healing"). The second factor is structural, where verse 5 may represent a parallel to the end of verse 6 in regard to the 1p pronouns ("we are healed" and "the iniquity of us all"). The third factor is that, in the LC, the *Maqqeph* indicates the close relationship of נִרְפָּא־לָנוּ and possibly indicates the impersonal usage of נִרְפָּא. So for these reasons, the final LC translation will favor נִרְפָּא as an impersonal verb.

Below follows several tables summarizing the character division, Servant's role, segments with corrections in the translation and a segment with an alternate translation of Isaiah 53:5.

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[80] Note that no commentary was found that uses or mentions this possibility.

[81] Richard Benton, "Aspect and the Biblical Hebrew Niphal and Hitpael," (PhD diss., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2009), 332-337.

SPEAKER	REFERENT	NOUNS and PRONOUNS
Men	Servant	He/Him
Men	Men	We/Us/Our

Table 8: Character division in Isaiah 53:5.

RESEMBLANCE	CONTENT
Prophet	Pierced and crushed from the transgressions of others

Table 9: Who the Servant resembles in Isaiah 53:5.

CORRECTION	REASON
but he was pierced from our transgressions, he was crushed from our iniquities	Preposition מִן; Agreement with v.4, 8; Theme of Men's actions

Table 10: Segment of Isaiah 53:5 with corrected translation.

ALTERNATE	REASON
the correction of our peace was because of him	Agrees with the context
and by his wounds he was healed for us*	Verb in the 3ms and non-omission of the preposition

Table 11: Segment of Isaiah 53:5 with alternate translation.
*Unlikely reading of the LC.

Literary Context of Isaiah 53:6-7

6 כֻּלָּנוּ כַּצֹּאן תָּעִינוּ אִישׁ לְדַרְכּוֹ פָּנִינוּ וַיהוָה הִפְגִּיעַ בּוֹ אֵת עֲוֹן כֻּלָּנוּ

7 נִגַּשׂ וְהוּא נַעֲנֶה וְלֹא יִפְתַּח־פִּיו כַּשֶּׂה לַטֶּבַח יוּבָל וּכְרָחֵל לִפְנֵי גֹזְזֶיהָ נֶאֱלָמָה וְלֹא יִפְתַּח פִּיו (LC)

We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the

slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. Isaiah 53:6-7 **(NIV)**

This verse summarizes that none of the Men perfectly obeyed ("We all [...] each of us has turned to our own way"). It further differentiates the Servant from Men. The subdivision of the Men group into one of unrighteous people and another of righteous people[82] cannot be made solely with this verse since the author includes himself and all of Israel in his speech (כֻּלָּנוּ). An example of this phenomenon is in Isaiah 6, where even though the prophet Isaiah could be considered one of the most righteous of Israel, the prophet does not consider himself as being righteous when he is in the presence of God (confirmed by the action of the seraphim, see Isaiah 6:5-7). However, the Men group could be subdivided into those who repent and those who do not repent if the character "you" in Isaiah 52:14 and 53:10 is the prophet(s) or Israel, regardless of whether they represent the nations (because all nations also need to repent from their sins). The Servant, however, does not go through a situation similar to Isaiah's in chapter 6, going from being unrighteous to righteous, because "all" does not seem to contain the Servant due to the contrast of verse 7 with verse 6 (despite "all" turning away from God, the Servant does not seem to turn away).

The word הִפְגִּיעַ (from the root פָּגַע) can have several meanings, for example, "to meet," "encounter," "reach," "stike," and in the *Hifil* stem it can mean "interpose," "entreat," "cause to light upon" or "make an attack."[83] The third

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[82] Joel E. Rembaum, "The Development of a Jewish Exegetical Tradition Regarding Isaiah 53." *The Harvard Theological Review* 75, no. 3 (1982): 295. http://www.jstor.org/stable/1509755.

[83] Brown, Driver, Briggs, *Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*, ף, פָּגַע, 803.1.

meaning is considered by BDB as the meaning of the word in this verse. However, the second meaning may be a more likely possibility. Isaiah 53:6 has the direct object marker את just like Jeremiah 15:11 which is considered to have the "entreat" meaning. The marker points to the object of the "intercession," which could mean that the iniquity is entreated through the Servant (הִפְגִּיעַ בּוֹ אֵת עֲוֹן).

The word הִפְגִּיעַ appears with the same stem in verse 12 as "made intercession" (יַפְגִּיעַ) which contextually is the only semantic option for the word. However, verse 12 could be written as "shall intercede," since it is an imperfect verb and mimics the end of verse 11, unlike the perfect verb הִפְגִּיעַ in verse 6. Orlinsky considers the possibility that verses 6 and 12 may have the same meaning.[84] Rashi understands הִפְגִּיעַ in the sense of intercession.[85] Moreover, the verb in verse 6 could be translated as "made intercession" or "interceded" because the use of the word intercession would align with the Servant's roles as prophet (Isaiah 52:14,15 and 53:3), Messiah Priest (Isaiah 52:15, 53:11,12) and Messiah King (Isaiah 52:13,15, 53:2). These three main roles share the common thread of intercession, although mechanisms may differ (a prophet warns and teaches, a priest carries sins and makes the ritual sacrifices, a king reigns and judges righteously, among other things).

One word that further validates the use of "made intercession" or "interceded" as the meaning of הִפְגִּיעַ, is the following word, בּוֹ, which is translated

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[84] Orlinsky and Snaith, *Studies on the Second Part of the Book of Isaiah*, 197.

[85] "Isaiah 53:6," Rashi's commentary, Sefaria, last accessed December 06, 2023, https://www.sefaria.org/Isaiah.53.6?lang=bi&with=Rashi&lang2=en.

as "on him", although, it could mean "by him" (intrumental)[86] or "through him"

(*beth communicationis*)[87] if the previous word is translated as "interceded."

Therefore, an alternative translation could be "[...] and the LORD has interceded

through him the iniquity of us all." In this way, the parallel with the intercession of

verse 12 becomes obvious. Nonetheless, even if one maintains the translation "laid

on him" (localization through contact),[88] the action of "laying" does not relate to a

punishment from God, but to the "carrying" of the sins of others (the priestly

duty[89] or the suffering from the sins of others). Additionally, "Targum Jonathan on

Isaiah" (from the book "The Chaldee Paraphrase on the Prophet Isaiah") affirms

the intercessory role of the Servant and includes his ability to participate in the

forgiveness process (a Servant who is considered to be the Messiah).[90]

The next verse, uses the word שֶׂה (meaning sheep),[91] which is related to the

guilt offering (and other offerings) of, for example, Leviticus 5:7. Verse 7 is,

therefore, connected with verse 6, because of the differentiation of the Servant as a

lamb (unblemished) and Men as lambs (who turned and went their own way), but

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[86] C. H. J. Van der Merwe, J. A. Naudé, and Jan Kroeze, *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, (New York: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2017), 340.

[87] Ibid., 341.

[88] Ibid., 338.

[89] Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16: a New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 20, The Anchor Yale Bible, (New York: Doubleday, 1991), 595-640.

[90] C. W. H. Pauli, *The Chaldee Paraphrase on the Prophet Isaiah*, (London: London Society's House, 1871), 182-185.

[91] Brown, Driver, Briggs, *Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*, שׂ, שֶׂה, 961.2.

probably not with the guilt offering of verse 10 because human sacrifice is not a Hebrew practice and would be a sin (animal sacrifices were not sinful, but killing a righteous person would be a sin). Moreover, the Servant could not be considered an unblemished lamb in the physical aspect.[92] Even considering the possibility that שֶׂה might not necessarily regard an offering explicitly in a cultic sense,[93] the Servant's life implicitly follows the blueprint of a desirable "life offering" (obedience to God is more valuable than animal sacrifices, Isaiah 1:12-19). This concept is further confirmed in Isaiah 53:9 (no violence, no deceit). Therefore, by explicit or implicit contextual meanings, the Servant can be considered righteous/obedient and a pleasing offering to God.

Below follows several tables summarizing the character division, Servant's role and a segment with an alternate translation of Isaiah 53:6.

SPEAKER	REFERENT	NOUNS and PRONOUNS
Men	God	יהוָה (v.6)
Men	Servant	He/Him (v.6-7)
Men	Men	We/Us/Our (v.6)

Table 12: Character division in Isaiah 53:6-7.

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[92] Jeremy Schipper, "Interpreting the Lamb Imagery in Isaiah 53." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 132, no. 2 (2013): 324-325.

[93] Bauer, "The Consequence of the Servant's Suffering for the Relationship Between God and the Others in Isaiah 53," 22-23.

RESEMBLANCE	CONTENT
"Lamb"	Contrast of v.6 and v.7; Servant's obedience (Isa.1 compared with Isa.53)
Priest	Intercession (v.6)

Table 13: Who the Servant resembles in Isaiah 53:6-7.

ALTERNATE	REASON
has interceded through him	Parallel with v.12; Priestly role

Table 14: Segment of Isaiah 53:6 with alternate translation.

Literary Context of Isaiah 53:8

‏8 מֵעֹצֶר וּמִמִּשְׁפָּט לֻקָּח וְאֶת־דּוֹרוֹ מִי יְשׂוֹחֵחַ כִּי נִגְזַר מֵאֶרֶץ חַיִּים מִפֶּשַׁע עַמִּי נֶגַע לָמוֹ‎ (LC)

By oppression and judgment he was taken away. Yet who of his generation protested? For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was punished. Isaiah 53:8 **(NIV)**

Verse 8 contains the same translation error as verse 5 (with the root ‏פֶּשַׁע‎ meaning transgression).[94] It should be written "from the transgression" (‏מִפֶּשַׁע‎). Therefore, showing that the Servant's death is due to the transgression of Men (second exegesis of Table 7).

Motyer incorrectly translates the preposition as "for" in ‏מִפֶּשַׁע‎, which can give readers the impression of the first exegesis of Table 7, but he correlates this preposition with verse 5 and a "because of" meaning (causative "from"), supporting

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[94] Brown, Driver, Briggs, *Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*, ‏ף‎, ‏פֶּשַׁע‎, 833.1.

the second exegesis in Table 7.[95] However, as with verse 4, Motyer affirms that there is a misapprehension, in the previous verses, to think that God does not strike the Servant, which would be aligned with the first exegesis in Table 7.[96] The cause of the striking is explicit, "from our transgressions" or "because of our transgressions," just as mentioned in verse 5, which is in agreement with the wrong estimation made by Men in verse 4 (by thinking that the Servant was stricken by God, even though he was not). Because of this, Motyer's interpretation begins to focus on the people's punishment that was transferred to the Servant,[97] instead of focusing on the people's transgressions and their connection to the Servant's wounds.

In the Translation Chapter, the word "stricken" will be used instead of "punished" since the Hebrew noun is נֶגַע (meaning stroke or wound),[98] mirroring the verb, which has identical consonants (נָגַע), in verse 4. Because of the similarities between the noun and verb, the word in verse 8 could potentially be, for instance, a verb in the 3ms *Niphal* perfect conjugation (נִגַּע "he was stricken"). Barré understands the passive force of the verb, but proposes the *Pual* stem instead of the *Niphal*,[99] which is the 1QIsa reading (נוגע). These three options (noun, *Niphal* and *Pual*) do not seem to cause major differences in translation.

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[95] Motyer, *Isaiah an Introduction and Commentary*, 380.

[96] Ibid., 380.

[97] Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah*, 435.

[98] Brown, Driver, Briggs, *Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*, נ, נֶגַע, 619.2.

[99] Michael L. Barré, "Textual and Rhetorical-Critical Observations on the Last Servant Song (Isaiah 52:13-53:12)," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly 62*, no. 1 (01, 2000): 17.

Another controversial preposition is the word לָמוֹ ("for/to them/him").

Because of the ל, the senses "for" or "to" could be argued, but in Isaiah 44:7 the

word is in the plural "to them," while in Isaiah 44:15 the word is in the singular "to

it" referring to the carved image (פֶּסֶל). Understanding the context, that the

Servant does not retaliate (Isaiah 53:6), has no violence or deceit (Isaiah 53:9),

carries the sins of others (Isaiah 53:11,12), and that the Servant is stricken by the

transgressions of others (Isaiah 53:2-8), then it is possible to translate the phrase as

"was stricken for them" (stricken as a passive verb and the preposition in the plural

pointing to the Servant healing and justifying many).

Barré correctly affirms that, in the 1QIsa, the word עַמִּי ("my people") is

actually written עמו ("his people"),[100] paralleling דורו ("his generation"). Although

this change does not significantly alter the exegesis (the people remain the same,

namely, Israel), it does push the beginning of God's second speech to a later verse.

This is the case because when עַמִּי appears, it is usually informs the reader that God

is speaking[101] (e.g. Isaiah 52:4-6), at least as a direct address. In the final

translation of the LC and 1QIsa, "my people" will be maintained for the first and

"his people" for the second.

Regarding the prophetic role, in Jeremiah 11:19, the prophet may have used

Isaiah 53:6,8 to describe his situation, using many synonyms. The comparison is not

equative, since Jeremiah was not killed in that situation nor brought healing

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[100] Barré, "Textual and Rhetorical-Critical Observations on the Last Servant Song (Isaiah 52:13-53:12)," 17.

[101] Bock and Glaser, *The Gospel according to Isaiah 53*, 74.

(Jeremiah 11:20-23). There was no need to "pour out his life unto death," as in Isaiah 53:12. Nonetheless, this could point to the understanding that prophets are similar to the Servant, and vice-versa, due to the known reality of persecution of prophets in Israel (e.g. 1 Kings 19:10,14 and Nehemiah 9:26). This is not a mere correspondence of words, but also of context, where the Servant and prophets have similar difficulties in their lives.

Below follows several tables summarizing the character division, Servant's role and a segment with the corrected translations of Isaiah 53:8.

SPEAKER	REFERENT	NOUNS and PRONOUNS
God(LC)/Men(1QIsa)	Servant	He
God(LC)/Men(1QIsa)	Men	Generation; People

Table 15: Character division in Isaiah 53:8.

RESEMBLANCE	CONTENT
Prophet	Death from Men's transgressions

Table 16: Who the Servant resembles in Isaiah 53:8.

CORRECTION	REASON
from the transgressions of my people (LC)	Correct preposition; Agrees with v.4 and v.5
from the transgressions of his people (1QIsa)	Correct preposition; Agrees with v.4 and v.5

Table 17: Segment of Isaiah 53:8 with corrected translation.

ALTERNATE	REASON
he was stricken for us	Non-omission of the preposition; verb/noun (נגע) will have the same translation

Table 18: Segment of Isaiah 53:8 with alternate translation.

Literary Context of Isaiah 53:9

9 וַיִּתֵּן אֶת־רְשָׁעִים קִבְרוֹ וְאֶת־עָשִׁיר בְּמֹתָיו עַל לֹא־חָמָס עָשָׂה וְלֹא מִרְמָה בְּפִיו (LC)

He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth. Isaiah 53:9 **(NIV)**

This verse by itself does not address the duration of the Servant not committing violence or deceit (being righteous). Alone, the verse could speak of a situation in which the Servant was purified, no longer committing violence, or concerning something that was never done before the time of this speech (e.g. Job 16:17; Psalm 17:1; Psalm 24:4). However, it does exemplify another differentiating factor of the Servant compared to Men. Men have gone astray (whether Israel or the nations that Israel represents, namely, all humans),[102] but the Servant passes through death without deceit or violence (Isaiah 53:7,8,9). Men confuse the will of God (Isaiah 53:4,12), but the Servant does not (Isaiah 53:10). These differences make the Servant unique in relation to all others ("all we" in Isaiah 53:6), and may refer to an unchanging state of righteousness. Regardless of the duration of the Servant's righteousness, he is definitely righteous unto death, justifying many and

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[102] Watts, "Echoes from the Past," 497-498.

possibly participating in the process of forgiveness of sins, at least for those who repent (Isaiah 53:10,11,12).

Using the LC and comparing to other English translations, the verb וַיִּתֵּן is sometimes mistranslated as a 3mp (e.g. ESV) instead of the 3ms rendition of the LC (e.g. NIV and KJV). The LC version is paralleling verse 7 so that the Servant is not retaliating, but letting others kill him ("he made/set/put with the wicked his grave"), making the active verb וַיִּתֵּן have a passive or permissive usage.[103] Bock mentions the agreement of Rashi and Radak with this rendition of וַיִּתֵּן.[104]

The 1QIsa scroll has some variations, different words, spellings, blurs and erased parts that may result in some changes in translation. Two words can significantly change the translation, although they do not change the exegesis of Isaiah 52:13-53:12. The first is ויחנו ("they encamped/settled," from the root חָנָה)[105] instead of וַיִּתֵּן ("he made"). The second is the word בומתו (singular noun with 3ms pronominal suffix, from the root במה or "high place")[106] instead of בְּמֹתָיו (plural noun with 3ms pronominal suffix, meaning "in his death"). Although במה typically means a place of worship, it may also be the place where important figures were

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[103] E. W. Bullinger, *Figures of Speech used in the Bible: Explained and Illustrated.* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1898), 823-824.

[104] Bock and Glaser, *The Gospel according to Isaiah 53*, 70.

[105] Brown, Driver, Briggs, *Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*, ח, חָנָה, 333.1.

[106] Ibid., ב, בָּמָה, 119.1.

buried (e.g. Ezekiel 43:7).[107] Since "his grave" seems to refer to the Servant, it is possible that "his high place" also refers to the Servant. However, given the Servant's righteousness, it probably does not mean a pagan place of worship that belongs to the Servant. Additionally, the word בומתו can form a word pair with קִבְרוֹ, a repetition of the concept of a grave/burial and death (see the Repetition Section for other illustrations of word pairs in Isaiah 53).

In view of this, instead of "and he made with the wicked his grave and with a rich in his death," the translation of 1QIsa would be, "and they encamped/settled with the wicked his grave and with a rich his high place/burial mound." It is important to note that עָשִׁיר ("rich") is maintaining its singular force because the word that one may think parallels it does not follow the same singular force (רְשָׁעִים is in the plural). Both רְשָׁעִים and עָשִׁיר are related to the concept of death, however, they might not be related among themselves. Because of this, it becomes more difficult to justify the singular representing the plural, and vice-versa.[108]

Below follows several tables summarizing the character division, Servant's role and a segment with the corrected translations of Isaiah 53:9.

SPEAKER	REFERENT	NOUNS and PRONOUNS
God(LC)/Men(1QIsa)	Servant	He/His
God(LC)/Men(1QIsa)	Men	Wicked; Rich

Table 19: Character division in Isaiah 53:9.

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[107] Brown, Driver, Briggs, *Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*, ב, בָּמָה, 119.1.

[108] Bullinger, *Figures of Speech used in the Bible: Explained and Illustrated*, 525.

RESEMBLANCE	CONTENT
Priest/King/Prophet	Display of righteousness (no violence and deceit)

Table 20: Who the Servant resembles in Isaiah 53:9.

CORRECTION	REASON
he made with the wicked his grave and with a rich in his death (LC)	3ms active verb וַיִּתֵּן (implied passive force)
they settled with the wicked his grave and with a rich in his high place (1QIsa)	בומתו and ויחנו

Table 21: Segment of Isaiah 53:9 with corrected translation.

Literary Context of Isaiah 53:10

10 וַיהוָה חָפֵץ דַּכְּאוֹ הֶחֱלִי אִם־תָּשִׂים אָשָׁם נַפְשׁוֹ יִרְאֶה זֶרַע יַאֲרִיךְ יָמִים וְחֵפֶץ יְהוָה בְּיָדוֹ יִצְלָח (LC)

Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. Isaiah 53:10 (**KJV**)

Yet it was the Lord's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the Lord makes his life an offering for sin, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the Lord will prosper in his hand. Isaiah 53:10 (**NIV**)

Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. Isaiah 53:10 (**ESV**)

This time, as was done with verse 5, three different translations are shown to demonstrate the difficulty that most versions have in the process of translating this verse from Hebrew into English.

All three versions, KJV, NIV and ESV seem to agree in one aspect. They can lead the reader to understand that God is the active subject of the verbs crush/bruise and cause/put, while the Servant is the receiving end, the one being crushed and suffering, because of the 3ms conjugations, pronominal suffixes and active voices in the LC (דַּכְּאוֹ הֶחֱלִי) or in 1QIsa (דכאו ויחללהו). Regardless, "having the will" for something does not automatically imply success of an action, if there was an action to begin with, nor the means by which the action, or the success, was accomplished. Considering that the LC and 1QIsa use the inseparable preposition מִן (from) in Isaiah 53:5, which implies that Men made the Servant's wounds (the second exegesis of Table 7), it becomes less likely that God was the agent of the wounds on the Servant, but rather that He allowed it.[109] Furthermore, considering the grammatical and contextual analysis made previously on Isaiah 53:4, it is clear that the Servant is not stricken by God, on the contrary, this was a wrong assertion made by Men.[110] Nonetheless, there are two more complementary pieces of information that help readers understand God's apparent "agency" in the bruising of the Servant. Both lead to an agreement with the Second Exegesis of verse 5, given the context (recall Table 7).

The first piece of information is to consider the motivations for this desire, the context may show that God's desire for the bruising of the Servant may be related to the Servant's righteousness, resembling the prophets who served God but

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[109] Bar, *The "Gospel" of Divine Abuse*, 339-340.

[110] Motyer, *Isaiah an Introduction and Commentary*, 377.

were killed (Nehemiah 9:26). The assumption that the desire to crush necessarily

relates to a punishment, goes against Isaiah 53:4 (not stricken by God),[111] and also,

for example, the narrative of the book of Job (where Job's suffering was not due to

a punishment actively caused by God, but a suffering permitted by Him). The

sufferings, of the prophets, Job or Joseph, lead to greater events along the

narratives. Therefore, the desire could be related to important future events,

whether or not described in the passage,[112] for instance, the Servant's exaltation

(Isaiah 52:13), as well as his participation in healing (Isaiah 53:6), intercession

(Isaiah 53:6,12), justification and division of spoil (Isaiah 53:11,12). The desire is

not on the suffering by itself, but on the Servant's service.[113] Moreover, the second

time the word חָפֵץ is used shows that God and the Servant are in agreement with

each other ("the will of the Lord shall prosper in his hand"), which would imply

that both characters (God and the Servant) act in agreement as in Isaiah 53:6,12.

Finally, Belousek points out that God does not desire the death of the wicked,

according to Ezekiel 33:11, which would suggest that God also does not desire the

death of the righteous Servant.[114]

The second piece of information refers to knowing that many writers of the

Tanakh wrote God's omission or permission as an action (Bullinger illustrates when

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[111] Motyer, *Isaiah an Introduction and Commentary*, 377.

[112] Ward, "The Servant Songs in Isaiah," 444.

[113] Belousek, *Atonement, Justice and Peace*, 228.

[114] Ibid., 227-228.

active verbs are used in this manner).[115] Bullinger exemplifies other idiomatic uses

of active verbs with different semantical forces, for instance, verbs can be used to

express an agent's design, the effects of an action, or the occasion of the action, and

not the actual active performance of the action.[116] North mentions that in the

Tanakh, everything that happens is considered as the result of God's direct

action.[117] All of this also points toward a solution to the paradoxical interpretation

of הֶחֱלִי דַּכְּאוֹ חָפֵץ וַיהוָה (or ויחללהו and דכאו in the 1QIsa), namely, that God's desire

was to allow the Servant to be wounded (there are other examples discussed in the

Paradox Section, mainly in the "God's desire or will to crush" Subsection).

When there are passages or concepts with two subjects (God and another)

performing the same action, it is possible that the writer is attributing to God the

action when in fact God is permitting it, just like what happens in the book of Job.

Sometimes, there is no need for two subjects to exist. For example, in Isaiah 54:8,

the expectation of an action, developed from wrath, is negated by an omission (the

wrath is in the omission, not in an action). Another example is 1 Chronicles 21 and

2 Samuel 24, where in one instance it is Satan going against David and, in the

other, it is God going against David. Yet another instance of an apparent paradox is

in Isaiah 63:17, where it seems that God caused Israel to stray from His ways. For

example, this last form of speech is common and shows people's desperation and

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[115] Bullinger, *Figures of Speech used in the Bible: Explained and Illustrated*, 823-824.

[116] Ibid., 821-825.

[117] North, *The Second Isaiah: Introduction, Translation and Commentary to Chapters XL-LV*, 242.

God's permission, making it appear that God made Israel sin, even though Israel itself had sinned against God (in Isaiah 49:14 a similar situation occurs, and the reality of the situation emerges soon after in verses 15 and 16).

Combining both pieces of information, the first related to the context and the second to the semantical force of verbs (idiomatic usage), there may be a desired permission, on God's part, showing a final and deeper purpose for this permission within the text. This permission does not necessarily mean that the one who suffers from what was permitted is unrighteous or righteous, however, the chapter explicitly differentiates the Servant as righteous, even alluding towards the special roles of this Servant (king, prophet, lamb, priest). The same conclusion, that God allowed the Servant's suffering, is found by Belousek. He analyzes the duality between God's actions and the Servant's actions in various verses to repeatedly demonstrate that God is not actively punishing the Servant.[118]

Because God does not force people to sin (Adam and Eve are the first example of this free choice to sin) and does not desire anybody to die (Ezekiel 18:23), the only way in which both assertions can be valid is in an "act" of God's permission. Similar to what happens with some of the prophets of Israel, as stated in Nehemiah 9:26 (righteous servants being killed by unrighteous men, and God allowing this to happen). The purpose of letting the prophets die is deeper than just a lack of interest or disregard on God's part. One possibility is that God is actually showing explicitly the need for repentance (warnings of prophets, e.g. 2 Kings

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[118] Belousek, *Atonement, Justice and Peace*, 239-240.

17:13), or that this occasion will serve as a future reference on the dangers of a sinful event or even for future repentance (e.g. Daniel 9). Therefore, the Servant resembles the prophets.[119]

Thus, it is possible that, with the information in verse 10, God allows Men to kill the Servant and that God is not punishing the Servant (agreeing with what was proposed in Isaiah 53:4,5). This non-active participation of God in the wounds of the Servant is similar to Eitan Bar's exegesis of the passage.[120] Barré, on the other hand, uses verse 10 to assert that God did wound the Servant,[121] extrapolating to verses 4 and 5 without considering the possible idiomatic usage of verbs illustrated by Bullinger. Not only that, but verses 4 and 5 explicitly show that God was not the origin of the Servant's wounds, making Eitan's exegesis more aligned with the context and Hebrew grammar than Barré's exegesis.

The LC and 1QIsa manuscripts present differing verbs, הֶחֱלִי and ויחללהו respectively.[122] These verbs have different meanings and allude to different verses. The verb הֶחֱלִי (*Hiphil-Perfect-3ms*) has the root חָלָה, which means "to be weak" or "sick,"[123] while the verb ויחללהו (*Qal/Piel-Imperfect-3ms with 3ms Type 1 alternate*

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[119] Whybray, *Thanskgiving for a Liberated Prophet*, 73.

[120] Bar, *The "Gospel" of Divine Abuse*, 339-342.

[121] Barré, "Textual and Rhetorical-Critical Observations on the Last Servant Song (Isaiah 52:13-53:12)," 14.

[122] Bauer, "The Consequence of the Servant's Suffering for the Relationship Between God and the Others in Isaiah 53," 18.

[123] Brown, Driver, Briggs, *Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*, ח, חָלָה, 317.2.

form pronoun) has the root חָלַל, which means "to wound" or "pierce."[124] The first

verb alludes to Isaiah 53:3-4 where the noun from the root חֳלִי (sickness) is used,

and the second verb alludes to Isaiah 53:5 where the same verbal root is used. This

difference does not significantly change the contextual meaning of the passage,

however, both allusions point toward the consonance of verses, which can help in

the exegesis (see Literary Structure chapter for more information on consonance).

When reading all three English translations mentioned, the subject who is

offering for guilt/sin, or making someone offer it, is different in each instance. In the

ESV it is the Servant who makes the offering. In the NIV it is God who makes the

Servant's life an offering. And in the KJV it is the "you" character (possibly the

prophet Isaiah, those he represents, or Israel) who makes the life of the Servant an

offering for sin. The specific word that is causing this difference between

translations is תשים, which can be conjugated as *Qal-Imperfect-3fs* (she makes) and

as *Qal-Imperfect-2ms* (you make), both conjugations being identical.[125]

An unlikely rendering of תָּשִׂים אָשָׁם נַפְשׁוֹ would be that the Servant made a

guilt offering of his own soul. The subject would be the indirect object, which is

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124 Brown, Driver, Briggs, *Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*, ח, חָלַל, 319.1.

125 Bauer, "The Consequence of the Servant's Suffering for the Relationship Between God and the Others in Isaiah 53," 34.

abnormal given that an indirect reflexive occurs in the *Hithpael* stem.[126] There is

also no preposition עַל or לְ to assume that נַפְשׁוֹ is an indirect object.[127]

Assuming the punctuation marks of the LC as correct, that is, נַפְשׁוֹ is not the

beginning of another sentence, and if one reads the verb as 3fs, then the Servant

would be doing the guilt offering in a V-O-S construction. In this specific case the

subject (S) is technically already clear from the conjugation of the verb (V). See

Genesis 21:7 as another example of this construction (הֵינִיקָה בָנִים שָׂרָה). Both

Genesis 21:7 and Isaiah 53:10 would be using an apposition (same referent) that is

related to the subject of the verb, and not to the adjacent noun. in Genesis 21:7,

"that she would nurse children, Sarah," is translated in the NIV and ESV as "that

Sarah would nurse children." In the same way, תָשִׂים אָשָׁם נַפְשׁוֹ would be literally "she

makes a guilt offering, his soul" with "his soul" referring to "she," which could be

translated as "his soul makes a guilt offering" (the ESV translation resembles this

reading). Now, the only possibility for the Servant to make a guilt offering is if he is

a priest or someone confessing guilt. Since the Servant is without violence or deceit

(Isaiah 53:9), he would necessarily need to have a priestly role.

The alternative (תָשִׂים as 2ms) is found, for instance, in the KJV version

("when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin"). The character "you" was

already introduced in Isaiah 52:14 (עָלֶיךָ), which could be, for example, the prophet

Isaiah, Israel (a subgroup of the subject Men) or, alternatively, those who repent

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[126] Bruce K. Waltke, and Michael Patrick O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, (Winona Lake, Ind: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 430.

[127] Ibid., 218.

(one of three options given by Motyer).[128] This last option can subdivide the Men group, and any subgroup, into two; those who offer the guilt offering and those who do not, which makes the justification and and the division of spoil (Isaiah 53:11,12) not universal (all Men), but only to those who repent ("many" in verse 12).

If punctuation and vowel marks are disregarded, then it would be possible, for example, to read אָשָׁם נַפְשׁוֹ as a construct chain of reason related to what "you" (Men) did to the Servant throughout the passage ("if you make a guilt offering because of his soul"). Without punctuation marks, it would also be possible to use נַפְשׁוֹ as the beginning of another sentence, connected with יִרְאֶה, instead of אָשָׁם נַפְשׁוֹ as a construct chain (not possible with the marks in LC) or as a apposition. Therefore, אִם תָּשִׂים אָשָׁם would be a separate sentence, similarly to the Septuagint reading.[129] This point of view would results in "he will see" or "his soul will see." This option would go against the LC punctuation mark in נַפְשׁוֹ, which assumes a pause in recitation (*Little Zaqeph* accent). However, given that the autograph would not have any punctuation or vowel marks, it is possible to see נַפְשׁוֹ as the beginning of another sentence.

With regard to אָשָׁם, when someone makes a guilt offering (אָשָׁם), the guilt always lies on the subject who gives the offering to the priest, in this case, the

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[128] Motyer gives two other options for the what the word עָלֶיךָ is referring: God and the Servant, see *Isaiah an Introduction and Commentary*, 381-382. Since a guilty person is usually making a guilt offering, עָלֶיךָ may be primarily referring to the guilty person (Motyer's option "c"), otherwise the text would be talking about the Servant in a priestly manner (the priest concludes the ritual offering).

[129] Lancelot Charles Lee Brenton, *The Septuagint Version of the Old Testament: With an English Translation, and with Various Readings and Critical Notes*, (London: Samuel Bagster and Sons, 1879), 889.

character "you." This guilt is neither on the sacrifice (the unblemished lamb),[130] nor
on the priest who "carries" the sin (atonement), nor on God who has no sin, and
given the properties that the Servant may possess in regard to deliverance (Isaiah
53:5,11,12), as well as his innocence (Isaiah 53:7,9), it becomes even more unlikely
that the innocent Servant needs to make an offering for his own guilt, but rather
that he is a priest as well as the "type of lamb" (as mentioned in verse 7, this type
is related to righteousness and not a ritualistic human sacrifice). The agency of the
one needing to make an offering, reinforces the idea of a callback to the "you" as
part of the Men group in Isaiah 52:14 (similar to Bauer's approach, but with
different results).[131] This is arguably the second indication of God's speech,
mirroring the pronoun of Isaiah 52:14 (the first indication is "my people" in verse 8
of the LC). Additionally, note that pushing God's speech to Isaiah 53:11 on the
basis that God cannot refer to himself in the third person[132] is false (e.g. Isaiah
38:7, Amos 4:11 and Zechariah 1:17).

Now, if one considers אָשָׁם נַפְשׁוֹ as a construct chain, even though it is an
unlikely construction when looking at LC, a possible interpretation is that the one
making the guilt offering ("you") is the one that is repenting from his own guilt, a
guilt related to the rejection and murder of the Servant, his soul (נַפְשׁוֹ). The one
guilty of despising and killing the Servant in the passage is Men. So, instead of

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[130] Fox, *Understanding Atonement*, 74-75.

[131] Bauer, "The Consequence of the Servant's Suffering for the Relationship Between God and the Others in Isaiah 53," 38.

[132] Ibid., 38.

considering the soul of the Servant as an offering from those who repent (the same act being considered as a sin and a guilt offering, which is an oxymoron), the word "soul" (noun 2) specifies what the "offering" (noun 1) is about, namely, the killing of the Servant's soul (cause, reason, or even specification).[133] The example sentence "you killed the servant of the king," illustrates this concept, where the servant is not the king nor the king is the servant, therefore, in Isaiah 53:10, the guilt offering (אָשָׁם) would not be the Servant's soul and vice-versa (נַפְשׁוֹ would qualify what אָשָׁם is about, without taking its place).

Table 22 summarizes the problematic consequences of different interpretations concerning the person "you/she" and אָשָׁם נַפְשׁוֹ in the LC. The most probable interpretation for the LC has the first column item in **bold**. The interpretations which are unlikely have the first column in **bold red**. The other possibilities depend on how one reads the text without punctuation and vowel marks.

Given the priestly characteristics of the Servant, he could also serve as a "type" of lamb and prophet ("he poured out his life unto death", Isaiah 53:12). This does not imply suicide on the Servant's part, but rather a self-sacrifice for others with "no violence nor deceit" (Isaiah 53:9), even if this meant his death (Isaiah 53:8). A subgroup of Men, who are "many" (רב), are those who are justified because they will repent from their guilt (Isaiah 53:10,11,12). This context is in line with the Hebrew sacrificial system. There is a guilty person making an offering, who

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[133] Chisholm, *From Exegesis to Exposition*, 63.

"you"	INTERPRETATION	PROBLEM
God	God does the guilt offering	God does not sin
Servant	Servant does the guilt offering (repenting)	The Servant did not sin to need to repent
Servant	Servant does the guilt offering (priestly duty)	-
Any	Make the Servant a guilt offering	A guilt offering which is a sin
Men	Make a guilt offering explicitly related to their sin against the Servant	Disjunctive accent exchanged for a conjunctive; vowel reduction; construct chain of reason
Men	Make a guilt offering implicitly related to their sin	The major disjunctive accent goes to אָשָׁם instead of נַפְשׁוֹ

Table 22: Different interpretations of "you," אָשָׁם נַפְשׁוֹ and their problems.

in this case is not the Servant, and the priest and lamb participate in the process of forgiveness of the sinner (the priest conducts the offering process without being guilty of any sin and the blood of the lamb atones/covers the sin). The main difference is that the Servant has a multiplicity of roles instead of just one (e.g. pouring his life for others, which resembles the lambs and prophets, and carrying the sin of others, which resembles the priests, those who forgive others and those who suffer from the sins of others).

One aspect that is not necessarily emphasized in the English translations is the protasis and apodosis of the conditional sentence in Isaiah 53:10.[134] Replacing "when" with "if" (beginning of protasis), and replacing "and" with "then" (beginning of apodosis), before "the will of the Lord", can reemphasize the conditional sentence. The Lord's will/desire prospers in the hand of the Servant given the condition of "your" (2ms) repentance ("you make the guilt offering"). Moreover, given that the next two verse show that many are justified (something God desires), it becomes certain that not only the Lord's will is going to prosper in the Servant's hand, but also not all will repent (make the guilt offering). This consideration connects the will of God with the justification and forgiveness of many, helping the readers understand the reasons why God allows the Servant to die.

In verse 10, there is "conflicting information" when compared with the previous two verses. The Servant seems to have been killed, and is able to see offspring (seed), prolong days, and be satisfied (in verse 11), among other characteristics of someone alive. Even though this situation may seem an oxymoron, these characteristics may indicate a type of resurrection which, in turn, transforms the situation into a solvable paradox (see "Dead and Alive" in the Paradox section of the Literary Structure Chapter).

Below are several tables summarizing the character division, the Servant's role and a segment with an alternative translations of Isaiah 53:10.

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[134] Bauer, "The Consequence of the Servant's Suffering for the Relationship Between God and the Others in Isaiah 53," 34.

SPEAKER	REFERENT	NOUNS and PRONOUNS
God(LC)/Men(1QIsa)	God	יהוה
God(LC)/Men(1QIsa)	Servant	Him
God	Servant	He, His

Table 23: Character division in Isaiah 53:10.

RESEMBLANCE	CONTENT
Priest/King/Prophet	Prospering for doing God's will

Table 24: Who the Servant resembles in Isaiah 53:10.

ALTERNATE	REASON
and was the Lord's will to crush him and pierce him	Parallel with v.5 (1QIsa)
if you make...then the will of the Lord will prosper in his hand	explicit protasis and apodosis
if you make a guilt offering, his soul will see	2ms pronoun; the offering ends the sentence
if you make a guilt offering because of his soul	2ms pronoun; construct chain of reason

Table 25: Segments of Isaiah 53:10 with alternative translation.

Literary Context of Isaiah 53:11

11 מֵעֲמַל נַפְשׁוֹ יִרְאֶה יִשְׂבָּע בְּדַעְתּוֹ יַצְדִּיק צַדִּיק עַבְדִּי לָרַבִּים וַעֲוֹנֹתָם הוּא יִסְבֹּל (LC)

After he has suffered, he will see the light of life and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities. Isaiah 53:11 (NIV)

The ESV and KJV versions do not present major differences between

themselves and the LC. However, the NIV adds "the light of life" to the text,

translating closer to the 1QIsa scroll יראה אור ("he will see light"), which is another characteristic of someone alive, probably implying the resurrection of the Servant in the text (e.g. after death he sees, prolongs days, justifies and divides spoil).

In this verse, the adjective רב is present, just as in Isaiah 52:15 and 53:12. It can mean "much", "many" or "great."[135] Both in Isaiah 52:15 and 53:11, the word means "many" and it may point to the word retaining the same meaning in the following verse, not just because of frequency, but by the context and by the literary structure of the passage (see the Repetition section in The Literary Structure Chapter).

Another recurring word is סָבַל, which was present in Isaiah 53:4 ("bore our sorrows"). The simple meaning of a physical action is not enough given the abstract concepts present in verse 4 and verse 11 (suffering and iniquities/guilt, respectively). The concept of bearing the iniquities/guilt of others is present in the Hebrew sacrificial system. For instance, in Leviticus 10:17 Eleazar and Ithamar (Levitic priests, sons of Aaron) failed to eat the sacrifice, and therefore, failed to "bear" (or lift, as in "take out" from the transgressors) the iniquities of the congregation as mediators, a special or "set apart" role of the priests (Lev 22:15-16). Leviticus 10:17 uses the word נָשָׂא in the context of atonement, resulting in the forgiveness of sins, since the priest carries (lifts or bears) the guilt of others.

The pain and suffering of verse 4 can be related, as consequences, of the iniquities/guilt and sins of verses 11 and 12, respectively, so that the phrases "carry

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[135] Brown, Driver, Briggs, *Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*, ר, רַב, 912.2.

guilt/sin" are related to the Servant's suffering (a repetition of verse 4).

Alternatively, verses 4, 11 and 12 could be referring to deliverance from sins and its

consequences as a byproduct of forgiveness of sins (this alternative has less

contextual clues, but if one reads verse 5 with the impersonal *Niphal*, then "we are

healed" could add support for a deliverance and/or forgiveness interpretation of

"carry" and "bear").

Verse 11 could have an interesting parallelism of ideas if the suffering

interpretation for נָשָׂא and סָבַל is used. Within the verse, the suffering of מֵעֲמַל נַפְשׁוֹ

would be paralleling the suffering in וַעֲוֹנֹתָם הוּא יִסְבֹּל. In a similar manner, the

middle section can be divided in two positive results, the satisfaction (יִרְאֶה יִשְׂבָּע)

and the justification (בְּדַעְתּוֹ יַצְדִּיק צַדִּיק עַבְדִּי לָרַבִּים). Moreover, these positive results

in verse 11 continue the trend of positive results that began in verse 10 (seeing seed,

prolongation of days and prospering) and will continue in verse 12.

Below are follows several tables summarizing the character division, the

Servant's roles and a segment with an alternative translation of Isaiah 53:11.

SPEAKER	REFERENT	NOUNS and PRONOUNS
God	Servant	He, His, Servant
God	Men	Their, Many

Table 26: Character division in Isaiah 53:11.

RESEMBLANCE	CONTENT
Priest/Prophet	Bear iniquity

Table 27: Who the Servant resembles in Isaiah 53:11.

ALTERNATE	REASON
from the trouble of his soul	אור (light) in 1QIsa
he will see light and be satisfied	

Table 28: Segment of Isaiah 53:11 with alternative translation.

Literary Context of Isaiah 53:12

12 לָכֵן אֲחַלֶּק־לוֹ בָרַבִּים וְאֶת־עֲצוּמִים יְחַלֵּק שָׁלָל תַּחַת אֲשֶׁר הֶעֱרָה לַמָּוֶת נַפְשׁוֹ
וְאֶת־פֹּשְׁעִים נִמְנָה וְהוּא חֵטְא־רַבִּים נָשָׂא וְלַפֹּשְׁעִים יַפְגִּיעַ (LC)

Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the
spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was
numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made
intercession for the transgressors. Isaiah 53:12 (**NIV**)

In verse 12, two words can confuse the reader, the "great" (from the root רב)

and the "strong" (from the root עָצוּם). After reading the passages and knowing the

three main subjects, it is not obvious who exactly the great and strong are, since all

Men turned away from God and went astray. However, both Hebrew words (רב and

עָצוּם) have other possible meanings, for example, רב can mean "many" and עָצוּם

can mean "numerous."[136] The change in meaning to "many" and "numerous" not

only agrees with context (related to Men who repent and are justified), but also on

other occasions the words are used (Isaiah 52:15 and 53:11) as adjectives of

quantity. Within the group of all who "turned their own way," many "turned back."

After having continually expressed the wrongdoings of Men in the previous

verses, it becomes uncharacteristic to consider that there are some who are "great"

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[136] Brown, Driver, Briggs, *Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*, ע,
עָצוּם, 783.1.

and "strong" (in Isaiah 52:15, not even kings have the right understanding and shall shut their mouths). However, a division of rewards and forgiveness among many is within the context of the previous passages, emphasizing the need for Men to repent, as in Isaiah 53:10 (those who make the guilt offering concerning their sin against the Servant of God).

As mentioned before, the use of נָשָׂא (carry) can symbolize the Servant's connections with a priest, the forgiveness of the "many" by Servant or the suffering from the sins of Men. The priest carried the guilt of the congregation and worked in the process of atonement or forgiveness of sins (e.g. Leviticus 10:17 and Exodus 28:38). Someone (God or a person) can carry the sins of others, in a process of forgiveness, concerning those who sinned against them (e.g. Exodus 32:32 and 1 Samuel 25:28). Suffering from the sins of others is also seen with נָשָׂא (e.g. Lamentations 5:7).

There exists a difference in one carrying his own sin and another, who can participate in the forgiveness of the sinner, carrying this sin. No priest was guilty of committing the sins of the person for whom he "carried" the sins. Those who asked for forgiveness do not make sinful the one who forgives or participates in the process of forgiveness (e.g. Moses and God in Exodus 32:30-32), even if the forgiving party has suffered something in the past (e.g. the conversation between Abigail and David, 1 Samuel 25, specially verse 28). When God "carries" sins, He is not guilty of the sins (e.g. Exodus 32:32, 34:7). When someone correctly carries/bears the sins or guilt of others (in the forgiveness sense), this someone becomes a mediator of God (the actual forgiveness of sin is finalized by God, but mediators can participate

in the process). Related words like מָחָה, meaning "blot out" or "wipe out"[137] (e.g. Exodus 32:32 and Isaiah 43:25); נָקָה, which means "clean"[138] (e.g. Exodus 34:7); and כִּפֶּר, meaning "cover over" or "atone"[139] (e.g. Leviticus 10:17), may indicate that נָשָׂא does not have a substitution element concerning guilt, it is the destruction of the guilt and sin through forgiveness (e.g. not remembering the sin, as in Isaiah 43:25). Moreover, sons suffering from the sins of the fathers (Lamentations 5:7) does not automatically mean that the sons are guilty (Ezekiel 18:20), which indicates that the Servant cannot be guilty.

If the possible meanings of נָשָׂא are overlooked, the exegesis can change substantially so that "carrying sin" appears to be related to punishment, and not with atonement and forgiveness of sin or simply with suffering. By analyzing the syntax in isolation, Bauer overlooks this,[140] consequently needing to make the Servant guilty of punishment by transference of guilt, regardless of the passage not mentioning this possibility (the only possibility for the Servant's punishment would be an unrighteous punishment caused by Men). Rikk Watts, on the other hand, identifies the priestly role presented in the passage, even identifying that there is a difference between carrying the sins of others and carrying one's own sin.[141]

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[137] Brown, Driver, Briggs, *Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*, ם, מָחָה, 562.1.

[138] Ibid., ן, נָקָה, 667.1.

[139] Ibid., ן, כִּפֶּר, 497.1.

[140] Bauer, "The Consequence of the Servant's Suffering for the Relationship Between God and the Others in Isaiah 53," 19-20.

[141] Watts, "Echoes from the Past," 498.

However, Watts attempts to join both uses of the word "carrying" to punishment (guilt or penalty) instead of the four meanings in which "carrying" can be used and agree with the context of the passage (the four meanings mentioned in the Literary Context of Isaiah 53:2-4 section, namely, deliverance, forgiveness and two types of suffering).

As mentioned in the context section of verse 6, instead of הִפְגִּיעַ, here the imperfect form is used, which is יַפְגִּיעַ or "shall intercede." Moreover, the meaning used in many translations of verse 6 (laid) does not work in verse 12, however, the underlying meaning "intercession" of הִפְגִּיעַ and יַפְגִּיעַ is possible in both verses so that the intercession of the Servant becomes even more apparent (see the Repetition section, on the Literary Structure Chapter, for more examples and visual representation of word repetition). Whybray also states the resemblance of the Servant's intercessory role with that of the prophets.[142] Moreover, Kim concludes that the Septuagint and Targumic interpretations of Isaiah 53:4,5,6,11,12 are related with the concepts of forgiveness, intercession and a Messianic figure.[143]

Similar to the parallelism of verse 11, here in verse 12 there may be a parallelism of suffering (Su) and positive results (Pr) if the interpretation of "carry" is related to suffering. Verse 11 had Su-Pr-Pr-Su, yet verse 12 has Pr-Su-Su-Pr. The first Pr would be the division of spoil among many (בָרַבִּים וְאֶת־עֲצוּמִים יְחַלֵּק שָׁלָל תַּחַת) and the second would be the intercession for the transgressors (יַפְגִּיעַ לָכֵן אֲחַלֶּק־לוֹ)

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[142] Whybray, *Thanskgiving for a Liberated Prophet*, 73.

[143] Jintae Kim, "Targum Isaiah 53 and the New Testament Concept of Atonement," (LBTS Faculty Publications and Presentations, 2008), 97.

וְלַפֹּשְׁעִים). The first Su would be pouring his life unto death and being accounted as a transgressor (הֶעֱרָה לַמָּוֶת נַפְשׁוֹ וְאֶת־פֹּשְׁעִים נִמְנָה) and the second Su would be carrying the sins of many in the sense of suffering (וְהוּא חֵטְא־רַבִּים נָשָׂא).

Below are several tables summarizing the character division, the Servant's roles and a segment with a corrected translation of Isaiah 53:10.

SPEAKER	REFERENT	NOUNS and PRONOUNS
God	Servant	Him, He
God	Men	Many, Numerous, Transgressors

Table 29: Character division in Isaiah 53:12.

RESEMBLANCE	CONTENT
Priest/Prophet	Carrying sins, Intercession
King	Divide spoil

Table 30: Who the Servant resembles in Isaiah 53:12.

CORRECTION	REASON
I will divide him with many and with numerous he will divide the spoil	Consonance and word pair; none who is great or strong

Table 31: Segment of Isaiah 53:12 with corrected translation.

CHAPTER 3

Literary Structure

Isaiah 52:13-53:12 is a passage from which it is possible to extract many literary structures, and by knowing these structures, the reader is able to understand the writer's rhetoric more clearly than he/she would otherwise. Here, both definitions of rhetoric, given by Ryken,[1] will be mixed to illustrate how the point of view of the writer of Isaiah 52:13-53:12 can be understood through his use of devices of disclosure (clues for interpretation) and his selectivity of material (what the writer includes or excludes).

After going through the structures, some of the grammatical and contextual choices made in the previous chapter (Literary Context) can become even more grounded and the conclusions of each section solidified.

Repetition

Within the devices of disclosure, repetition is predominant in the passage, mainly consonance, echo and word pairs (a structure often used by Hebrew poets, using pair(s) of synonyms or antonyms).[2] Consonance (or concordance), according to Ryken, is "the preservation in an English Bible translation of the repetition of

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[1] Leland Ryken. *A Complete Handbook of Literary Forms in the Bible.* (Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway, 2014), Rhetoric, Credo Reference.

[2] William W. Klein, Craig L. Blomberg, and Robert L. Hubbard. *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation.* Third edition. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2017). 379.

words or phrases found in the Hebrew Old Testament and Greek New Testament"[3]

and echo is "a rhetorical form in which something that has been introduced into a

work is echoed later in the work, either once or multiple times."[4]

By noticing these repetitions, more information can be added to narrow

down all the possible lexical meanings and understand the relationship between

verses to form a cohesive immediate context. The repetitions can lead the reader to

see the parallelism among different lines, and that there may exist a lexical-semantic

factor that associates sets of words together.[5]

Because some echoes may be lost by disregarding consonance, the Hebrew

text (LC) will be used to illustrate this phenomenon, rather than the previously

used English versions (KJV, NIV, ESV). Below are some examples:

Many and Numerous

52:14 כַּאֲשֶׁר שָׁמְמוּ עָלֶיךָ רַבִּים כֵּן־מִשְׁחַת מֵאִישׁ מַרְאֵהוּ וְתֹאֲרוֹ מִבְּנֵי אָדָם

15 כֵּן יַזֶּה גּוֹיִם רַבִּים עָלָיו יִקְפְּצוּ מְלָכִים פִּיהֶם כִּי אֲשֶׁר לֹא־סֻפַּר לָהֶם רָאוּ וַאֲשֶׁר

לֹא־שָׁמְעוּ הִתְבּוֹנָנוּ

53:11 מֵעֲמַל נַפְשׁוֹ יִרְאֶה יִשְׂבָּע בְּדַעְתּוֹ יַצְדִּיק צַדִּיק עַבְדִּי לָרַבִּים וַעֲוֹנֹתָם הוּא יִסְבֹּל

12 לָכֵן אֲחַלֶּק־לוֹ בָרַבִּים וְאֶת־עֲצוּמִים יְחַלֵּק שָׁלָל תַּחַת אֲשֶׁר הֶעֱרָה לַמָּוֶת נַפְשׁוֹ וְאֶת־פֹּשְׁעִים נִמְנָה

וְהוּא חֵטְא־רַבִּים נָשָׂא וְלַפֹּשְׁעִים יַפְגִּיעַ

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[3] Ryken, *A Complete Handbook of Literary Forms in the Bible*, Consonance.

[4] Ibid., Echo.

[5] Klein, Blomberg, and Hubbard. *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, 378-379.

The text above shows the repetitions of the adjective רַב in blue, many are astonished (52:14), many are sprinkled (52:15), many are justified (53:11), many have their sins carried (53:12), so the "division of spoil" will likely be done "with many," rather than "with the great" (53:12). Not only the word, but the meaning of רַב as "many" is echoed throughout the text. Therefore, the word עֲצוּמִים, in orange, is probably forming a synonymous word pair with בָּרַבִּים as in מְחֹלָל with מְדֻכָּא (53:5 and 10 of 1QIsa), נָשָׂא with סְבָלָם (53:4), וְנֶבַה with וְנִשָּׂא and with יָרוּם (52:13). Note that there are more examples in the passage, these are just a few of them for illustration purposes. So עֲצוּמִים means "numerous," as mentioned in the Literary Context chapter, but there is now structural evidence for this meaning. Hermisson recognizes this synonymous parallelism.[6]

Intercession

One example of failed consonance in the KJV, NIV and ESV is between the following verses,

53:6 כֻּלָּנוּ כַּצֹּאן תָּעִינוּ אִישׁ לְדַרְכּוֹ פָּנִינוּ וַיהוָה הִפְגִּיעַ בּוֹ אֵת עֲוֹן כֻּלָּנוּ

12 לָכֵן אֲחַלֶּק־לוֹ בָרַבִּים וְאֶת־עֲצוּמִים יְחַלֵּק שָׁלָל תַּחַת אֲשֶׁר הֶעֱרָה לַמָּוֶת נַפְשׁוֹ וְאֶת־פֹּשְׁעִים נִמְנָה וְהוּא חֵטְא־רַבִּים נָשָׂא וְלַפֹּשְׁעִים יַפְגִּיעַ

Where the word in blue has the same root (פָּגַע) and same stem (*Hifil*) but different meanings in verses 6 and 12 of many translations. However, because the

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meaning "intercede" works in both verses,[7] and the meaning "laid" does not. It is likely that the word is being echoed just as with מֵעֲוֹנֹתֵינוּ and וַעֲוֹנֹתָם (53:5 and 11), נָגוּעַ and נֶגַע (53:4 and 8) or מִפְּשָׁעֵנוּ and מִפֶּשַׁע (53:5 and 8). Note that there are more examples in the passage, these are just a few of them for illustration purposes. The orange word (בּוֹ or "through him") also makes sense with the intercessory meaning of הִפְגִּיעַ.

Meanwhile, with more context, the reader could eventually find another structure, for example, a paradoxical echo of verses 6 and 12 with Isaiah 59:16, which says,

59:16 וַיַּרְא כִּי־אֵין אִישׁ וַיִּשְׁתּוֹמֵם כִּי אֵין מַפְגִּיעַ וַתּוֹשַׁע לוֹ זְרֹעוֹ וְצִדְקָתוֹ הִיא סְמָכָתְהוּ

Belousek makes an interesting connection, between "the repairer of the breach" of Isaiah 58:9-12 to the intercessor of Isaiah 59:15-19 as someone who intervenes "to end injustice and put things right."[8] Since there is no one (אֵין) to intercede (all gone astray, Isaiah 53:6), with the exception of the Servant (Isaiah 53:6,12), God brings salvation and justice Himself, through His exalted and righteous Servant (Messiah, possibly the redeemer of Isaiah 59:20) who fulfills God's desire (Isaiah 53:10), therefore, resolving the paradox (see the next section, Paradox, for more information on this structure).

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[7] Harry M. Orlinsky, and Norman H. Snaith. *Studies on the Second Part of the Book of Isaiah*, Vol. 14, Supplements to Vetus Testamentum, (Leiden: EJ Brill, 1967), 197.

[8] Darrin W. Snyder Belousek, *Atonement, Justice and Peace: The Message of the Cross and the Mission of the Church*, (Grand Rapids, Mich: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2012), 221. Brueggemann, Motyer and Oswalt would also follow similar interpretations (no one to intercede against the lack of justice).

To carry and to bear

Yet another example that needs careful attention concerns the roots **נָשָׂא** (red) and **סָבַל** (blue), in the text below,

52:13 הִנֵּה יַשְׂכִּיל עַבְדִּי יָרוּם וְנִשָּׂא וְגָבַהּ מְאֹד

53:4 אָכֵן חֳלָיֵנוּ הוּא נָשָׂא וּמַכְאֹבֵינוּ סְבָלָם וַאֲנַחְנוּ חֲשַׁבְנֻהוּ נָגוּעַ מֻכֵּה אֱלֹהִים וּמְעֻנֶּה

11 מֵעֲמַל נַפְשׁוֹ יִרְאֶה יִשְׂבָּע בְּדַעְתּוֹ יַצְדִּיק צַדִּיק עַבְדִּי לָרַבִּים וַעֲוֹנֹתָם הוּא יִסְבֹּל

12 לָכֵן אֲחַלֶּק־לוֹ בָרַבִּים וְאֶת־עֲצוּמִים יְחַלֵּק שָׁלָל תַּחַת אֲשֶׁר הֶעֱרָה לַמָּוֶת נַפְשׁוֹ וְאֶת־פֹּשְׁעִים נִמְנָה

וְהוּא חֵטְא־רַבִּים נָשָׂא וְלַפֹּשְׁעִים יַפְגִּיעַ

Here the words in orange complement additional information to the verb in red (**נָשָׂא**), while the words in teal complement the verb in blue (**סָבַל**). Isaiah 52:13 is an example were, although the verb is red, appearing to be an echo with other instances of itself, it is not an echo but a synonymous "word pair" (in this case a triplet) with the words in orange. The supplementary words give more context and confirm this synonymous structure of 52:13 in a threefold manner,[9] by understanding that **יָרוּם וְנִשָּׂא וְגָבַהּ מְאֹד** could be translated as "he will be high (exalted)[10] and lifted (exalted)[11] and very exalted."[12] Verse 4 is also an example of a synonymous word pair between **נָשָׂא** and **סְבָלָם** (to carry and to bear).

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[9] Alec J. Motyer, *Isaiah an Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, vol. 20, (Nottingham, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 1999), 374

[10] Francis Brown, Samuel Rolles Driver, Charles Augustus Briggs. *Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon.* (Logos Research Systems, 2002), **ר**, **רום**, 926.2.

[11] Ibid., **ן**, **נָשָׂא**, 671.2.

[12] Ibid., **ג**, **גָבַהּ**, 146.2.

On the other hand, there are parallels in meaning between verses 4, 11 and 12. The stems are the same in the red words (except verse 13, mentioned above), as well as in the blue words, restricting the possible meanings. Although the Servant does not suffer from sinning himself, he surely suffers from the sins of others. As mentioned in the Literary Context chapter, there are only four possibilities (already mentioned in the Literary Context of Isaiah 53:2-4 section). The third and fourth possibilities are related to suffering, but although the Servant's suffering is clear from the passage (e.g. crushing, piercing and killing in verses 5 and 8), the close relation between carrying/bearing sin and justifying others or interceding for others (verses 11, 12) could validate the first and second possibilities (deliverance and forgiveness).

What the Servant does and the acceptance of him by many is what makes the relationship of the "many" with God restored, which no "mechanical transfer" of penalty can produce this atonement.[13]

To pierce and to crush

The following word pairs and echos of Isaiah 53:4,5,10 depend on the manuscript (LC or 1QIsa),

53:4 אָכֵן חֳלָיֵנוּ הוּא נָשָׂא וּמַכְאֹבֵינוּ סְבָלָם וַאֲנַחְנוּ חֲשַׁבְנֻהוּ נָגוּעַ מֻכֵּה אֱלֹהִים וּמְעֻנֶּה

5 וְהוּא מְחֹלָל מִפְּשָׁעֵנוּ מְדֻכָּא מֵעֲוֺנֹתֵינוּ מוּסַר שְׁלוֹמֵנוּ עָלָיו וּבַחֲבֻרָתוֹ נִרְפָּא־לָנוּ

10 וַיהוָה חָפֵץ דַּכְּאוֹ הֶחֱלִי אִם־תָּשִׂים אָשָׁם נַפְשׁוֹ יִרְאֶה זֶרַע יַאֲרִיךְ יָמִים וְחֵפֶץ יְהוָה בְּיָדוֹ יִצְלָח

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[13] James M. Ward, "The Servant Songs in Isaiah," *Review and expositor*, 65, no. 4 (1968): 446.

In the LC, the red and blue words are echos. In the 1QIsa scroll, the red word in verse 10 (הֶחֱלִי) would be considered violet, just as מְחֹלָל, because the scroll reads ויחללהו. The orange words are complements to better understand the echo, regardless of which manuscript is used. Furthermore, הֶחֱלִי (or ויחללהו) with דַּכְּאוֹ in verse 10 are synonymous word pairs and, similarly, מְדֻכָּא with מְחֹלָל in verse 5.

Beginning with the 1QIsa, the agent who pierces and crushes the Servant is understood by the orange words in verse 5 ("from our," which means Men) and the consonance of words in verse 5 with verse 10, talking about the same thing (echo), can explain the apparent oxymoron of agency when reading verse 10. It is not an oxymoron (an oxymoron is a genuine contradiction that cannot be "explained away"),[14] but a paradox (an apparent contradiction that, upon analysis, is seen to express a truth)[15] that can be resolved due to its frequency in the Tanakh (see "God's desire or will to crush" in the Paradoxes Section). The same thing happens with the LC, however, now the parallel is with verse 4 and 5. The orange words at the end of verse 4 confirm what is said in verse 5 (Men were the agents of the crushing and piercing) and exclude the interpretation that God crushed and pierced the Servant (Men had a wrong conclusion). Moreover, the use of the word חָפֵץ (desire) within verse 10, which does not necessarily mean agency, is confirmed as not meaning agency by the orange words in verses 4 and 5 and by the oxymoron that

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[14] Ryken, *A Complete Handbook of Literary Forms in the Bible*, Paradox.

[15] Ibid., Paradox.

would be created otherwise (Oxymoron: God desiring sins; Paradox: God desiring the Servant to fulfill his responsibilities, despite all sins committed against him).

By comparing the Servant with prophets, it is possible to solve the paradox. Understanding that God allows something to happen (e.g. the murder of a prophet) does not mean He desires sin to be committed. However, God's ultimate desire can be achieved even when sinful actions are happening (Isaiah 46:10). God's desire is not aimed solely toward the piercing and crushing of the Servant (sins), but rather his mission/obedience (e.g. carry sin in verses 11 and 12), which is fully achieved after he is pierced and crushed. The success of a prophet or priest is not measured by staying alive or by being recognized or by riches, but by obedience to God (to heal, to carry sins and guilt and to abstain from violence and deceit). The Servant can be considered successful in these endeavors, as it is attested by the introduction and conclusion of the passage (Isaiah 52:13-15 and 53:10-12). Sentences like יִצְלָח וְחֵפֶץ יְהוָה בְּיָדוֹ ("and the desire of the LORD shall prosper in his hand") or עָלָיו מוּסַר שְׁלוֹמֵנוּ ("discipline/correction of our peace upon/on account of him") may also guide the exegesis toward the success of the Servant.

Sickness, sorrow and regard

53:3 נִבְזֶה וַחֲדַל אִישִׁים אִישׁ מַכְאֹבוֹת וִידוּעַ חֹלִי וּכְמַסְתֵּר פָּנִים מִמֶּנּוּ נִבְזֶה וְלֹא חֲשַׁבְנֻהוּ

4 אָכֵן חֳלָיֵנוּ הוּא נָשָׂא וּמַכְאֹבֵינוּ סְבָלָם וַאֲנַחְנוּ חֲשַׁבְנֻהוּ נָגוּעַ מֻכֵּה אֱלֹהִים וּמְעֻנֶּה (LC)

Above, in Isaiah 53:3-4, there are also some echoes that can lead to ambiguous conclusions tied to the meanings of "carry/bear." Three words echo in these verses, sickness (red), sorrow (blue) and regard (orange).

The Servant may know sickness and sorrow because he suffers from them. He may also know them because he delivers people from them, or both options. This becomes interesting when looking at verse 5, which clearly shows a suffering ("pierced from our transgressions, crushed from our iniquities"), but there is also a healing ("by his wounds we are healed").

Moreover, given that in verse 3 there is a disregard for the Servant, which is something negative and probably morally wrong, it would be plausible to understand that how Men regard the Servant, in verse 4, is also negative and morally wrong.

Parallelism of life events

The life events of the Servant can be paralleled with different roles, as well as paralleled with other important characters mentioned in the Tanakh. One of these characters is Joseph. Below are some of the parallels between Joseph and the Servant:

- Joseph is rejected and afflicted by his brothers; the Servant is rejected and afflicted by his people (Isaiah 52:14, 53:2-5 and 53:8-9).

- Joseph is left by others to die; the Servant is also left by others to die (Isaiah 53:8-9 and 12).

- Joseph is righteous in his actions; the Servant is also righteous (Isaiah 53:11).

- Joseph is exalted from near death and imprisonment to a high ranking position; the Servant is treated as a criminal and killed, but he is also extremely exalted (Isaiah 52:13,15 and 53:9,12).

- Joseph does wonders; the Servant also does wonders (Isaiah 52:15 and 53:10-12).

- By God's will, evil turned into good in the lives of Joseph and the Servant (Isaiah 53:10-12).

- Joseph intercedes and forgives those who wronged him; the Servant also intercedes for many and, depending on how one interprets the ambiguous nature of "carry/bear," forgives many (Isaiah 53:6,11-12).

In these items, the roles of leadership, priesthood, and the prophetic role are apparent. In similar manner, Moses or David can be compared to the Servant, as they also interceded for the people of Israel, God spoke to them, their desire was to obey God, they were persecuted and they had leadership roles. The only difference between the Servant and these figures may be the absence of violence and deceit (Isaiah 53:9) and actual death by the hands of the people (Isaiah 53:8-9,12).

Paradoxes

As mentioned briefly before, the sense of paradoxes used here is that of Ryken's book, namely, that it is an apparent contradiction, which upon analysis is seen to express a truth.[16] Ryken considers an oxymoron to be a genuine

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[16] Ryken, *A Complete Handbook of Literary Forms in the Bible*, Paradox.

contradiction, while the paradox is not a genuine contradiction.[17] This happens because natural language is dependent on intent, affected by ambiguity and context.[18]

Paradoxes are a common structure in the Tanakh, and bring the necessity of readers to resolve these paradoxes to interpret texts. Resolving these paradoxes can reveal what culturally was understood within a topic without the need to describe what is meant by a text or group of texts.

Paradoxes can occur due to the use of literal and figurative meanings in different passages that represent similar content, for example, Isaiah 49:15-16 depicts God not forgetting, but other passages use the phrase "God remembered" or "God forgot" (e.g. Genesis 8:1 or Hosea 4:6). However, while the first example (Isaiah 49:15-16) appears to be literal (considering that God is omnipotent), the second (Genesis 8:1 or Hosea 4:6) is figurative, possibly expressing the time or occasion when God's action was visible or even that God allowed something,[19] which gives the appearance of forgetfulness. In this case, the expression "God forgot" could be could be considered a paradoxical-expression (PE), because to understand it properly, it is necessary to realize that the non-literal meaning of the expression is due to other related and apparently conflicting contexts. If God always remembers (never fails to remember), the expression is always true (God

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[17] Ryken, *A Complete Handbook of Literary Forms in the Bible*, Paradox.

[18] Andrea Iacona, *LOGIC: Lecture Notes for Philosophy, Mathematics, and Computer Science*, (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2021), 7.

[19] Bullinger, *Figures of Speech used in the Bible: Explained and Illustrated*, 821-825.

remembered, remembers, and will remember). Nonetheless, the expression may also emphasize the present or immediate future events occurring in a narrative (God remembered, so something happened). Each paradox needs its own analysis because some expressions may have different meanings and each proposition inside a paradox will need to be accompanied by a "situation" (interpretation).

The concept of a paradox can also be understood as an expression that possesses overlapping truths, which appear contradictory by conventional logic, where statements can only be true or false, however, it depends on perspectives or interpretations within different contexts.

The logical system that will address paradoxes will need "other intuitive and formal insights in arriving at semantics,"[20] and because of this, the notion of "situation" (H)[21] becomes important to return to the conventional logic. The concept of "situation" will be used below to show how an apparent contradiction can be explained

- P ∧ ¬P is T iff P is T and ¬P is T, that is, P is T and P is F.[22]

Where P is a proposition, ¬P is the negation of the proposition, T is true and F is false.

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[20] Richard Routley, "The American Plan Completed: Alternative Classical-Style Semantics, without Stars, for Relevant and Paraconsistent Logics," *Studia Logica: An International Journal for Symbolic Logic* 43, no.1 (1984): 133. http://www.jstor.org/stable/20015155.

[21] Hitoshi Omori, and H. Wansing, *New Essays on Belnap-Dunn Logic*, (Cham: Springer, 2019), 26.

[22] Ibid., 25.

The contradictory statement above could be problematic for semantics if there is no situation to make P ∧ ¬P have different values (one T and the other F). Instead of looking at P as being T and F (also called B, meaning "both" in a four-valued logic), there is a situation (H) that makes P become T or F, instead of B, while also not making ¬P a contradiction with P.

- P ∧ ¬P is T iff P is T in H_1 and ¬P is T in H_2.

Although H may be attributed somewhat subjectively, a simple change in the positions of H_1 and H_2 may show inconsistencies in the exegesis (or at least concerning the axioms of an exegesis). For example, Isaiah 59:1-2 mentions God hearing and not hearing, however, instead of looking at these verses as contradictory, both the affirmative and negative proposition (P and ¬P) need a different situation (H) for each (H_1 for P and H_2 for ¬P). A possibility is calling H_1 a situation where שָׁמַא literary means God's hearing ability (always hears) and H_2 a situation where שָׁמַא metaphorically attributes "not hearing" to God's inaction regarding those who keep sinning. Now, given the axiom that the corpus of the Tanakh is coherent, it would be inconsistent with the axiom to interpret that God literally "does not hear" and that only metaphorically God can "hear" (this is an example of changing the position of H_1 and H_2, therefore, P would be F in H_2).

Of course one can directly notice that P and ¬P are different propositions say, P_1 and P_2, after assigning the situations (H_1 and H_2), resulting in one of the conventional truth tables:

$\mathbf{P}_1$	$\mathbf{P}_2$	$\mathbf{P}_1 \wedge \mathbf{P}_2$
T	T	T
T	F	F
F	T	F
F	F	F

Table 32: Truth table of logical AND.

This table may not be directly apparent from grammar, but with the use of situation-dependent propositions, apparently contradictory (paradoxical) texts can be understood.

Below are some examples of paradoxes in Isaiah 52:13-53:12.

Dead and Alive

Isaiah 52:13-53:12 talks about the Servant as both dead and alive paradoxically. Dead, by the use of words like "cut off from the land of the living" (Isaiah 53:8) and "poured out his life unto death" (Isaiah 53:12), as well as alive, by words like "lifted up and highly exalted," "see offspring," "prolong days," "see and be satisfied" and "divide the spoils" (52:13 and 53:10-12).

This may appear to refer to the nation of Israel, a nation that appeared dead and was resurrected. However, the "we all" or "our transgressions" already encompasses Israel (it even encompasses the speaker, just as in Isaiah 6:5), so that the Servant is, at least in part, unique compared to the characters "we."

It was known, in the Tanakh, that God could resurrect people[23] as in Isaiah 26:19 and Daniel 12:1-3.

A sequence of interconnected events begins to appear in the book of Isaiah. There is a king from the line of David who reigns forever (Isaiah 9:6-7), there is resurrection (Isaiah 26:19), and there is a Servant who dies (Isaiah 53:8) but by resurrection is alive (Isaiah 53:10-12) and interceding for many (Isaiah 53:5,6,12).

Regardless of the interpretation concerning the Servant's identity, the paradox can be resolved, for instance, by a simple temporal difference between statements (at one time dead and at another alive, given that resurrection is possible).

In the form of propositions, P could be considered "alive" and ¬P is "not alive" (dead), while H_1 (related to P) is the situation where the Servant is alive (prior to death and after the resurrection) and H_2 (related to ¬P) is the situation where the Servant is dead (temporally between the two moments of the "alive state").

<center>God's desire or will to crush</center>

Many texts talk about how God does not desire that Men sin (fact 1) and how He desires that Men obey Him, for their own good (fact 2). Given these two facts, the paradox that God desired the righteous Servant to be crushed, wounded or pierced (all actions that could be considered sins) already excludes some

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[23] J. A. Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah: an Introduction & Commentary*, (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2015), 440-441.

interpretations by default. One is that God wanted people to sin, which goes against both facts. A second excluded interpretation is that God desired to torture the righteous Servant, which also goes against both facts. A third is that God punishes the righteous Servant who does not commit violence or deceit (this interpretation occurs due to a type of "Job's fallacy," which is the false impression that suffering equals guilt for sin or punishment). Yet another is to consider that God desired the people to sacrifice the Servant,[24] which would be a sin.

However, looking at what the Servant does, for instance, healing (Isaiah 53:5), correcting our peace (Isaiah 53:6), justifying many (Isaiah 53:11) and dividing spoils (Isaiah 53:12), it becomes clearer that these are, in fact, God's desire. Since the Servant fulfills God's desire (Isaiah 53:10), regardless of being killed (Isaiah 53:8,12), the Servant's suffering becomes only God's permission (just as what happened with Job, Joseph, and murdered prophets) that results in deeper truths and plans that are actually "God's ultimate desire."

God's permission is also seen in other passages of the Tanakh. Below some examples in the book of Isaiah are shown,

- Isaiah 54:7-8, the wrath that could have given readers a sense of action on God's part, is connected with leaving/forsaking and hiding, which brings to light a feeling of omission. An inaction is paralleled by an action, the forsaking (inaction) with the compassion (action) and the hiding (inaction) with the mercy (action).

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[24] John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah. Chapters 40-66*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament, (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998), 225, ProQuest Ebook Central.

- Isaiah 57:17, which uses striking and hiding in the same sentence. Leaving people to go their own ways is considered by the author a striking action and an inaction of concealment from God simultaneously.

- Isaiah 59:1-2, God is able to save and hear in verse 1 (action), while in verse 2 the iniquities and sins have separated and hidden God from the people, so that He does not hear (inaction).

- Isaiah 63:17, here God appears to have caused the people to stray from His ways by hardening their hearts (action), while the speaker also pleads for God's return as if He has abandoned them (inaction).

Just as God does not make people sin, so he does not crush or pierce the Servant (דַּכְּאוֹ הֶחֱלִי or דכאו ויחללהו were allowed to happen by God, but not actively caused by God). Each example listed above can be understood by attributing different situations to action and the inaction. In relation to God's desire, P is God's will in favor of the Servant and ¬P is God's will "not in favor" of the Servant, while H_1 (related to P) is the situation where God's will is actively in favor of the Servant and H_2 (related to ¬P) is the situation where God's will allows (inaction) that things happen that are "not in favor" of the Servant.

These paradoxes can lead to some more fundamental truths concerning God. They differentiate the God of the Tanakh from other gods. While other gods may not hear or see some things, the God of the Tanakh hears and sees everything but chooses to allow some things. By writing the action and inaction, God is portrayed as all-powerful to stop or do anything, while leaving space for free will. For

example, by "not softening" the people's hearts, God is allowing the hardening of people's hearts that was self-imposed by their free will choice to continue to sin. This resolution of the paradox maintains a relational experience between God and Men, where somethings Men can choose to do and God might not interfere, even if, in a sense (situation 1, H_1), His desire is opposite to that of Men, and in another sense (situation 2, H_2), God's will is to allow Men's choices. The first example of this happening is in the Garden of Eden with Adam and Eve, where the God had both, the desire for Adam and Eve not to sin, and the desire for them to be able to make their free choices (including sinning).

Another way of concluding that God is not punishing the Servant is by logical contradiction, which can be written as such:

- Proposition to be proved (P).

- Assume ¬P.

- Derive Falsehood.

- Conclude P.

One important thing to note is that there are axioms that make the derivation of the falsehood clear. For this, the axioms are:

1. God acts righteously (God is not unrighteous, Psalm 19:9)

2. The word of God is consistent (Psalm 18:30).

Because of these two axioms, it is possible to conclude that God will not do actions which He considers as unrighteous. In this case, punishing the righteous (e.g. Exodus 23:7, Proverbs 17:26, Amos 5:12). Therefore the proof becomes:

- God does not punish the righteous Servant (P).

- Assume God did punish the righteous Servant (¬P).

- Then God does what he considers unrighteous, making Him unrighteous, which is false.

- Therefore P.

Theme and Variation

By bringing together context, grammar and structure, it is possible to form the concept of Theme and Variation within Isaiah 52:13-53:12. This concept is composed of a unifying motif (theme) and its contributing variations in each unit of the text.[25] Moreover, the themes and their variations are foregrounded[26] through the passage considering the semantics, syntax, and structures related to the actions (or inactions) and merits (or demerits) of the characters (Men, Servant, God).

The first theme concerns the roles of the Servant. This theme has four variations (see Figure 1). James Ward connects some of the events that happen to the Servant with prophets, or anyone who obeys God,[27] which can be seen in cases already mentioned where the Servant is despised and killed like other prophets. Another role is the intercessory role of the priests. Yet, another role, which is sometimes contested given the lack of explicit evidence, is the role of the sacrificial lamb, which focuses on how the Servant is blameless, his non-retaliation, and how he

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[25] Ryken, *A Complete Handbook of Literary Forms in the Bible*, Theme and Variation.

[26] Ibid., Foregrounding.

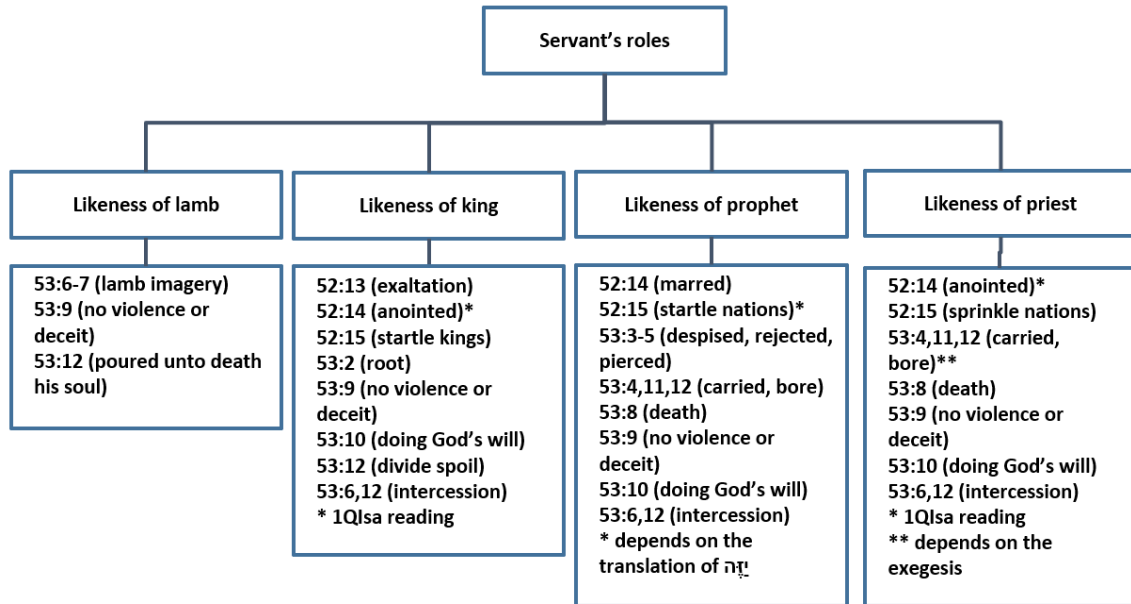[27] Ward, "The Servant Songs in Isaiah," 442.

Figure 1: Servant's roles

poured out his life for many. A final role may be that of a Messianic figure, not only because of the priestly role, but possibly also because of a kingship role that may be related to exaltation and division of spoils. Furthermore, paralleling other Messianic figures in the Tanakh, the Servant appears to have many interconnected roles (e.g. David prophesied, was a king, and interceded for the people, resembling a priest).
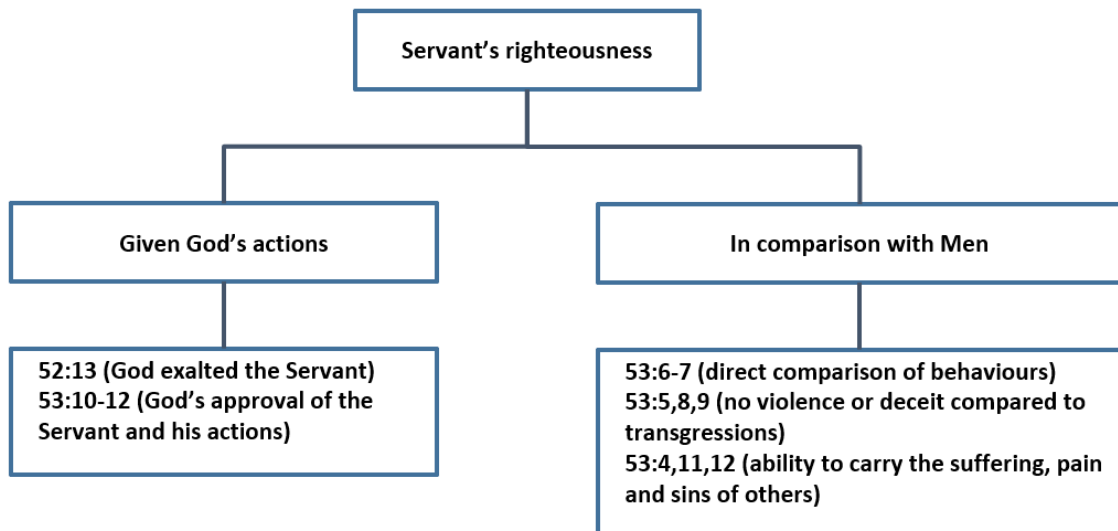

Figure 2: Servant's righteousness

Figure 2 shows two variations of a second theme. This theme is related to the Servant's righteousness, one variation is related to God's actions and another variation to the dichotomy between the Servant and Men.

Although some commentators separate the Servant in two parts (one part is the righteous Israel and another is the unrighteous Israel),[28] the 1cp statements (e.g. Isaiah 53:4-6) appear to encompass all the people including the speaker (similarly to Isaiah 6:5 with the joint consideration of Isaiah and the people of unclean lips, or as in Isaiah 64:6). There is also a contrast between "we/our" and "my/his people" to other "antonymic statements" that separate the Servant from the people (e.g. while the people commit transgressions, the Servant does no violence or deceit). This dichotomy also happens with God's actions, which demonstrate that the Servant is righteous (e.g. exalted, able to justify others and an intercessor). Therefore, it becomes difficult to justify the Servant as Israel because of the known sins that Israel committed before, during and after the period of prophet Isaiah.

Considering the guilt offering (Isaiah 53:10, with תָּשִׂים as 2ms), that many are justified (Isaiah 53:11), and that intercession is made for many (Isaiah 53:6,12), only now can the "all encompassing" 1cp group be successfully divided into two: one related to those who make the guilt offering (those who repent and are forgiven and justified) and the other related to those who do not belong to the "many" of verses 11 and 12 (those who do not repent and are not forgiven, nor justified).

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[28] Joanna Bauer, "The Consequence of the Servant's Suffering for the Relationship Between God and the Others in Isaiah 53," Master's Thesis, NLA University College, Bergen, 2017: 45, https://nla.brage.unit.no/nla-xmlui/handle/11250/2487976.

There may even be a "transference of righteousness" from the Servant to the

people,[29] that could be understood as the copy of the righteousness of the Servant,

by the people (possibly Israel or all those who serve God), in a reflexive manner.

These considerations lead to understanding Isaiah 52:13-53:12 as an encomium
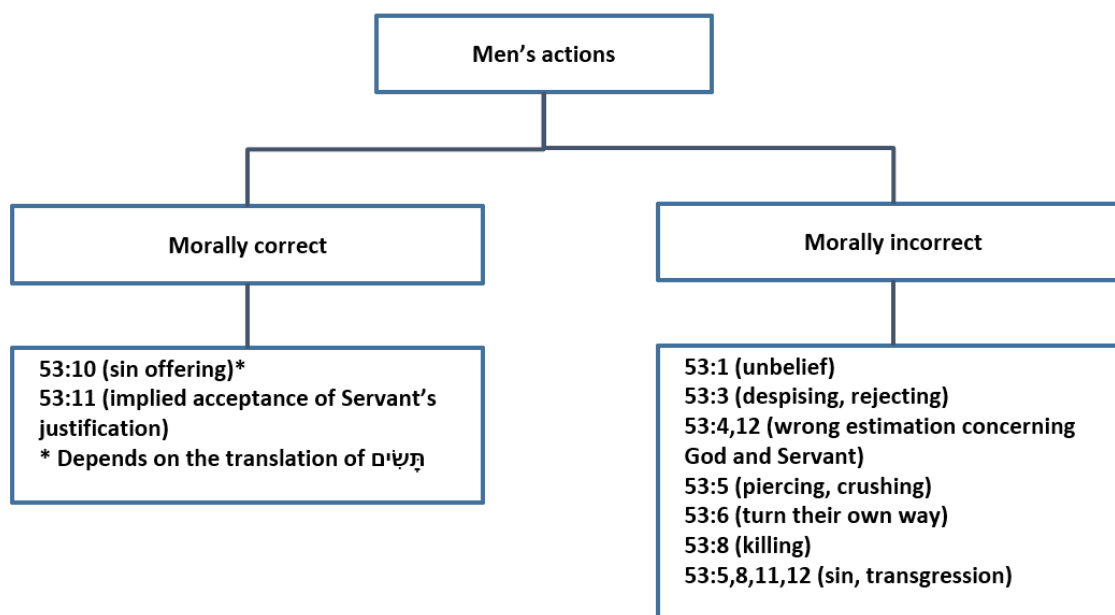
(praises of the Servant's qualities).[30]

Figure 3: Men's actions

A third theme is concerning Men's actions and this theme varies by what

could be considered morally correct and incorrect (see Figure 3). Men's actions are

repeatedly shown as morally incorrect and only a couple of times, at the end of the

passage, the actions can be considered correct. This pattern makes it unlikely that,

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[29] Jaap Dekker, "The High and Lofty One Dwelling in the Heights and with his Servants: Intertextual Connections of Theological Significance between Isaiah 6, 53 and 57," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*, 41 no. 4 (2017): 483-484, https://doi-org.ezproxy.liberty.edu/10.1177/0309089216661172.

[30] Ryken, *A Complete Handbook of Literary Forms in the Bible*, Encomium.

for example, verse 4 regards Men's estimation of what happened to the Servant as correct. In fact, the estimation is probably incorrect, leading the reader to look at verse 10 from a more appropriate perspective that focuses on God's permission to turn what was intended to harm into good and to save "many" (Genesis 50:20).
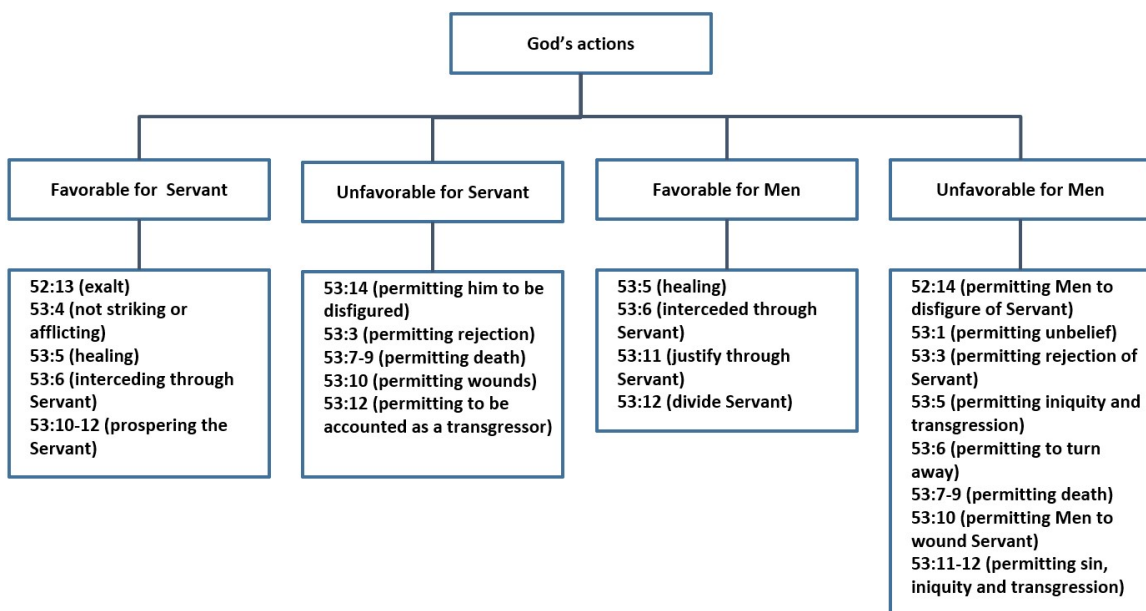

Figure 4: God's actions.

Paralleling the third theme, a fourth theme is concerning God's actions. This theme has four variations, two related to "actions" toward the Servant and two related to "actions" toward Men (see Figure 4). Although the authors of the Tanakh may describe something as "God's action" or that something was his desire, there are some considerations that need to be taken before one can interpret the text. For example, noticing that permission or non-interference can be described by actions and/or by active verbs. One way to figure out if an action is indeed an action, is by encountering paradoxes. Paradoxes are indicators that, although propositions may appear contradictory, there are different situations that fit each

proposition and explain the paradox. Looking at Figure 4, there are points were God permits that the Servant suffers (unfavorable for the Servant), which can also be understood as God permitting Men to sin against the Servant (which is also unfavorable for Men). While God may desire the free will of Men, the sinful actions are not God's desire. While God does not desire evil, He permits it, and even with this permission God is able to turn the evil into good.

Isaiah 53:10 is one example of the concept of paradox. Instead of concluding that verse 10 contradicts verse 4, 5 and 8, verse 10 describes a permission while the other verses describe actions. Moreover, verse 10 points forward toward the "good" described in the rest of verse 10 and in verses 11 and 12 (e.g. prospering, justifying, dividing spoil).

CHAPTER 4

Translations

Two translations of Isaiah 52:13-53:12 are provided here, one with the LC as its basis and the second with the 1QIsa as its basis. Any complementary word that makes the translation more fluid will be contained in square brackets (e.g. this [is] an example).[1] If there is an alternate translation for a phrase, it will be marked with asterisks (e.g. *phrase with alternate translation*). Below each translation there will be the respective alternate translations of verses and a brief explanation of such choices (more details are contained in the Literary Context and Literary Structure Chapters).

Translation of LC

52:13 Behold my Servant shall prosper, he shall be exalted and lifted very high.

14 Just as many were astonished because of you, so his appearance [was] marred more than [any] man, and his form more than the sons of men,

15 so he shall sprinkle many nations, because of him kings shall shut their mouths, for what was not told to them, they shall see, and what they have not heard, they shall consider.

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[1] Note that both translations are attempts to do a word-for-word translation, which may cause some difficulties in the flow of the text.

53:1 Who has believed our message? And the arm of the LORD, upon whom it has been revealed?

2 For he grew as the infant before Him and as the root from dry earth, he [had] no form and no splendor, and we saw him but [there was] no beauty that we [should] desire him.

3 He was despised and rejected [by] men, a man of sorrows and a knower of sickness, and as we hid [our] faces from him he was despised and we did not regard him.

4 Surely our sickness he carried, and our sorrows bore, yet we regarded him stricken, smitten [by] God and afflicted.

5 Yet he [was] pierced from our transgressions, crushed from our iniquities, *[the] correction of our peace [was] because of him* and by his wounds we are healed.

6 All we like sheep have gone astray, every man to his way has turned, and the LORD *has interceded through him,* the iniquity of us all.

7 He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he shall not open his mouth, as a lamb to the slaughter he shall be led, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he will not open his mouth.

8 From prison and from judgment he was taken, and his generation, whom he shall consider? For he was cut off from the land of the living, from the transgressions of my people *he was stricken.*

9 And he made with the wicked his grave and with a rich in his death, because he did no violence, and [there was] no deceit in his mouth.

10 Yet the LORD desired to crush him and cause sickness, if *his soul makes a guilt offering, he shall see seed,* he shall prolong days, then the desire of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.

11 From the trouble of his soul he shall see [and] be satisfied, by his knowledge, the righteous one, my Servant, shall justify many, and their iniquities he shall bear.

12 Therefore, I will divide him with many and with numerous he shall divide spoil because he poured out unto death his soul, and with the transgressors he was numbered, and he, the sin of many carried, and for the transgressors he shall intercede.

<div align="center">Alternative translations of LC</div>

5 *[the] punishment that resulted in our peace [was] upon him*

Explanation: the unrighteous punishment of Men against the Servant (evil action), turned into something good because of God.

6 *has laid upon him,*

Explanation: God allowed our iniquities to fall upon him.

8 *he was stricken for us.*

Explanation: parallels the healing in verse 5. What happened, ultimately brought healing to Men.

10 *you make a guilt offering, his soul shall see seed*

Explanation: this is grammatically possible with no punctuation marks, but one would need to assume that "his soul" begins another sentence. There is an

implicit guilt of the character "you," which is likely related to what happened to the Servant.

10 *you make a guilt offering because of his soul, he shall see seed*

Explanation: this is grammatically possible with no punctuation and vowel marks, but the construct chain would probably be of cause or reason (the "you" character makes the offering because of what this character has done to the Servant, what was done to "his soul").

Translation of 1QISa

52:13 Behold my Servant shall prosper, he shall be exalted and lifted very high.

14 Just as many were astonished because of you, so I anointed his appearance more than [any] man, and his form more than the sons of men,

15 so he shall sprinkle many nations, because of him kings shall shut their mouths, for with what was not told to them, they shall see, and with what they have not heard, they shall consider.

53:1 Who has believed our message? And the arm of the LORD, to whom it has been revealed?

2 For he grew as the infant before Him and as the root from dry earth, he [had] no form and he [had] no splendor, and we saw him but [there was] no beauty that we [should] desire [him].

3 He was despised and rejected [by] men, so [he was] a man of sorrows and a knower of sickness, and as [we] hid [our] faces from him, so he was despised and we did not regard him.

4 Surely our sickness he carried, and our sorrows bore, yet we regarded him stricken, smitten [by] God and afflicted.

5 Yet he [was] pierced from our transgressions, and crushed from our iniquities, and *[the] correction of our peace [was] because of him* and by his wounds *we are healed.*

6 All we like sheep have gone astray, every man to his way has turned, and the LORD *has interceded through him,* the iniquity of us all.

7 He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he shall not open his mouth, as a lamb to the slaughter he shall be led, as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.

8 From prison and from judgment he was taken, and his generation whom he shall consider? For he was cut off from the land of the living, from the transgressions of his people *he was stricken.*

9 And they settled with the wicked his grave and with a rich his burial mound, because he did no violence, and [there was] no deceit in his mouth.

10 Yet the LORD desired to crush and pierce him, if *his soul makes a guilt offering, he shall see seed,* he shall prolong days, then the desire of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.

11 From the trouble of his soul he will see light and be satisfied, and by his knowledge, the righteous one, my Servant, shall justify many, and their iniquities he shall bear.

12 Therefore, I will divide him with many and with numerous he shall divide spoil because he poured out unto death his soul, and with the transgressors he was numbered, and he, the sins of many carried, and for the transgressors he shall intercede.

Alternative translations of 1QISa

5 *[the] punishment that resulted in our peace [was] upon him*

Explanation: the unrighteous punishment of Men against the Servant (evil action), turned into something good because of God.

5 *he was healed for us*

Explanation: if the verb is not impersonal, this would be the reading.

6 *has laid upon him,*

Explanation: God allowed our iniquities to fall upon him.

8 *he was stricken for us.*

Explanation: parallels the healing in verse 5. What happened, ultimately brought healing for Men.

10 *you make a guilt offering, his soul shall see seed*

Explanation: there is an implicit guilt of the character "you," which is likely related to what happened to the Servant.

10 *you make a guilt offering because of his soul, he shall see seed*

Explanation: the "you" character makes the offering because of what this character has done to the Servant, what was done to "his soul".

CHAPTER 5

Conclusion

This Thesis analyzed some grammatical and structural aspects of Isaiah 52:13-53:12 and proposed corrections on common English translations, as well as alternative translations with their respective exegesis. One contribution was the greater degree of Hebrew-to-English consonance in the proposed translations than the KJV, NIV and ESV. Because of this, the proposed translations follow a more literal reading of the LC and 1QIsa manuscripts.

With respect to structure, repetition is prevalent in the passage, which may result in the repetition of semantics and affect any exegesis. The fact that the passage is poetically repetitive can indicate a connection of the ideas behind each verse into a larger unit. Within this larger unit, themes like the Servant's roles and his righteousness come to the forefront, making it difficult to interpret the Servant as someone who is in need of repentance. Moreover, God's and Men's actions are two additional themes that, not only differentiate God from Men, but also complement the Servant character (e.g. God exalts the Servant while Men wound the Servant).

In exegetically difficult passages, a specific Device of Disclosure, called paradox, is sometimes found. This device, although common to the Tanakh, is not frequently addressed, nor resolved by commentaries. Because paradoxes may involve interrelated texts within several different books of the Tanakh, the difficulty to resolve them is understandable. In Isaiah 52:13-53:12, it was possible to resolve two paradoxes, one related to who wounded the Servant and another related to the

question of whether the Servant is dead or alive. Therefore, this Thesis attempts to initiate the study of paradoxes in the Tanakh, which can be a valuable topic for future exegetical and theological discussions on other passages.

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