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WILL.

Will is an attribute of God inasmuch as he consciously prompts his own acts, and is intent upon the execution of his purposes, the accomplishment of his designs, the realization of his counsels, and the fulfillment of his ordinances. Will is one of the characteristics of rational, self-conscious, personal agencies. The acts of a person are that person's acts inasmuch as they are consciously prompted by such person, and an accessory to an act is again a person who consciously concurs in prompting such act, though the *materiale* of the act be wholly or in part performed by another. Thus God is active by his own promptings. Every act of God not only presupposes, but implies volition. And, again, volition is, in God, linked with action, the conscious and intentional exertion of power. This is indicated in the words, *Who hath resisted his will?*¹⁾ Of him the Psalmist says, *Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth,*²⁾ and, *Our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.*³⁾ When God acts, his act

1) Rom. 9, 19.

2) Ps. 135, 6.

3) Ps. 115, 3.

THE SERVANT OF THE LORD.

The fifty-third chapter of the prophet Isaiah is without doubt one of the clearest and certainly the most minutely particularized prophecy in the Old Testament. The description of events is so detailed, the sufferings of Christ are so vividly described, that the entire chapter conveys the impression of a narrative, and of a narrative written on Golgotha. It is mainly this prophecy of Isaiah which called forth the well known words of Jerome: "Call him (Isaiah) rather an *Évangelist*, than a prophet; for he so lucidly describes (*ad liquidum prosecutus est*) the mysteries of Christ and his Church that you may well imagine him not to prophesy future events but to record facts of the past."¹)

But if Jerome says that the prophecies of Isaiah *convey the impression* of a historical narrative, he is very many leagues from *actually regarding* them as such. His first statement would be utterly meaningless and inane, if not coupled with the belief that Isaiah was truly a prophet and that all he has written is true prophecy; the second statement, too, would be absolutely *banal* if meant for a denial of the prophetic character of Isaiah. Yet there are those among our modern exegetes who unhesitatingly give their support to this denial, who even imagine that they can point out the events in Jewish history to which the prophet is supposed to have reference. In attempts of this kind they frequently get into pretty tight places; and their inner consciousness is sometimes taxed very severely in order to supply what is missing, or to explain a troublesome date in some plausible manner. One of the bestknown "problems" that have arisen in the course of these researches is the "problem of the Servant of the Lord." We may find occasion to refer to several of the hysterical "solutions" that have been offered in sober earnest by some modern exegetes, as we proceed.

1) Praef. ad Jes. ad Paulam et Eustoch.

Before attempting to ascertain the nature and person of the Servant of the Lord let us go back a step or two and ask, What was termed a servant in ancient times? or, more general still, What is the notion of "servant"?

A servant is a *person*. If inanimate objects or impersonal things are termed servants the word is clearly employed in a figurative sense, as, for instance, if the Egyptians said to Joseph: "We and *our land* will be *servants* unto Pharaoh."¹) But cases of this kind are extremely rare, and as all of them can be readily explained²) they do not in the least invalidate the statement that the servant is, first of all, a *person*. This being the genus, what is the specific difference between this person and a thousand others? The very first distinguishing feature which presents itself to us is this, that while other names denoting persons,—as, e. g., laborer, soldier, prisoner,—may be used *absolutely*, "servant" can not. Thus we can speak of a laborer absolutely, i. e., without thereby stating more than that he is a person who performs labor. A servant, however, will never be present to the mind as a servant in the absolute, but always as *somebody's* servant—in other words, the notion "servant" has something within its very essence which links it to another notion, or, as Aristotle might express it, "servant" is a *πρός τι*, a *relative term*. In fact, turning to his *Categories*,³) we find that he actually cites *δοῦλος* as a typical relative term. Let us, then, regard it as established that *a servant is a person standing in a relation to another person*.

But this is yet too general. The notion "child," for instance, would be covered by the same definition. A child stands in a relation to another person—its parent. Still we must not overlook a point of coincidence in the concepts "child" and "servant": both denote a relation of *inferi-*

1) Gen. 47, 19. Cf. Ps. 119, 91.

2) Thus in Gen. 47, 19 we evidently have a Zeugma.

3) Chap. VII (*πρός τι*).

ority, in which the servant or child is the inferior and its correlative the superior. The correlative superior of a child is its parent; let us find the corresponding term for "servant."¹⁾ We will reach this next stage of our deduction by circumscribing the particular point in which the inferiority of a servant consists. An inferiority in, or lack of, personal strength—though it might be the cause—is certainly not the essence of servitude. Neither is a lack of culture or learning to be so considered. Many a Greek slave was the intellectual superior of the members of the Roman family which he served; some are known to have assisted Roman noblemen in scientific researches, etc. The inferiority is to be found somewhere else. Let us closely examine the particular forms in which עֶבֶר occurs in Scripture: we will at once be struck by the singular fact, that the word is used in the great majority of cases either 1) with the personal suffixes—עֶבְרִי, עֶבְרִיָּה, עֶבְרִיָּהוּ—, corresponding to our possessive pronoun—*my* servant, *his* servant, *his* servants—, or 2) it is found in the *status constructus*—עֶבְרִי—, again denoting possession. Thus the relation which exists between a servant (עֶבֶר) and someone else, seems to consist in this that he is the *possession*, the *property* of that person. But I have the unquestioned and unconditioned possession of a thing only if I can exercise complete *control* over it—and this, this is precisely what constitutes the relation of a servant, his inferiority: *a servant is a person who is the property of another, his person and services being—by virtue of this relation—under the control of his master, and his actions prompted by the will of his master.*

That this is the historical notion of δούλος, servant, will appear as we hear the evidence of history.

1) It will be well to remark that this word is throughout this article employed in its *scriptural usus loquendi*. As will be seen presently, our "slave" would perhaps in some instances more closely approach the scriptural עֶבֶר, δούλος; the German has a very pertinent term in "Knecht." The German "Sklave" and the English "slave" are not scriptural terms.

The oldest historical witness, older than the clay tablets of Assurbanipal and older than the papyrus-scrolls of the Pyramids, is language itself. We will, therefore, let this witness speak first on the point at issue. The Hebrew עֶבֶר throws no light on the question.¹⁾ But Δούλος is highly significant. The root of this word is DA, to give, from which Sanskrit da, to give, also δίδωμι and *donum*, *dos*. Δούλος then would be, one who has been given, handed over, i. e., as a captive in war (cf. Sk. da-sa, the vanquished). It is a noteworthy coincidence that this mode of acquiring servants is referred to in one of the very earliest Greek poems.²⁾ Again, the Latin *servus* is derived from SERV (= 'ΕΡΥ-ω), meaning "one who has been dragged away," "led captive." These two words clearly show that the very earliest SERV-ants or slaves were *captives in war*. Many Greek slaves in latter ages were descendants of the vanquished former possessors of the soil, as for instance the Helots at Sparta. But we find already in the *Odyssee*³⁾ instances of servants which had been *bought* by their masters, and at Athens they were sold at auction on the first of every month. Finally, even free men might become slaves by legal methods, and even Greek citizens, if they were *insolvent*, might be sold into slavery by their creditors. Similar rights were accorded the creditor in the early days of the Roman republic. The acquisition of slaves by purchase was a matter of daily occurrence even in our own country some forty years ago, as many a witness can testify.

In all the cases enumerated—whether the servant was brought into servitude by the right of the stronger, by sale or by debt—it was never throughout the ages doubted that the slave was truly the *property* of his master. He was "looked upon strictly as part of the chattels of the house, on a level rather with horses and oxen than with human

1) Cf. Gesenius s. v. עֶבֶר.

2) *Odys.* 1, 398.

3) *Odys.* 1, 430. 15, 482.

beings."¹⁾ His master might throw him in chains, leave him without food, brand him and condemn him to the hardest labor. Legal marriages between slaves were not possible, since, though persons, they possessed no personal rights. Killing a slave was not murder at Rome,²⁾ and if a Roman nobleman of the later days of the republic fed his slaves piecemeal to the fishes in the fountain at his villa, this is easily matched by the Spaniard who cut out the right eye of every one of his 3000 slaves in order that he should know them if they ran away.

Of course, there have always been laws governing the conduct of a master towards his servant, notably in our own country, when slavery still had a legal existence; but one right has never been denied the owner of a servant, the right which permitted the master to *control, by his will, the actions* of his servant. So the centurion of Capernaum could say to his servant, "Do this, and he doeth it,"³⁾ and so the servant will be punished who "knew his lord's *will*, and prepared not himself, *neither did* according to his will."⁴⁾

At this juncture we should remember that by carrying into execution the commands of his master the servant thereby does not render these actions his own; whatever the servant may perform in compliance with the will of his superior—he cannot expect reward for it, and—according to Greek law—need not fear punishment. Whatever the master may perform through his servant will be regarded as performed in person by himself.—

Up to this point we have dealt with the general usage of the term "servant." It now becomes our task to ascertain the peculiar usage of this word in the Old Testament Scriptures. It will only be after determining the status of servants among the children of Israel that we may approach the "problem of the Ebed Iahveh."

1) Mahaffy, *Old Greek Life*, p. 39.

3) Matt. 8, 9.

2) Legg. XII Tab. 7, 13.

4) Luke 12, 47.

In order to arrive at a clear understanding of the situation of servants or bondmen in the Jewish nation, it is necessary to examine those sections of the Mosaic law which fixed the relation of master and servant among the Jews. It has been shown above, that the person of a bondman is under the control of another, his actions controlled by the will of his master; and this by virtue of his being the property of his master. And so it was among the children of Israel. A bondslave was the *possession* of his master¹⁾ and was therefore not free to act for himself, but could act only pursuant to the instructions of his master. The servants would go to war under the generalship of their lord;²⁾ they accompanied him on his journeys if he commanded them to do so;³⁾ in short, their person and services stood at the beck and call of their owner. All this would seem to indicate that the definition of "servant" given above might also serve as a definition for "Hebrew servant." Yet this is true only with certain restrictions, and for this reason: the Mosaic laws treating of the matter under consideration, draw a very sharp line between slaves or bondmen acquired by purchase *from a heathen nation*, and such servants as were *members of the Israelitic nation*. The law is very explicit on this point. An Israelite was permitted to buy a bondslave from the heathen round about,⁴⁾ and such a servant was henceforth the property of the purchaser,⁵⁾ and was his property *for ever*.⁶⁾ Of course, the owner was at liberty to set such a servant free, as well as a Roman or Greek, but he could not be forced to do so except in very special cases.⁷⁾ But with regard to Hebrew servants the law said: "*If thou buy a Hebrew servant, six years shall he serve:*

1) Lev. 24, 45: "and they shall be your *possession*." Exod. 21, 21: "for he is his *money*." Cf. Gen. 12, 16: "And he had sheep, and oxen, and *he asses*, and *menservants*, and *maidservants*, and *she asses*, and camels."

2) So already in the days of Abraham, Gen. 14, 14.

3) Cf. Gen. 22, 3.

4) Lev. 25, 44.

5) Ibid. v. 45.

6) Ibid. v. 46.

7) E. g. Exod. 21, 26 f.

and in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing,"¹⁾ i. e., without procuring his release by payment of a sum of money. So the servitude of a Jew was limited to a certain number of years. Again, if an Israelite was sold on account of his inability to meet his creditors, such servitude would end with the next year of jubilee; "then," said the law, "he shall depart from thee, both he and his children with him, and . . . unto the property of his fathers shall he return."²⁾ And during these years he was in no wise rated alike with the servant bought from the pagan tribes. "For if thy brother . . . be waxen poor, and be sold unto thee; thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bondservant,³⁾ but as an hired servant,⁴⁾ and as a sojourner he shall be with thee."

But although the servitude of an Israelite was limited to a certain length of time, this servitude was nevertheless a real one as long as it lasted. The servant was not his own master, but was subject to the will of another. He was not permitted to act according to his own free will, but was bound to obey the commands of his superior. And although his master was not allowed to accord him the treatment a non-Israelitic slave received, yet the relation subsisting between the master and his servants was in both cases essentially the same, with only this difference that in the case of the Jewish servant this relation came to an end after a certain lapse of time.—

Before we can decide whether the term "servant of the Lord," עֶבֶד יְהוָה, shows the same common characteristics as the notion עֶבֶד, it is necessary to determine the usage of this term in Holy Scripture, that is to say, we must ascertain whether these words express the same notion wherever they

1) Exod. 21, 2.

2) Lev. 25, 40. 41.

3) Lev. 25, 39: literally: thou shalt not force him to perform the work of a slave (עֶבֶד), i. e., of a slave bought from the heathen.

4) Ibid. v. 40: literally: one who is hired to do a day's work, a day-laborer.

occur. Now, a hurried glance at the passages of Holy Writ containing this expression will inform us that, for instance, Job and Nebuchadrezzar are both called "servants of the Lord." This plainly indicates that there are at least two distinct usages of this term; for it is evident that the words cannot possess the same meaning in both cases. But what is the meaning, and where lies the difference?

Let us take up the first passage referred to: Job 1, 8: "*And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered MY SERVANT Job.*" God himself declares Job to be his servant. How are we to understand this? Let us read on: "*that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, ONE THAT FEARETH GOD AND ESCHEWETH EVIL?*" And chap. 42, 8 we are told: "*and my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept . . . ye have not spoken of me the thing which is right, like my servant Job.*" Ps. 69, 36 it is said: "*The seed also of his SERVANTS shall inherit it: and they that LOVE HIS NAME shall dwell therein.*" Here the *parallelismus membrorum* puts it beyond doubt that servants of the Lord are such as *love* him, and comparing this with the passage from Job:—such as love him in fear¹) and hate evil,—in other words, servants of the Lord are persons who *serve him*, loving him and fearing him. This, however, will always be accompanied by actions and works consistent with such fear and love, i. e., works shaped according to the *commands*²) of God. It is therefore established that the term *ebed Jahveh* is in some passages of Scripture equivalent to: *one who serves God by obedience to his commands.*

But we have not yet done with this first meaning of עֶבֶד יְהוָה. Scripture is more explicit in its statements concerning these servants. We are told, for instance, in what

1) Ps. 2, 11: "*Serve the Lord with fear.*"

2) James 24, 24: "*The Lord our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey.*"—So also the *angels* are called (Job 4, 18) "*his servants,*" since they "*do his commandments.*" (Ps. 103, 20.)

manner they have been acquired: "*Thou art my servant; I HAVE CHOSEN THEE.*"¹⁾ For this reason the children of Israel are termed a chosen people,²⁾ they are the nation which God himself had elected to serve him: "*MINE ELECT shall inherit it and MY SERVANTS shall dwell there.*"³⁾ But God has not only chosen the descendants of Abraham for "his people," but has also called members of other nations, has chosen people of all nationalities and of all ages. Thus St. Paul writes to the Christians at Corinth that they have been *called* by God,⁴⁾ and he expressly states⁵⁾ that God "has called *us*, not only of the Jews, but *also of the Gentiles.*" So all those who serve God in the Spirit and in truth, even if living in these latter days, may fitly call themselves, and rejoice in the fact of being, servants of the Lord. Yes, rejoice, for it is—in the words of Gregor of Nyssa⁶⁾—"the top and pinnacle of all the gifts bestowed upon us, to serve God;" to serve him, is at the same time "an inestimable servitude and glorious liberty,"⁷⁾ "to *serve* him is to *reign.*"⁸⁾

It now remains to compare all this with our definition of "servant," for it is by doing this that we can arrive at a satisfactory answer to the question, Were the "servants of the Lord" servants in every sense of the term, was an *ebed Javeh* truly an *ebed*? The answer is most emphatically, Yes. "A servant is a person who is the property of another." And precisely so does Scripture speak of the servants of God, Ps. 135, 4: "*The Lord hath chosen . . . Israel for his*

1) Is. 41, 9; cf. 44. 21; especially Ps. 105, 6. 26.

2) Is. 41, 8: "But thou, Israel, art *my servant*, Jacob *whom I have chosen.*"

3) Is. 65, 9.

4) 1 Cor. 1, 9.

5) Rev. 9, 24.

6) Ad 1 Cor. 15, 28: "Nostrorum autem bonorum summa est et caput, Deo esse subjectum" (tr. lat. Paris, 1605).

7) Ambrosius, De vita beata (ed. 1567, Vol. IV, 288): "Utraque conditio optima, esse sub Christo, sub quo et *preciosa servitus*, et *gloriosa libertas.*"

8) St. Bernard, serm. de S. Andrea, III: *Huic (Deo) servire regnare est.*"

קנין (cf. קָנָה, to acquire), POSSESSION;" and Tit. 2, 14: Christ has purified unto himself a *λαὸς περιούσιος*, "a people which is his *property*." Finally all his actions are prompted by the will of his Master, i. e., in the words of Scripture,¹⁾ he is "*obedient in all things*." Drawing the sum total of this entire investigation, it must be said that an עֶבֶד יְהוָה was truly and really a servant, a servant in the full meaning of the term,²⁾ though chosen to do the will—not of another human person—but of God.

But what of Nebuchadrezzar, the king of Babylon? He also is called a servant of God. Are we therefore to understand that Nebuchadrezzar is one of the number who serve God with love and fear? This cannot be. For it was this ruler who commanded Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego to be thrown into the fiery furnace, *because* they had served their God. And yet the prophet Jeremiah in three distinct places at least calls this prosecutor of God's servants a servant of the Lord. But let us view these passages in their own light. Jer. 25, 9, for instance, we read: *Behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the Lord, and Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them against this land . . . and against all these nations all about, and will utterly destroy them*. And what is the cause of this? v. 8: *Because ye have not heard my word*. This makes everything clear. God had chosen the king of Babylon to execute his will, to mete out punish-

1) 2 Cor. 2, 9; cf. Greg. Nyss. l. c.: "Dei autem subjectio est *perfecta et omni ex parte absoluta* a malo abalienatio."

2) This subject is, of course, still far from being exhausted. Thus it might be added that if Scripture says (Rom. 6, 22) that *the very members of the body* shall be servants of God, we are strongly put in mind of the term "Leibeigener;" or, again, if Paul says (Phil. 2, 13): it is God who worketh in you, both to will and to do—this reminds us of the fact, that "actions performed through a servant *remain* the actions of his master; and also *these* servants cannot expect remuneration for their services (cf. Ambrose, serm. 16 in Ps. 118: *servus voluntatem domini sui facit—remunerationem non sperat*). But this line of thought would lead too far from our subject proper.

ment upon the wayward children of Israel; and since God had chosen him *for this purpose*, he calls him עַבְדִּי—“my servant.”—Take another case: In the 119th Psalm David continually refers to himself as a servant of the Lord, and in a surprisingly great number of passages of the Old Testament the same term is applied to him. That the words Servant of the Lord, as applied to David, do not only designate him as a person who served God by obedience to the law, is evident from Acts 13, 36: *For David, after he had SERVED HIS OWN GENERATION BY THE WILL OF GOD, fell on sleep, etc.* David had also, like Nebuchadrezzar, carried into execution a command of God, had served him *in a special capacity*. And in which capacity, we are very emphatically told Ps. 78, 70 ff.: *He chose David also HIS SERVANT . . . TO FEED Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance. So HE FED them according to the integrity of his heart, and GUIDED THEM by the skillfulness of his hands.* This was the *special purpose* for which God had called David, his servant.—Another example of this kind is Moses, who served God in the capacity of law-giver and prophet to His chosen people. But not Moses alone, the prophets in general also receive the same appellation. God himself calls Isaiah his servant,¹⁾ and the words “my servants the prophets” are found in a great number of passages. The same holds good of the apostles. Paul terms himself *δοῦλος θεοῦ*, and this name is given to the apostles as a class. What, then, was the *special purpose* for which the Lord had chosen the prophets and apostles? “These men are the servants of the most high God, *which shew unto us the way of salvation.*”²⁾ Here again we may add, that all those whom God has chosen to show the way of salvation to sinful mankind at the present time, who serve him in the *special capacity* of ministers (= “servants”) of the gospel—are also very properly termed “servants of the Lord.”

1) Is. 20, 3.

2) Acts 16, 17.

All these are *δοῦλοι θεοῦ* in a peculiar sense, persons *who serve God in a special capacity and for a special purpose*. Here also we observe, that "the person and services" of these servants "are under the control of their master, and their actions," yea, the very words they wrote and uttered, "prompted by the will of their Master"—God.

Having now considered, first, the general notion Servant; then the servants of Jewish antiquity; finally the Servants of the Lord in general (such as serve him by a loving obedience) and in particular (those that were chosen for a certain purpose)—we have reached that point in our investigation which permits us to approach the subject proper of these lines, the "Servant of the Lord" of Is. 53, the "problem of the Ebed Jahveh." By comparing all that has been said on Servants and, in special, on Servants of the Lord, with the statements of Is. 53 and parallel passages, and by noting all points of coincidence and difference, it will be possible to arrive at the proper solution. In order to simplify matters it will be well to first clearly exhibit the relation between the *general* concept Servant and what we find stated in Holy Scripture on the person and attributes of this *particular* Servant of the Lord.

It has been maintained at the very outset that a servant is a *person*. It hardly needs telling, that this holds good of the Servant mentioned in the passages under consideration; yet it is a matter of prime importance to discover whether this is an individual person or whether Servant is here a collective name. Let us examine the passages preceding chap. 53. The 44th chapter begins thus: *Yet now hear, O Jacob my servant; and Israel, whom I have chosen*. Servant is here evidently a collective term, Israel being synonymous with children of Israel, the "ancient people" of verse 7. Again, we read chap. 49, 3: *Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified*. But v. 6 says: *It is a light thing that thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved*

of Israel. There cannot be a shadow of doubt, that "my servant Israel" is here a different person than the people of Israel. In other words: while Israel, God's chosen servant, is a collective term in the passage first cited, it denotes an individual person in chap. 49. This is a very noteworthy fact, and teaches us that the meaning of the words עֶבֶד יְהוָה here depends entirely upon the context. Keeping this well in mind, we read chap. 42, 1: *Behold, my servant, whom I uphold, my elect, in whom my soul delighteth.* That this again is an individual person must be concluded from v. 6: *I the Lord . . . will give thee for a covenant OF THE PEOPLE.* The "servant" is here in direct contradistinction to "the people."¹⁾

Turning to chap. 53 we must deal with the same question. Let the supposition be, that here, as in the passages cited, the Jewish nation is spoken of: and we at once move in a perfect maze of difficulties and absurdities. Has the Israelitic people "surely borne our griefs and carried our sorrows?" Can it be said of the Jews, that they have "done no violence, neither was any deceit in their mouth?" These two passages would suffice to preclude every possibility of assuming that the Israelites are here spoken of, that Ebed Jahveh is in this chapter a collective name. Moreover, we find it definitely and explicitly stated that this servant is a man, "a man of sorrows." It is therefore evident that in Is. 53, as in other portions of the second half of this book, the "Servant of the Lord" is an individual person.

All this was tolerably smooth sailing, and we begin to wonder at the whereabouts of those cliffs and sandbars on which so many a research into our subject has been so ignominiously wrecked. But the difficulties are nearer than we would suppose. Thus, it might seem a question, if not

1) So already Jerome (ad Jes. 42): *Jacob et Israel in praesenti capitulo non habent.*

altogether trivial, yet of little consequence, to ask: Is this individual person also a *human* person? Still it will require but a moment's reflection, to perceive, that by inquiring into the *identity* of this servant, we have reached a point in our investigation which brings us fairly and squarely face to face with the Problem. For, let us consider, even if it can be proven, that "The servant of the Lord" is a *human* person, it would still remain to be shown, *in what respect* he is termed a Servant, and above all—*who* he is. Now, as for the first point mentioned, it seems to be agreed on all hands, that the terms employed in the entire chapter strongly indicate the *human* nature of this Servant. Although several of the statements credit the Servant with more than human holiness and dignity—yet there are, on the other hand, expressions which bring home to us the conviction, that a *human* person is the subject of Is. 53. We read, for instance, that the servant of the Lord was *stricken*¹⁾ and *wounded*,²⁾ he was covered with *stripes*,³⁾ was put to *grief*; and mention is made of his *soul*, which was poured out *in death* when the Servant was *cut out of the land of the living*. All this⁴⁾ forces us to the conclusion that we are here dealing—not, for instance, with an Angel,⁵⁾ although the superhuman holiness attributed to the Servant would tend to give some color to this view—but with a *human* person, possessing body and soul, experiencing affections of the same, and suffering a parting of both—in death.

In all this we are not surprised to find a complete coincidence of views of those who have entered into an investigation of the subject. But we are hardly prepared for the great number of wildly varying and mutually annulling theo-

1) נָגַיעַ lit. he was branded (as a criminal).

2) נִחַלַּל lit. he was crushed (Pual, indicating a sudden and violent death).

3) תִּכְרַחַח wound resulting from blows.

4) Cf. also chap. 50, 6.

5) as Job 4, 18.

ries and explanations which sprout into view the moment we ask for a definite response to the question: If the servant of the Lord was a human person, with which historical personage, then, are we to identify him?—*who was* the Ebed Jahveh of Is. 53?

We have stated the problem—now for the solutions. Of course, we cannot pass in review every solution that has been offered; but it will be at once profitable and interesting to examine a limited number of the most widely accepted theories purporting to be disentanglements of the problem.—The LXX indicate that they had *the Israelites* in mind when they translated this chapter, for in chap. 42 (which most assuredly treats of the same person as chap. 53) they begin the first verse: Ἰακώβ ὁ παῖς μου, Ἰσραήλ ὁ ἐκλεκτός μου. Now, we have seen in a former instance, that “my servant” is sometimes used as an apposition to “Israel,” the chosen people. Still the LXX is undoubtedly wrong in its surmise, and looking at the Hebrew text we discover, that mention is there made of neither of the names “Jacob” and “Israel”! This high-handed dealing with the original text throws an extremely unfavorable light upon this solution of the problem. And if Hitzig, Ewald and others support the view of the LXX the matter is not improved in the least. It has already been shown that the idea of a collective term cannot for a moment be entertained; and it is a mystery how men not altogether destitute of historical knowledge could say, e. g., that *the Jews* “had done no violence, neither was any deceit in ‘their’ mouth.” There is not a line in the entire chapter which tallies with any occurrence in Jewish history, not a word which would indicate that the Israelites are the Servant of the Lord. A slight modification of this view is that taken by Knobel, Paulus, et al., who imagine, that the *better portion* of the people are meant. Of course, the same holds good of this solution as of the former; and it cannot be objected, that the servant is spoken of in terms of high praise,—because this praise is of an

order which could not be accorded even the most pious, the most god-like of Old Testament believers.

According to a third conception, *the prophets* were in the mind of the author of Is. 53. And here the supposition of a collective person was dropped, and judgment began to crystallize in a new direction; the עֶבֶר יְהוָה is a person, a single, individual person—*ONE of the prophets!* (Dum vitant stulti vitia in contraria currunt.) Of course, opinions now differ as to which particular prophet. Grotius decides in favor of Jeremiah. We may guess, that he gets into very deep water by doing so. 52, 13 (“He shall be exalted and extolled and be very high”) is dismissed with this lugubrious nonsense: *Jeremiah enjoyed great distinction with the Chaldees.*¹⁾ This is bad enough; but if 53, 9 (he made his grave with the wicked (אֶת-רְשָׁעִים), and with the rich (אֶת-עֲשִׂירִי) in his death) is done into: “and he will give him the wicked *instead of* (pro) a grave, and the wealthy *instead of* death”—and this explained by a reference to a rescue of Jeremiah from powerful enemies, who received themselves what they had intended for him—this will at once convince us of the inadequateness of a solution, which needs for its vindication such frantic onslaughts on the words and sense of the Hebrew text.

After this depressing sojourn in the dismal wastes of Theological Boeotia, let us return to the verses of our text, and hear what the *ipsa verba* have to say on the question. It has repeatedly been remarked that the holiness of the Servant is of a very high order. This must be inferred from passages as (v. 9): “*He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.*” And this perfect holiness of God’s Servant is strongly contrasted with our iniquity, our transgressions, our sins; more than that—these our sins, iniquities and transgressions are *the cause* of his sufferings; and are the cause of his sufferings because *God himself* “has laid on him the iniquities of us all.” It is clear that

1) Jeremias in magno honore erat apud ipsos Chaldaeos.

the holiness, the righteousness of a person whom God chooses for such a work can be nothing short of perfection. But over and above this we are told that the Servant of the Lord is—not only a perfectly righteous and holy human person—but is GOD HIMSELF. Is. 42, 13: "Jehovah shall go forth as a mighty man, . . . he shall prevail against his enemies," cf. v. 4, "he (*my servant*) shall not fail nor be discouraged," etc. It is of paramount importance to observe that the Lord God himself is in this entire chapter speaking in the first person. But the person speaking introduces another person, his servant, whom he pronounces to be also יהוה. So we have two persons, both יהוה—and one of these the Servant of the Lord. But we know only of one person in whom a divine nature and a human nature were united, and that is our Lord, Jesus Christ.

That this is the true solution of the problem is made doubly sure by the words of Christ himself, who expressly refers the statements of Is. 53 to his own person.¹⁾ St. Paul applies the same terms to Christ when he says:²⁾ *He took upon him μορφήν δούλου, the form of a servant.* It is at Bethlehem that we for the first time observe this *μορφή*, this form or appearance of a servant; for it is just under such

1) Matt. 12, 17—21. Trusting in the word of their master, this has been held to be the true solution by all teachers of the Church since the days of the Apostles. The Apostolic Fathers, e. g., Barnabas (5, 2), Ignatius (ad Antioch. 3), Clement of Rome (ad Cor. 16, 3—16, containing the entire 53d chapter as treating of κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός); Justin (Dial. c. Tryph., p. 174, ed. Froben), Chrysostom (in Es. VII, 14), Clement of Alexandria (Paedag. III, 1), Cyprian (Adv. Jud. II, 15), Tertullian (Adv. Marc. IV, 20), Lactantius (Instit. Div. IV, 16), Ambrose (De Virg. III, ed. 1567, I, p. 96), Athanasius (Ed. 1601, I, p. 469. II, p. 253)—in short, every Father of any note has unhesitatingly and explicitly maintained, that the Servant of the Lord is Christ. Every Lutheran theologian, and for that matter, every Lutheran Christian has shared their conviction, and it is only the modern theologian who has come out against this belief. But of them it is said that "until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away *in the reading of the Old Testament.*"

2) Phil. 2, 7.

surroundings that we may expect the child of a bonds slave, himself a slave, to be born. The same *μορφή* of a servant is plainly evident in the circumstances of Christ's death on Golgotha; it was the death usually accorded to and expressly reserved for slaves as a punishment for particularly atrocious crimes,—death by crucifixion. But there was not only a *form*, an *appearance* of servitude, no, the servitude was *real*, Christ was *truly* a servant. A "servant's actions are controlled by the will of his master"—and so Christ was, as a true servant, subject to the will of his Father. He says: "my meat is *to do the will* of him that sent me;¹⁾" and again, with stronger emphasis: "I can of mine own self do nothing. . . . I seek *not my own will*, but the *will of the Father* which hath sent me."²⁾ Before his entrance into Jerusalem he says: "as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do;"³⁾ and finally in Gethsemane: "*Not my will, but thine, be done.*"⁴⁾ This last passage in particular so clearly and forcibly and directly proclaims the fact that Christ was in the true sense of the word a servant, that it is impossible to put this relation in a clearer light:—*not* the servant's will, *but* the master's will controls the actions of the *δούλος*. But here let us remember, that this inferiority is, *even with servants in general*, not of quality, but of relation. This was expressed in our definition by the clause: "*by virtue of this relation.*" So we will correctly and consistently add, as a prominent feature of *Christ's* servitude, that he also was subject to the will of his father only *by virtue of this relation*. *As true God* he "sits at his right hand," i. e., rules *with* the Father in equal majesty and power; but inasmuch as he, being also true *man*, has taken upon himself *μορφήν δούλου*, by virtue of *this* relation is he under the will of his Father and obedient to his commands.

1) John 4, 34.

3) John 14, 31.

2) John 5, 30.

4) Luke 22, 42.

Obedience to his master's commands stamps the servant everywhere; obedience to the will of *God* stamps the true servant of the Lord. This applies with equal force to Christ. And Christ was, also in his servitude, perfect, a perfect servant. There is this difference between the obedience of Christ and the obedience, e. g., of David, that the one was tainted with sin, and the other was *absolutely perfect*. More than that: it was not even possible for Christ to break a commandment of God; his was not only the *posse non peccare* of Adam before the fall, his was the *non posse peccare*.

But it will not do to let the matter rest here. This perfect obedience had a *purpose*, in other words, Christ was a servant of God also in the second, in the higher meaning of the term: he was appointed to carry out a *special* design and plan of God, and to carry it out *through* his perfect obedience. The 53d chapter of Isaiah treats of this purpose of Christ's servitude. It was decreed,¹⁾ before the world began, that sinful humanity should be redeemed. In order that we should be saved, our sins must be atoned for; so God chose his servant, Christ, and "laid on *him* the iniquity of *us all*." "He was wounded for *our* transgressions, he was bruised for *our* iniquities, the chastisement" which brought "*us* peace was upon *him*; and with *his* stripes *we* are healed." Thus Christ has atoned for our sins according to the will of God. God punished him in our stead, and has thereby wiped out our sin and guilt; in the words of Isaiah, the Servant has "justified many."²⁾ This was the special purpose for which God had chosen his servant, and this purpose the servant has faithfully carried out. And the execution of this purpose, being the work of a servant of Jehovah, was really and truly the work of

1) V. 10: יִצְרָף, placere, it "pleased God," he decreed.

2) Cf. Rom. 5, 15; note the coincidence of the עִוְוֹנוֹת and the εἰς τοὺς πολλοὺς.

Jehovah, ordained by Jehovah's will, performed according to Jehovah's word. Paul Gerhardt describes this in the familiar lines:—

“Go forth my Son!” he said, “and bail
The children who are doomed to hell
Without Thine intercession.
The punishment is great, and dread
The wrath, but Thou Thy blood shalt shed,
And save them from perdition.”

“Yea, Father, yea, most willingly
I'll bear what Thou commandest;
My will conforms to Thy decree,
I do what Thou demandest.”

Thus, then, the work of redemption being performed by the *Servant of Jehovah*, it is *ab initio* and *in solidum* the work of *Jehovah*; it is, in other words, a work of divine dignity not only by subsequent approval, but *by its very nature and genesis*. God the Lord Jehovah Himself is our savior, not only inasmuch as Jesus was very God, but also inasmuch as Jesus, being the Servant of Jehovah, performed Jehovah's own work according to Jehovah's own will: “God *was in Christ*,¹⁾ reconciling the world *unto himself*.” And for this very same reason the work of redemption is *valid* in the judgment of God from everlasting, even before it had been performed; for the master will not disavow the work of a servant who was acting in accordance with the will and instructions of his master. And since it was decreed before the world began that Christ should be the Redeemer, not only of a few, but of *all mankind*—every sinner may rest assured that Christ's soul was “poured out in death” for him also; we all may truthfully and confidently say with Isaiah the prophet: He was wounded for *our* transgressions, He has carried *our* sorrows—and thereby “has blotted out our transgressions,” has atoned for our sins. Therefore

1) θεός ἐν Χριστῷ, not only Χριστός ὁ θεός.

“Sing, O ye heavens; for the Lord hath done it; shout, ye lower parts of the earth; break forth into singing, ye mountains: for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel.”

And now, the will of Jehovah having been carried into effect, the purpose for which the Servant of Jehovah was chosen having been accomplished, the servitude of the *Ebed Jahveh* has come to an end. As the Jewish slave was not a servant for life, but served a certain time and then “returned to the property of his fathers,” so the Servant of the Lord, having served his appointed time, returned to his inheritance. Having “*dealt prudently,*” he has been *exalted and extolled and made very high,*¹⁾ and *who shall declare his generation?*²⁾ After he had *humbled himself and became obedient unto death,* God has *highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is LORD, to the glory of God the Father.*³⁾

T. G.

1) Is. 52, 13.

2) Is. 53, 8.

3) Phil. 2, 8—11.