CHAPTER FOUR

THE SERVANT OF THE LORD

There is no need here to give a summary of the many and varied attempts to identify the Servant of the LORD. This was done admirably a generation ago by A. S. Peake,¹ and even more comprehensively in recent years by C. R. North.² This latter volume is most detailed, and every view of importance is discussed. The bibliography is both accurate and extensive. We proceed, therefore, to discuss the identity of the Servant of the LORD with the discussions in Professor North's book as a background. An outline of this present discussion has already appeared in 'The Servant of the LORD in Deutero-Isaiah,' Studies in Old Testament Prophecy, 1950, pp. 187-200, and a preliminary article appeared in The Expository Times, lvi (December 1944), pp. 79-81, entitled 'The So-called Servant Songs.'

In the first place, we maintain that the Servant of the so-called Servant Songs (42: 1-4; 49: 1-6; 50: 4-9; 52: 13-53: 12) is the Servant of the remainder of the nineteen chapters, 40-55 and 60-62. As was pointed out in the two above-mentioned essays, the existence of the four Servant Songs as distinct pieces involved their separation from 'the main body of the prophecy.'³ Very few have argued against such segregation,⁴ and few have realised any need for discussion. The position here maintained is that there is no such 'main body of the prophecy.' The modern attitude is to think of all four of the Latter Prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, the Twelve) as 'collections of independent and usually short oracles, poems and the like.'⁵ This movement began with H. Gressmann ⁶ who found 49 pieces in Isaiah 40-55, and these wholly independent of each other. He has been followed by Köhler (70 pieces), Mowinckel (45), Volz (54), Oesterley and Robinson (54), Eissfeldt (about 50), Begrich (70), and Caspart (many pieces from many authors). Mowinckel and

¹) The Servant of Yahweh, etc., 1931.
⁴) Budde (1922), Giesebrecht (1902), Marti (1900), Kissane (1943) and Roman Catholic scholars generally.
⁵) O. Eissfeldt, 'The Literature of Israel: Modern Criticism' in Record and Revelation, ed. H. Wheeler Robinson, 1938, p. 94.
VOLZ exclude the Servant Songs from their count. More recently, J. MUilenburg has written in favour of twenty-one separate poems.

If there is no main body of the prophecy, there can be no special group of pieces distinct from it. We are faced with approximately fifty separate pieces, in some of which reference is made to the Servant of the LORD. These references are of varying definiteness, but there are four where the association is particularly plain. These are the pieces which B. DUHM picked out and called Die Ebed-Jahve-Leider. These he isolated from the rest, and most scholars have followed him in this. But some scholars include other pieces also, and even DUHM himself varied. The fact is that the four pieces cannot be identified as markedly and definitely as DUHM first proposed. NORTH, for instance, speaks of 'Secondary Servant Songs:' 42: 5-9; 49: 7-9a or 49: 7-12; and 50: 10 f. It has been said that 42: 5-9 is a continuation of 42: 1-4, and later DUHM agreed to this, but in doing so he said that these latter verses were so similar in style to the style of the Second Isaiah that he had at first ascribed them to him instead of associating them with the author of the Servant Songs, whom DUHM distinguished from the Second Isaiah. If DUHM could make such a 'mistake,' it is evident that the style of the Servant Songs does not differ from the style of what is called 'the main body of the prophecy' to anything like the degree which some have maintained. Often arguments depending upon style are far too subjective, but here we accept DUHM's second opinion: the style is for the most part indistinguishable.

We do not agree that 42: 5-9 forms one piece with 42: 1-4. Verses 5-9 undoubtedly refer to the Servant, but he is not specifically mentioned. Further, v. 5 begins with 'Thus saith the El, the LORD,' which GRESSMANN held to be an important criterion for the detection of a new piece. In 42: 1-4 the Servant is referred to in the third person, but in 42: 5-9 he is himself addressed in the second person. Again, in the first piece the message is for all who will listen and is in general terms. In the second piece the message is precise and specific. The word nāḥah is used in different senses in the two pieces. In the first piece, the reference is to the Spirit of God which inspires the Servant

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1) For further details, see C. R. NORTH, *The Suffering Servant in Deutero-Isaiah* pp. 158 ff.
3) 42: 1-4; 49: 1-6; 50: 4-9; 52: 13-53: 12. See *Die Theologie der Propheten* (1875) and again his commentary *Das Buch Jesaia übersetzt und erklärt* (1892).
4) *op. cit.*, pp. 189 ff.
5) LXX reverses these titles.