

JEREMIAH, GOD'S SUFFERING SERVANT

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This article proceeds in three steps, showing how the figure of the prophet Jeremiah is portrayed according to traits of Yhwh's servant in the Book of Isaiah. First (1), it discusses the relationship between these two books, with a special focus on the 'Servant Songs'. Secondly (2), it reflects on the direction of an eventual dependence between both books; a thorough literary analysis of the links between the Servant Songs and Jer suggests that the latter is using Isa, picking up specific expressions mainly from the second and fourth song (Isa 49 and 53). This allows us, finally (3), to perceive the figure of Jeremiah as *the* example of a 'suffering prophet' which becomes evident throughout his book, in his physical pain as well as in the suffering of his mind and soul. Thus, it seems, the Book of Jeremiah deliberately depicts its prophet in agreement with the fate of Yhwh's servant in Isa, still enhancing the figure of the servant.

Nearly thirty years ago, Horacio Simian-Yofre gave a seminar on Deutero-Isaiah at the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome. It proved to be one of the most profitable seminars, as he introduced us painstakingly to the analysis of prophetic texts.¹ Later on, he became the second reader for my thesis.² His sensitivity

¹ I still remember how he started with the delimitation of Isaiah 40, asking for the end of the unit beginning in v. 1. He urged us to give reasons for our various positions and thus trained us to discern and ponder the different reasons we adduced. My thanks go to Mrs. Felicity Stephens, for having corrected the English of this article.

² It was a peculiarity of the Biblical Institute in Rome to assign two «directors» for a thesis, fostering in this way a broader and more critical foundation for the investiga-

and accuracy were not only a source of inspiration, but also motivation for solid research.

It is an honour for me to pay tribute to him with this article. I have chosen a topic connected with one of his important contributions, namely the figure of the «servant» in Deutero-Isaiah, published in the most renowned theological dictionary of Biblical Hebrew.³ I will investigate how this idea is present in the book of Jeremiah, too, and whether it indicates a relationship between these two biblical books. Moreover, the specification «suffering» picks up another major theme of Simian-Yofre's publications,⁴ and the emphasis on prophetic books, appropriate for this Festschrift, coincides with the main emphasis of his research.⁵ A further point of contact with him is the attention given to aspects of methodology.⁶ In all of this, the article seeks to follow in the footsteps of my former teacher, both thematically and in its general orientation.

Our starting point (1) will be the 'common ground' of the books of Isaiah and Jeremiah: some expressions in the «servant songs» of Isa are to be found again only in Jer, or have their clos-

³ H. SIMIAN-YOFRE, "«abad», 10, *TWAT* V, 1003–1010. In the same volume there is also his article on "«na am", p. 366–383.

⁴ H. SIMIAN-YOFRE, *Sofferenza dell'uomo e silenzio di Dio nell'Antico Testamento e nella letteratura del Vicino Oriente antico* (Studia Biblica 2; Roma 2005). Therein he concentrates on the motif and figure of the «suffering just».

⁵ At the Biblical Institute, prophets were the central field of his teaching, and this is mirrored also in his books. See, *inter alia*, H. SIMIAN-YOFRE, *El desierto de los Dioses. Teología e Historia en el libro de Oseas* (Cordoba 1993), and *Testi Isaiani dell'Avvento* (Bologna 1996), and his recent overall view of the important developments in the study of prophecy: "La evolución de la lectura e investigación de los libros proféticos", *EE* 85 (2010) 261–286.

⁶ H. SIMIAN-YOFRE (with contributions from P. Bovati and I. Gargano), *Introduzione alla Metodologia Esegética* (Roma 1993), and also, in collaboration with I. Gargano, S. Pisano and J. L. Ska, *Metodología dell'Antico Testamento* (Studi Biblici 25; Bologna 1994); the experience mentioned above with his seminar and in general with the variety of courses and approaches at the Biblical Institute led me to write the book *Wege in die Bibel. Leitfaden zur Auslegung* (unter Mitarbeit von Boris Repschinski und Andreas Vonach), Stuttgart 2000; 4^{re} 2011. This shows the shared conviction that the reflection on methods and their solid application is a key issue for contemporary exegesis.

est parallels therein. Then (2) we will consider in which direction any relationship between these prophetic books might lie with regard to this topic. Further (3) I want to show how the figure of the prophet Jeremiah, although never directly designated as «servant»,⁷ can be seen as a model or example of a suffering servant. Jer, as a book, gives a sort of 'biography'⁸ of him and thus allows us to perceive his life through some of its crucial moments.

■ 1. Connections between Isaiah's «servant songs» and the book of Jeremiah

This first part of my article serves only to provide the general background. Initially (1.1), a concise overall view of the relationship between the two books of these great prophets, Isaiah and Jeremiah, is presented. Next (1.2), some attention will be given to the servant songs in the book of Isaiah and finally (1.3), we can address the issue of specific links between the servant songs and the book of Jeremiah.

1.1 The relationship between Isa and Jer

Classical positions for this issue count on a *dependence of Jer on «First Isaiah»*, attributing the latter mainly to the prophet's proclamation in the 8th century BC.⁹ The direction of dependence

⁷ Yet, Jeremiah might be included in the phraseology «(all) my / his servants, the prophets», e.g. in Jer 7:25; 25:4; 26:5; 29:19; 35:15; 44:4.

⁸ Many texts refer to special moments of the prophet's life; this starts with allusions to his mother's pregnancy with him and to his birth (Jer 1:5), mentions some of his proclamations (Jer 7 and 19:14f, for example) and other specific events (being beaten [Jer 20:2], or held in custody [Jer 32:2], etc.) and conveys a kind of 'portrait' of Jeremiah — for the discussion about terming this a 'biography' see T.W. OVERHOLT, "Jeremiah — Introduction", *Harper's Bible Commentary* (San Francisco 1988) 597–608, especially 602f, and G. FISCHER, *Jeremia 1–25* (HThKAT; Freiburg 2005) 99–100.

⁹ U. WENDEL, *Jesaja und Jeremia. Worte, Motive und Einsichten Jesajas in der Verkündigung Jeremias* (BthSt 25; Neukirchen 1995), is a typical example for this position. She limits her research to Isa 1–30 and interprets the correspondences with Jer as Jer drawing on Isa.

changes with «Second» and «Third Isaiah», which are taken to be exilic or even postexilic and thus postdating the prophet Jeremiah whose career is fixed to 627–587 BC due to the indications given in Jer 1:2–3.¹⁰

Recent developments have *questioned these assumptions*. No longer can we presume that the respective books stem, to a large extent, from the prophets themselves; rather they are products of later writers, maybe with processes of redaction(s) and editing.¹¹ There is no need here to present the various theories for Isa or Jer; what has become clear is that both books present deliberate compositions and, as a whole, cannot be earlier than postexilic times, and most probably even later.¹²

In view of this, the question of the relationship between Isa and Jer arises anew, and also the possibility of an influence of the so-called «Deutero-Isaiah» on Jer. Our theme could serve as a kind of *test case* for it: either Second Isaiah picks up the experience of the life of the prophet Jeremiah, modelling it into a kind of ‘ideal’ figure in the servant songs,¹³ or the book of Jeremiah uses imagery and motifs from the ‘servant songs’ to portray its prophet along these lines, or, as a third option, both prophetic books draw on a common source, no longer known to us. Recent research on other prophetic books, especially the twelve ‘minor’ prophets,¹⁴ has led to a perception of them as having been

¹⁰ One representative of this stance is B.D. SOMMER, “Allusions and Illusions. The Unity of the Book of Isaiah”, (ed. R.F. Melugin), *New Visions of Isaiah* (JSOTS 214; Sheffield 1996) 156–186. Other colleagues like G. Glaßner, P.T. Willey share his view.

¹¹ As long-time editor of the renowned journal *Biblica*, H. Simian Yofre has earned great credit, and he is very knowledgeable about such processes.

¹² In the *Einleitung in das Alte Testament* (ed. E. ZENGER) (Stuttgart 72008), H.-W. Jüngling takes up M. Sweeney’s position in his commentary, dating the book of Isa as a whole towards the end of the fifth century BC (p. 445). Extreme positions, like O.H. Steck, who assigns parts of the ‘Third Isaiah’ to the 2nd century BC, have not found acceptance.

¹³ Thus the opinion of U. BERGES, “Servant and Suffering in Isaiah and Jeremiah: Who borrowed from whom?”, *OTES* 25 (2012) 247–259.

¹⁴ One of the pioneers was J.D. Nogalski, with his two books in 1993 (BZAW 217 and 218). In the German speaking area A. SCHART, *Die Entstehung des Zwölfprophetenbuchs* (BZAW 260; Berlin 1998), opened up the discussion very widely.

deliberately composed, in the knowledge of other prophetic books and biblical scrolls.¹⁵

1.2 The 'servant songs' in Isa

This is not the place to deal in detail with these famous texts. It will suffice to point to their *important role within Isa*, which is mirrored in the book itself¹⁶ as well in the literature commenting on it.¹⁷ Which texts are to be attributed to it, is open to debate; the classical songs consist of texts¹⁸ in Isa 42; 49; 50 and 52:13–53:12.

It is to the credit of H. Simian-Yofre that he *widened the spectrum* of 'servant texts' beyond the classical position. He dealt also with other passages like Isa 42:18–25 and 43:8–13 and thus opened up the understanding of the servant's role with new and important aspects.¹⁹ In fact, the first occurrence of 'servant' within 'Deutero-Isaiah' is found as early as Isa 41:8 where God assures the servant, identified with Israel, of his assistance and help against those who will confront him. This is a kind of a 'plus sign' at the beginning of the various servant texts which follow later.

¹⁵ The German term «Schriftprophetie» has played a key role in these discussions. It was already used by H. UETZSCHNEIDER in his monograph on Malachi: *Künder oder Schreiber. Eine These zum Problem der »Schriftprophetie« auf Grund von Maleachi 1, 6–2, 9* (BEATAJ; Frankfurt 1989), and keeps still a prominent position, as the title of the FS J. JÉRÉMIAIS, *Schriftprophetie* (ed. F. HARTENSTEIN *et alii*) (Neukirchen 2004), shows.

¹⁶ E.g. by the prominence of the motif especially in Isa 40–55, being a key theme there; by the abundance of its occurrences in those chapters, and by the significant 'switch' from the singular to the plural ('servants') in Isa 54,17 (U. BERGES, *Das Buch Jesaja. Komposition und Endgestalt* [HBS 16; Freiburg 1998] 393 and 413).

¹⁷ Among many authors I just want to mention A. LAATO, *The Servant of YHWH and Cyrus* (CB.OT 35; Stockholm 1992); J. WERLITZ, "Vom Knecht der Lieder zum Knecht des Buches", *ZAW* 109 (1997) 30–43, and H. SIMIAN-YOFRÉ, *Sofferenza* (n. 4, especially part 3, p. 117–284); see also n. 20 below.

¹⁸ In the first three cases the endings of the songs are discussed, but that does not matter for the further treatment of our theme. Generally there is agreement about the beginnings in Isa 42:1; 49:1 and 50:4.

¹⁹ H. SIMIAN-YOFRÉ, "abad", 10. (see n. 3 above), 1006f, and *idem*, *Sofferenza* (n. 4), 154–182. He stresses, among other things, the servant's identification with his people and his role as witness for God.

At the moment it seems wise not to limit research on God's servant in Isa to just the four songs originally proposed by B. Duhm.²⁰ Nevertheless, for the scope of our investigation, we will mostly select passages from the undisputed servant texts in order to avoid discussion about pertinence to our topic. In any case, the 'classical' servant songs are *literary and theological highlights*, and this is reflected in the next part also.

1.3 Links with Jer

In view of our theme, I will concentrate on the *most specific links* between the servant songs and texts in Jer.²¹ They appear in two quite limited contexts, namely Jeremiah's call (Jer 1) and the first two of his so-called 'confessions', in Jer 11 and Jer 15. These chapters provide a key to the understanding of the prophet's role in Jer, and the connections of Isaiah's servant songs with them points to an agreement between Isa and Jer in the concept of a messenger of God, as servant or prophet.

In Isa 49 the servant confesses about himself: «Yhwh called me *from the womb* (בֶּטֶן)» (v. 1). This statement stands right at the beginning, after two exhortations to listen to a universal audience. The following stich declares in a parallel expression: «From the bowels of my mother he remembered my name». Isa 49:1 thus knows about a *long-lasting relationship* between God and his servant, going back to the maternal uterus.

The closest parallel to this is Jer 1:5: «*Before I formed you in the womb* (בֶּטֶן), I knew you». Once again, there is a strong bond

²⁰ His proposal (in 1892) was soon challenged by K. Budde (1900) and, more recently, by T.N.D. METTINGER, *A Farewell to the Servant Songs* (Lund 1983), and others (like J. Werlitz [n. 17 above]). Today there is growing acceptance that these 'songs' cannot be seen isolated from their context.

²¹ It is neither necessary nor helpful to list all common words or motifs. Rather it makes sense to focus on expressions that connect both prophetic books in a peculiar or exclusive way, thus excluding interference of other texts as far as possible. This enterprise tries to deal with a question deliberately left open by H. SIMIAN-YOURE, *Sof-ferenza* (n. 4), 5.

between God and the one he calls, reaching back before the time of birth. Whereas Isa refers to the time of pregnancy, Jer goes still further back, before the moment of the prophet's conception. The idea of an early link with God seems thus to be radicalized, *extending back to the earliest possible date*, even before one's physical existence.²²

Comparing God's actions, 'call' and 'remember' in Isa 49:1, and 'form, know, sanctify' in Jer 1:5, the latter appears to be *more intensive and more intimate*. Forming is a personal, creative process (see again Jer 18:1–6). To 'know' characterizes closest relationships, like those between spouses (Gen 4:1,17). And 'sanctify' with individuals as object (as in Num 3:13) means that they are set apart, on God's side, who, himself, is holy (cf. also passages like Lev 11:44; 19:2).

According to one possible reading, to 'form' might occur earlier in the first servant song: «And I will form²³ you and make you a covenant (for) people and a light (for) nations» (Isa 42:6). The latter expression is repeated in Isa 49:6: «..., and I will make you [ונתחידך] a light (for) nations [גוים] ...» and describes the *universal range of his mission*.

Once again, Jer 1:5 comes close to it: «I make you (נתחידך) a prophet for the nations (לגוים).» Like the servant, Jeremiah is appointed not only for Yhwh's faithful, but for an international public. With regard to Isa, there are *two main differences*, concerning the task and the time. 'Light' is an image, 'prophet' a specific role, linked with functions of proclamation, representation etc. and is thus more visible. Isa 49:6 talks about the future,²⁴

²² Within Jer, this will play an essential role for Jeremiah's last confession. At its end (Jer 20:17–18) there is a threefold reference to his mother's womb, interpreted by J.R. LUNDBOM, *Jeremiah 1–20* (AB 21A; New York 1999) 872, as a kind of frame with Jer 1:5. Jeremiah's question about the sense of his painful existence is thus, right from the start, answered by God's declaration at the beginning of the book.

²³ Others read 'protect'; the Hebrew form allows both interpretations.

²⁴ The Masoretes propose with their vocalization of Isa 42:6 an understanding as future, whereas the critical apparatus of the BHS suggests, with the Syriac version and the Vulgate, to interpret both verb forms as referring to a past time («and I formed / protected you and I made you ...»).

whereas Jer 1 has to be understood as a performative perfect.²⁵ The very act of God's speaking constitutes Jeremiah at this moment as just such a prophet with international range. Isa leaves open when God's announcement will occur, Jer speaks about what has already begun.

In his first confession, Jeremiah complains: «And I was like a tame lamb, led to slaughter (יובל לטבוח)...», and he continues quoting his enemies: «... and let us extirpate him from the land of the living (מארץ חיים), ...!» (Jer 11:19). Both statements have their *closest parallels in the last servant song*. Isa 53:7 describes him in this way: «... he did not open his mouth, like a lamb led to slaughter (לטבוח יובל), ...». And a verse later Isa reads: «..., for he was cut off from the land of the living (מארץ חיים), ...» (Isa 53:8c).

Two further links with the fourth servant song can be found in *Jeremiah's second confession*. Following his lament in Jer 15:10, God answers him in v. 11: «For sure, I have let the foe encounter (ב + hi פגע) you ...». The only other occurrence of this construction is Isa 53:6: «..., but Yhwh has let encounter (ב + hi פגע) him the iniquity of us all», where a group confesses the servant's innocence and vicarious suffering for their guilt.

Starting to speak a second time in Jer 15:15, Jeremiah pleads: «... Don't take me away (תקחני) through your forbearance!». The use of this verb comes close to the statement about the servant in Isa 53:8a: «By oppression and judgment he was taken away (לקח) ...» — Jeremiah *asks to be spared* what happened to the servant.

Looking back at these agreements between Isa 49; 53 and Jer 1; 11 and 15, they seem to be so close that we can *consider a literary relationship*. Some of the parallels are unique, not encountered elsewhere, and the concentration on just some very limited passages might also indicate a deliberate literary work. In the next part we will explore further these connections between Isa and Jer.

²⁵ See W. SCHNEIDER, *Grammatik des biblischen Hebräisch* (München ⁸1993) 204.

■ 2. Who knows whom?

2.1 Methodological reflection

As we saw in 1.1 above, there is no longer any firm ground for the 'classical' datings of texts in Isa or Jer in connection with the lives of these prophets.²⁶ On the contrary, our increased understanding of the genesis of their books points to a much later period, so that questions of dependence and literary processes are once more open. For this reason it seems better to *start without the traditional theories* and to engage in a mainly literary comparison, leaving aside previous assumptions and presuppositions.

However there are difficulties with such a procedure. The *search for criteria* by which to detect literary dependence is not easy.²⁷ In my experience with research in Jer, it proved useful to pay attention to the following benchmarks and principles:

- grade of *precision* of the accordance: the more exact the agreements are, the higher the probability of a literary relationship;²⁸
- *length* of the concordance: the longer two texts agree with each other, the more we can assume some kind of dependence;²⁹

²⁶ It is not possible to attribute with certainty some sayings to these prophets themselves, as '*ipsisima verba*' in the eight century BC (for Isaiah) and the period around 600 BC (for Jeremiah).

²⁷ A positive example in this field is S. BERGLER, *Joel als Schriftinterpret* (BEAT 16; Frankfurt 1988), esp. 23–29. The considerations about the ambivalence of certain arguments, adduced by G. VANONI, "Anspielungen und Zitate innerhalb der hebräischen Bibel", *Jeremia und die deuteronomistische Bewegung* (ed. W. GROSS) (BBB 98; Weinheim 1995) 383–395, might also be helpful.

²⁸ In the cases listed above in 1.3, e.g., the verb forms of 'to take away' in Isa 53:8 and Jer 15:11 are quite different, whereas in Isa 49:6 and Jer 1:5 they are nearly identical and in addition have the same audience («for the nations»). So the latter case is more convincing than the former.

²⁹ The connections shown above are rather short, but one can perceive a difference between the agreement of Isa 53:6 with Jer 15:11 in just one grammatical construction (לְכַמּוֹתֵי הַיְהוָה + כִּי) and the accordance of Isa 53:7 with Jer 11:19, consisting of a comparison ('like a lamb') and the construction «led to slaughter», although the word for 'lamb' in Hebrew is not the same and the sequence of the latter words is reversed. The best examples of long agreements are parallel texts, like Isa 36–39 // 2 Kings 18:13–20:21; Jer 52 // 2 Kings 24:18–25:30, pointing to deliberate re-use of a source.

– *distribution* of the phrasing: single or common words, which also occur frequently elsewhere, are normally not really useful for the purposes of argument; rather, unusual combinations of words or even «exclusive relationships»³⁰ offer stronger arguments.

These are some of the main principles helpful for investigating intertextual relationships.³¹ Applied to our topic, some of the links mentioned above match the criteria almost exactly. But the length is in all cases rather short, never exceeding more than just one phrase.³² This is counterbalanced by some «exclusive links», like the expressions of Isa 53:6–7, and the fact that the other constructions are also quite rare. So, overall, we can detect a *convergence of the criteria*, confirming what we surmised above about a possibility of a literary relationship between the servant songs of Isa and some texts in Jer.

For carrying out a comparison between two related texts *three steps* are normally indicated:³³

- a) establish what is common, as a basis (this has mostly been done in 1.3 above),
- b) observe then what is different,
- c) and finally, interpret the observations.

Steps b and c have not yet been completely covered, and so we shall address them in the next section.

2.2 Reflecting on the differences between Isa and Jer

Isa 49:1 and Jer 1:5

Jer's repeated insistence on «before» goes beyond Isa's idea of the servant's vocation «from the womb», bringing the beginning of Jeremiah's mission to the earliest possible moment.

³⁰ This term indicates that the phrase does not occur elsewhere, besides the two texts being compared with, like «led to slaughter» in the footnote above.

³¹ For further reflections on such analyses, see G. FISCHER, *Jeremia. Der Stand der theologischen Diskussion* (Darmstadt 2007) 132–133.

³² This means that we can, at maximum, reach a degree of probability, not of certainty. The weakness of the short agreements is partially compensated by their number and by their concentration on these very specific texts.

³³ Cf. G. FISCHER, *Wége* (n. 6 above), 27.

In Jer, God is speaking, in Isa 49, the servant himself. In terms of the level of authority, God ranks highest — but this is not to be overestimated, as e.g. Isa 42:1–9 also reports God's words about his servant.

With regard to the verbs employed, 'call' and 'remember' indicate a close relationship. Yet Jer 1, with 'form, know, sanctify', is even more intimate and intensive.

Isa 49:6 and Jer 1:5

In Isa, God's promise is open for the future; it may happen sometime. The performative speech in Jer expresses the fact that Jeremiah's constitution as an international prophet takes place at this moment, at the beginning of his book, and therefore shapes all the rest of it and his whole mission.

The poetic image 'light' (in Isa) and the specific role of 'prophet' (in Jer) are difficult to assess with regard to literary dependence; we may leave it open here.

Isa 53:7 and Jer 11:19

In Isa, a group talks about the servant, comparing his behaviour (to remain silent) with a lamb soon to be slaughtered. The same comparison serves in Jer for the entire life of the prophet: «*I was like a lamb*», speaking personally about his persecution.

Whereas in Isa the 'lamb' receives no qualification, Jer has, in addition, 'tame'.³⁴ This further accentuates his innocence and the cruelty of his adversaries.

Isa 53:8 and Jer 11:19

The neutral, passive wording in Isa leaves open who is responsible for the death of the servant. In Jer, the group of as-

³⁴There is a tendency for texts to 'grow' when being quoted, see e.g. the insertion of King Hezekiah's prayer in Isa 38:9–20, as expansion of 2 Kings 20, or the extended treatment of the temple vessels in Jer 52:17–23, with regard to the source text in 2 Kings 25. This 'normal' tendency does not mean that the longer text is always the later one, drawing on the shorter. It can also be the other way round, as for instance Jer 39 in comparison with 2 Kings 25 shows. An author can abbreviate the original in his quote.

sailants themselves are speaking of their intention, and they can clearly be identified in v. 21 with the «men from Anathoth», that is from Jeremiah's home village.

The verbs used also differ. Isa has **נִיר** ni «to be cut off», Jer **כָּרַח**, with a similar meaning «to cut away», but also stronger in the sense of «to exterminate»; in the same direction the previous stich in Jer 11:19 employs **שָׁחַח** hi «to destroy, spoil, ruin», indicating a very violent action, extinguishing Jeremiah completely.³⁵

Isa 53:6 and Jer 15:11

The exclusive link of «let encounter» connects both passages as well as having God as subject of it. In Isa, the «we-group» is still speaking, in Jer, God himself.

The 'object' of the encounter³⁶ is the guilt of the group in Isa, the enemy in Jer. Isa uses the concept in a metaphorical sense, without connotations of ferocity; Jer, on the contrary, envisages a fierce confrontation, and God being responsible for it.

Isa 53:8 and Jer 15:15

Isa makes a statement, expressed once again in the passive voice, about something that has already happened. In Jer, the prophet addresses God, pleading and admonishing³⁷ him in a critical situation of persecution. The danger is still acute for Jeremiah.

So far we have dealt with the connections listed above in 1.3. There are *further links* between the servant texts in Isa and Jer, but mostly not as close in their wording as those already treated here. To those other relationships belong:

³⁵ The sequel, in the last stich of v. 19, continues along the same line with a *damnatio memoriae*: «... so that his name will no longer be remembered.»

³⁶ The language, by the *hiphil* form, portrays God as the agent and two direct 'objects' for the meeting partners. The Hebrew construction **פָּנַע** hi + **ב** might also be translated «to bump into», pointing towards a more violent clash.

³⁷ The mention of «your forbearance» points out to God, that his mildness and patience endanger the prophet's life.

- Isa 50:6, from the third servant song, with its mention of people «beating» the servant and «shame and spitting»; both aspects will be taken up in the next part (3.1 and 3.2);
- Isa 49:4, where the servant talks about his seemingly fruitless efforts, coming close to Jeremiah's complaints in his confessions;³⁸
- Isa 42:22, with 'prisons', literally «houses of confinement», for the servant identified there with the people,³⁹ in Jer 37:4,15,18 used for Jeremiah;
- Isa 41:8–10, with many links to Jer 30:10–11.⁴⁰

The overall impression is that quite a *large number* of connections exist and that some of them show a *high level of agreement*. Reflecting on the differences pointed out in this section, Jer seems to be more radical than Isa, in many respects. The prophet's mission starts before his conception, earlier than the servant's call during pregnancy or at his birth. In Isa, it is mostly others who talk about the servant; in Jer, more often God himself speaks about Jeremiah, thus increasing the authority of the declarations. In Isa, we find neutral or passive statements (Isa 53:6,8); in Jer, God or a group are directly involved (15:11,15, and the second instance in 11:19). The image of the lamb is more elaborate in Jer (11:19) than in Isa (53:7), and it is extended from a comparison with the servant's behaviour to an assessment of his whole life. In my opinion, these elements indicate that *Jer draws on the respective texts of Isa* and uses them for his portrayal of the prophet Jeremiah. However, these results of the comparison have to be complemented by other aspects.

³⁸ E.g. Jer 15:18 «Why has my pain become unceasing, and my wound incurable?», or Jer 20:7, in a reproach towards God: «You have deceived me ... I have become a ridicule all the day».

³⁹ Isa 42:7 already used this term, in the singular, but in that case, for the servant's mission to free those sitting in the jails.

⁴⁰ Elements or expressions common to both texts are the beginning with «but you», the address «my servant», the designation as «Jacob», the promise to help, the admonition «not to fear», etc. As Isa 41 and Jer 30 do not deal with an individual, but a group of people, they are not relevant for our theme and can be omitted from further discussion.

2.3 Further observations

An objection against this position has been raised by U. Berges.⁴¹ He perceives Isa 53, with its representative, vicarious suffering of the servant, as a *theological climax* and regards it as a late development, surpassing other forms of mission of God's elect ones. For Berges it would be strange, if Jer, knowing Isa, had not adopted his concept that the servant's fate is a God-pleasing אשם for the guilt of his people.⁴²

However, *this objection can be overcome* in the light of the following considerations. First, there are many other later texts (in Prophets and Psalms and other Writings) which did not take up this idea either. Second, Jer has a very special literary and theological profile, quite different from Isa,⁴³ so there is no need to assume that it had to adopt this singular concept of Isa. The author of Jer was free to select what he wanted to re-use. Finally, Jer is the only book within the Bible containing a triple prohibition of intercession (Jer 7:16; 11:14; 14:11); this presupposes that Jeremiah as a prophet would have been predestined to intervene for his people, but, contrary to the servant in Isa, was definitely not allowed to do so. As a result, the highly developed theology of Isa 53 need not be later than Jer.

Considered the other way round, we can detect further connections between Isa and Jer that *confirm* what we arrived at here. The oracles about Moab in Isa 15–16 have many specific links with Jer 48 which can best be explained as Jer being dependent on Isa.⁴⁴

⁴¹ U. BERGES, "Reading" (see n. 13 above).

⁴² For the understanding of this idea see esp. D. VOLGGER, "Das 'Schuldopfer' Ascham in Jes 53,10 und die Interpretation des sogenannten vierten Gottesknechtsliedes", *Bib* 79 (1998) 473–498.

⁴³ Isa is replete with vocabulary connected with the temple, Zion and God's being 'holy'. Jer takes quite a reluctant stance towards the cult at the temple and its officials (e.g. Jer 7; 26); see also G. FISCHER, "Zur Relativierung des Tempels im Jeremiabuch", and *IDEM*, "Träger religiöser Verantwortung im Jeremiabuch", *IDEM*, *Der Prophet wie Mose. Studien zum Jeremiabuch* (BZAR 15; Wiesbaden 2011) 337–347 and 366–373.

⁴⁴ R. L. SCHULTZ, *The Search for Quotation. Verbal Parallels in the Prophets* (JSOTS 180; Sheffield 1999) 307–329, and others, like G. H. Parke-Taylor, D. R. Jones.

G. Glaßner⁴⁵ attempted to understand the promises for 'Lady Zion' in Isa 54 as a reversal of her fate in Jer 4; however it seems more probable that it is the other way round and that Jer criticizes the optimistic announcements of Isa.⁴⁶

The same attitude of taking a *critical stance towards proclamations of Isa* appears in Jer 6. Isa 60 announced that «violence, oppression and ruin will not be heard any more» (v. 18) and «gold and incense will be brought from Sheba» (v. 6). Jer 6:7 counters by saying that in Jerusalem the cry «Violence and oppression!» is still to be heard continuously, and by letting God himself question, in v. 20, the usefulness of «incense coming from Sheba». A further point along this line is the negation of the double proclamation of שלום 'peace, salvation' by prophets and priests in Jer 6:(13–)14: «'Peace, peace!' — but there is no peace», turning upside down the promise in Isa 26:3 for the just people or even God's own announcement in Isa 57:19 for a future time of restoration.⁴⁷ For these and many other reasons, I have arrived at the conclusion that Jer draws on the already completed book of Isa, probably in the late 4th century BC.⁴⁸

■ 3. Jeremiah, the example of a 'suffering prophet'

On the basis of the results achieved above, we have to assume that the one(s) responsible for the book of Jeremiah knew the book of Isaiah, as a whole, and deliberately picked up some traits of the portrayal of the servant there to inform the figure of the prophet Jeremiah.

There is, however, a *very significant difference* in that Jeremiah is never explicitly called «servant». There are indirect links with this

⁴⁵ G. GLASSNER, *Vision eines auf Verheißung gegründeten Jerusalem. Textanalytische Studien zu Jesaja 54* (ÖBS 11; Klosterneuburg 1992), esp. 238–240.

⁴⁶ G. FISCHER, *Jeremia 1–25* (n. 8 above), 222.

⁴⁷ The only other occurrence is 1 Chron 12:19, clearly later than both Isa and Jer. Jer 6:14 has a doublet in Jer 8:11, with a nearly *verbatim* repetition.

⁴⁸ G. FISCHER, *Jeremia 1–25* (n. 8), 74 and 120.

designation, it being used for a row of prophets under which Jeremiah can be subsumed (see n. 7 above). Nevertheless this absence is a remarkable feature, all the more so as Isaiah is called a prophet by God (Isa 20:3) and the figure of the «servant» is so prominently present, especially in the second part of the book of Isa. This might have to do with Jeremiah's primary task as «prophet to the nations».⁴⁹

Given the connection with Isa 49,⁵⁰ Jeremiah shares the international impact with Yhwh's servant in Isa. Yet at the same time he has to fulfil a more *specific role*, being a prophet, rather than what the more open metaphor 'light' might bring to mind.⁵¹ Instead of a wide poetic image, as used in Isa, Jer insists on the specific task of Jeremiah, as a speaker for God, with clearly defined messages and with a great deal of suffering to bear as a consequence of it.⁵²

Against this background I want to expose some main elements of *his fate*. The book of Jeremiah is a rich source for that, as it depicts to a large extent what the prophet had to endure from others as well as in his inner being. In this regard, Jer thus stands out from other prophetic books and presents a sharpened portrayal of prophetic existence.

⁴⁹ This designation is unique, and it occurs already in the first verse of God's speaking (Jer 1:5).

⁵⁰ The link with Isa 49:6 is not the only one possible; in fact, the expression «light for the nations» already occurred in Isa 42:6, the first 'official' servant song, and the universal range of his mission is also present elsewhere.

⁵¹ 'Light' has a rather negative role within the first half of Jer: it is no longer there (Jer 4:23; 25:10), or it is the object of vain hope (Jer 13:16). Only in Jer 31:35 does God refer to himself as giver of light through sun, moon and stars, thus implicitly resolving the problem of Jer 4:23.

⁵² Jer is replete with divine demands that the prophet has to pass on God's words to various audiences. This starts in Jer 2:2 and has its last occurrence in Jer 43:10. Furthermore, Jer, for the largest part of the book, contains God's speaking, as communicated through the prophet or the narrator, beginning with Jer 1:5 and ending only in Jer 51:58.

3.1 Physical suffering

«I offered / gave my back to beating» (Isa 50:6),⁵³ the servant says of himself in the third song. Looking at 'servants of God', in a wider sense, to whom this phrase is applicable, Jeremiah seems to be *the only scriptural prophet*⁵⁴ who had to suffer this twice, first by Pashhur (Jer 20:2), and later by officials (Jer 37:15). Even among other types of God's servants there are only a few who endured the experience of being beaten.⁵⁵

To receive blows is only one kind of physical suffering. The passage already mentioned in Jer 20:2 refers also to Jeremiah being put into the block and thus *tortured* by having to endure a painful position all through the night, until the next morning. Furthermore, Jeremiah was exposed in this way to those passing by, right at the gate leading to his home country.⁵⁶ The 'correspondence' with the deportees in Babylon in Jer 29 mentions a letter of Shemaiah, from the exiled community, to the priest and supervisor Jehoiada at the temple in Jerusalem, demanding that he put Jeremiah into the «block and the garrotte» (Jer 29:26), an instruction which, fortunately, is not executed.

On his proclamation of impending disaster, priests, prophets and people seize him in Jer 26:8 and threaten to put him to death. This is the first instance of Jeremiah being captured, though here only for a short time, as the trial ends in his favour (Jer 26:16–

⁵³The combination of 'beat' and 'back' is unique. Within Isa, the next chapter brings a possible explanation: Jerusalem was forced by its tormentors to bow down and offer its back like soil to be walked upon.

⁵⁴Blows are never reported for Isaiah, Ezekiel or any one of the twelve minor prophets. Obviously the other 'latter prophets' were spared this experience.

⁵⁵It is not said of important 'servants of God' like Moses, Joshua, David ... that they had to endure beating. Yet, Zech 13:6 talks of an alleged prophet denying to be one and explaining his wounds falsely be «having been beaten in the house of friends». The next verse, Zech 13:7, contains a command to the sword «to beat the shepherd».

⁵⁶The Benjamin's gate at the Temple was on the way to Jeremiah's home village Anatot, in the region of the tribe Benjamin (Jer 1:1). For a discussion about interpreting Jer 20:2 as torture see W.L. HOLLADAY, *Jeremiah 1* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis 1986) 542f.; G. WANKF, *Jeremia 1* (ZBK 20; Zürich 1995) 181f, understands it as such.

19).⁵⁷ Later on, Jer refers several times to the prophet's *detention or imprisonment*,⁵⁸ in frightful conditions, so that he pleads to be transferred to another place (Jer 37:20–21).

Maybe the most *perilous incident* was when military leaders threw him into a cistern, endangering his life, and he was rescued from death only by the mercy and courage of a foreign courtier (Jer 38:6–13). Other threats to his life occurred earlier. Besides the one mentioned in the last paragraph (Jer 26), Jer 11 and 18:18–23 talk of assaults on the prophet. In Jer 11 the prophet laments before God about attacks planned against him, without identifying the assailants (v. 19). In his response, God discloses their identity as being the men of Jeremiah's home village (v. 20) and promises to judge them (v. 21–22), while saving Jeremiah, as in all other cases.⁵⁹

Jeremiah also experiences *physical pain*. He mentions his wound in Jer 15:18 and that it does not heal.⁶⁰ In his last 'confession', he talks about an experience, comparable to flames in his body: «... like fire burning, closed within my bones» (Jer 20:9), and being unable to bear it. The long passage dealing with other prophets (Jer 23:9–40) starts with «My heart is broken within me ...» (v. 9) which can be interpreted as suffering in his mind, but could also refer to physical pain.

Towards the end of the book, Jeremiah and his 'secretary' Baruch have to suffer *being taken away to a foreign country*, together with a number of other people (Jer 43:5–6). Against the advice of God and Jeremiah, not to leave the country, they are con-

⁵⁷ Jer 26 does not mention the release of the prophet, yet it is to be assumed. The final remark in v. 24 also points in this direction.

⁵⁸ This starts with the notice in Jer 32:2 that Jeremiah was detained in the courtyard of the guard. It is present particularly in Jer 37–38, with last references to it in Jer 39:14–15.

⁵⁹ The initial assurance of protection (Jer 1:8) is repeated later on and even expanded (e.g. Jer 1:19; 15:20–21). God is faithful to this promise during the whole life of the prophet.

⁶⁰ As with the 'pain' mentioned before, 'wound' might be used metaphorically, referring to inner hurt. In this case this passage would belong to the suffering dealt with in 3.2 below.

strained to accompany military officials to Egypt.⁶¹ The traces of Jeremiah's life end there, after just a few further proclamations (Jer 43:8–44:30).⁶²

This overview of Jeremiah's physical suffering is *not complete*. One could add Jer 36:26, where king Jehoiakim sends men to arrest Jeremiah and Baruch, so that they have to hide, and God conceals them. Only a few verses later,⁶³ in 37:13–14, the officer Irijah seizes the prophet and takes him into custody. In the next chapter, king Zedekiah envisages future threats to Jeremiah's life (Jer 38:25) which come true (v. 27). Finally, in Jer 40:1 the prophet is bound with chains, in preparation for being led into exile. But only a few verses later (v. 4), he is released by the Babylonians.

This section concentrated on physical pain. It showed the *enormous extent* of Jeremiah's suffering, which outstrips by far that of any other person depicted in the Hebrew Bible. Further, the listing of physical assaults does not mean that they are restricted to the body; as is known, blows, torture, detention and similar experiences often trigger and include anguish, grief and other kinds of mental or spiritual damage, and thus are also connected with the next part.⁶⁴

3.2 Suffering of soul and mind

The previous section started with a quote from Isa 50:6, namely the beginning of that verse. The end of it, «I did not con-

⁶¹ This is a perverse reversal of Israel's founding tradition, in God's liberation from there, as depicted in the book of Exodus.

⁶² Jer 45 is dated earlier (to 605 BC, as for example also Jer 36). There is no report about Jeremiah's death, nor about his tomb — this latter motif presents a further link with Moses.

⁶³ Yet, the distance in time is greater: Jer 37 stems from the period of Jerusalem's siege, towards the end of Zedekiah's reign (probably around 588 or 587), Jer 36 from the fourth regnal year of king Jehoiakim (605 BC).

⁶⁴ In some instances (like Jer 15, 20 and 23) we could also see that bodily expressions (e.g. 'wound' or 'heart') might be used in a metaphorical sense and therefore, too, belong to the following section.

ceal my face before vilifications and saliva», indicates that God's servant had to bear *shame and public humiliation*. Both elements are present in Jeremiah's life, too, besides other kinds of mental suffering.

The first word of the prophet is «Alas!» (Jer 1:6). This expression of lament is his initial reaction to God's call, and it is *typical of his future life*, which will be full of difficult experiences.⁶⁵ Still in the same chapter, at the end (1:17–19), God prepares him for the fact that conflicts lie ahead.

Jer 4:10 starts like 1:6. Jeremiah reproaches God for having deceived his people by saying «Peace will be to you!». A closer look at this announcement reveals its provenance from 'false prophets',⁶⁶ a theme characteristic of Jer. No other book of the Bible deals so extensively with it, and Jeremiah has to struggle with them throughout his life.⁶⁷ Even when his prophecies come true, as against the proclamations of his opponents, he can only ask bitterly where they have gone now (Jer 37:19) — obviously they disappeared in the face of the impending disaster.

From ancient times, intercession was an important task for servants of God. Moses pleaded for his people several times (e.g. in Exo 32:11–13, 30–32), and so did Samuel (1 Sam 7:5–9; 12:23),⁶⁸ Amos (Am 7:2,5) and others. Contrary to this essential feature of prophets, Jeremiah, at various times, is *forbidden to intercede* (Jer 7:16; 11:14; 14:11). Even when asked to intercede (Jer 37:3), the only message he can deliver from God is one of growing danger through the approach of the enemy returning for the siege (Jer 37:6–10).⁶⁹ It is painful not to be allowed to practice an

⁶⁵The wording «Alas, Lord Yhwh!» will recur again in Jer 4:10; 14:13; 32:17 and thus shows the representative character of its contents for Jeremiah's existence.

⁶⁶ See the identical statement in Jer 23:17.

⁶⁷ Other passages are 6:13f; 14:14–16; 23:9–40; 26:7, 11, 16; 27:16–22, etc.

⁶⁸ Both are explicitly mentioned together in this regard in Jer 15:1.

⁶⁹ Compare also Jer 21:1–2, where Jeremiah is asked to «inquire» of the Lord and answers with a harsh announcement of God's judgment. In the opposite direction, after the fall of Jerusalem and Gedaliah's death, a group of Judahites begs Jeremiah to intercede and promises obeisance (Jer 42:1–3); he does so, but is not heeded afterwards (42:4–43:4).

important side of one's mission and thus live in solidarity with one's own people.

God's prohibition and the further development of this motif show the nearly complete *failure of intercession* in the book of Jer: first, Jeremiah is not allowed to plead for his people, or he can only reply with judgment proclamations; later, the people do not listen to the result of his praying for them.⁷⁰ Whether he intercedes or not the outcome seems nearly always to be a negative one.

At various times, Jer refers to inner states of mind, using a first person singular form, as in Jer 8:18,21,23. Some of these passages might express Jeremiah's feelings, although it is difficult to identify their reference with certainty.⁷¹ If the mourning person in Jer 8:21,23 refers to the prophet, it shows his *grief and desire to weep* without interruption over the terrible situation of his people.

The same difficulty of identifying the speaker arises in a number of other passages which talk of suffering. However, this is much less true for the texts commonly called the '*confessions*' and assigned to the prophet himself.⁷² In them the speaker expresses his delusions, questions, complaints, bitterness and other sorts of negative feelings.⁷³ He also mentions being shamed by others and having to bear humiliation, mockery and slander because of God and his word (Jer 15:15; 20:7–8,10). The extent and intensity of

⁷⁰ There are exceptions: Once Jeremiah refers to his former intercession for his opponents, as a sign of his positive attitude towards them (Jer 18:20). And God's promise to answer his prophet in Jer 33:3 might also contain a reversal of the prohibition of intercession. For a thorough investigation of this motif in Jer, see the forthcoming work of Benedetta Rossi.

⁷¹ E.g. the immediate continuation in Jer 9 also uses the «I» and similar motifs (like «my people», or «who might give it ...», as in 8:23), but at the end of v. 2 is expressly passed off as God's statement.

⁷² Normally they are taken to be Jer 11:18–12:6; 15:10–21; 17:14–18; 18:18–23 and 20:7–13 (or –18). Mostly, context and / or content give indications that Jeremiah is meant by the «I». There is an on-going discussion about whether these texts are authentically «jeremian» or stem from a later author. Independent of any answer to that, they do portray a figure of a suffering prophet.

⁷³ See, for example, questions in 12:1,4; 15:18; 20:18; a woe-call in 15:10; the complaint of being lonely in 15:17; curses in 20:14–15, etc.

these texts is without parallel in prophetic books and thus testifies to an extreme degree of suffering attributed to 'Jeremiah'. His complaints in Jer 20:7–8, 18 particularly, with the explicit mention of shame and ridicule, come close to the fate of Yhwh's servant in Isa 50:6, referred to at the beginning of this part 3.2.

It is no surprise that this motif emerges at this point in the prophet's laments. It has, at least partially, a *connection* with what we saw above in 3.1, his physical torments. To be arrested, beaten, publicly exposed and tortured as described in Jer 20:2–3 leaves traces in the mind of a person — no wonder then, that we find the last and longest confession in the same chapter (20:7–18). In a similar manner, we can conjecture that the other mistreatments and experiences of rejection mentioned above will have had consequences for Jeremiah's psyche, albeit not always indicated directly.

There are many other instances in Jer where mental suffering of the prophet can be assumed. Jer 16 reports God's commands to Jeremiah not to marry and not to have children (Jer 16:2). This *isolates* the prophet within the society, goes against God's own directive in Gen 1:28 and requires from him an unusual style of living — all of these are aspects difficult to bear. Still in the same chapter, he is ordered not to mourn or offer his condolences in a case of death (Jer 16:5). The prohibition against the expression of sympathy and solidarity further complicates Jeremiah's position in his community and, linked with that, has an impact on his own state of mind. Both these divine directives are unique within the Hebrew Bible.

Looking back at all the descriptions of and hints at Jeremiah's inner suffering, there is a surprising observation to be made: *fear is never mentioned*. In the midst of all the assaults, threats to his life, and dangers, at no time does the prophet express anguish.⁷⁴

⁷⁴ Cf. especially Jer 26, the case mentioned above in 3.1, where Jeremiah faces a death sentence and nevertheless continues to exhort the people to better their ways of conduct (v. 13). In the same chapter, Uriah presents the negative example of it: He «fears» King Jehoiakim's persecution and «flees» to Egypt (Jer 26:21; both verbs missing in the LXX). Soon afterwards, he is fetched from there, brought back to Judah and executed by the king (v. 23).

Probably this has its origin in God's orders, not to be afraid or break down before his audience (Jer 1:8,17), combined both times with promises of assistance (Jer 1:8,19). God repeats and extends his assurance in Jer 15:18, and Jeremiah himself picks up the first motif in his prayer in Jer 17:18. He faithfully and courageously fulfils God's command, right up till the end.

3.3 Evaluation

Finally, we can sum up our investigation. In the first part (1) we saw that some expressions of the servant songs in Isa have their *closest or even exclusive relationships* with texts in Jer. The next part (2) enquired, who might know whom. We arrived at the conclusion that most probably Isa is the source text, and *Jer is dependent* and drawing on it.

On this basis, this last part (3) adduced further evidence, by exploring the portrayal of Jeremiah in his book, under the aspects of physical and mental suffering. We could see that this prophet is *outstanding in what he had to endure*. He is the only prophet said to have been beaten, as Isa 50:6 describes the fate of God's suffering servant. What he had to bear in bodily suffering and persecution endangered his life many times and, in terms of the fates administered to God's representatives, marks him out as the one who endured the most. The length, the pervasiveness and the intensity of Jeremiah's suffering⁷⁵ are without equal. No other biblical book depicts so extensively a person's affliction and torment.

To be despised is another feature of Yhwh's servant in Isa 50:6. This aspect, too, applies to Jeremiah to a high degree. He had to bear *shame and mockery*, and his message of judgment and impending disaster encountered neglect and rejection.⁷⁶ In this respect too, his portrayal in Jer marks him out from other servants of God.

⁷⁵ It starts right in the first chapter with God's pre-announcements of it and is present throughout almost the whole book, until the last appearance of the prophet in Jer 43-44.

⁷⁶ See, e.g., Jer 17:15, where some people ridicule his proclamation which, so far, has not been realised.

Perhaps the most impressive feature is Jeremiah's *inner suffering*, revealed in occasional remarks and especially in the famous laments called 'confessions'. It shows the impact of persecution and public humiliation on the prophet's feeling and thinking. He is inwardly torn apart, between joy (Jer 15:16) and grief (15:17–18).⁷⁷ Pain is inescapable, whether he proclaims (Jer 20:8) or whether he does not (20:9). Many of the prophet's remarks are replete with and marked by such expressions of his inner suffering.

Taking all these aspects together, we may conclude that Jer, in its portrayal of the prophet Jeremiah, does indeed want to present him *as the ultimate example of a suffering servant of God*. Yet, he is not alone in this respect. Other persons called by God had to suffer, too. Moses had to bear his people's repeated resistance.⁷⁸ The prophet Amos was rejected by the priest Amaziah in Bethel (Am 7:12–13) and prohibited from further proclamation of his message there. Hosea, the prophet, had to take his unfaithful wife back and love her again (Hos 3:1).⁷⁹ The series of prophets sent by God in 2 Kings 17:13 share the same fate as Jeremiah, in not being listened to.⁸⁰ The New Testament, too, regards suffering as a typical feature for God's servants.⁸¹

At the end we may ask why Jer, when picking up specific traits of Isaiah's depiction of Yhwh's servant and using it for its portrayal of Jeremiah, *limits itself to just a few motifs*?⁸² In my opinion,

⁷⁷ Compare also Jer 20:7–10 with 20:11–13 and 20:14–18, as an example of extreme changes in his mood.

⁷⁸ It began in Exod 2:14, continued in Exod 5:21; 6:9; 14:11–12, etc., and returned again in the second part of Israel's wandering in the desert, in Num 11–21.

⁷⁹ For the details of this verse see H. SIMIAN-YOURE, *Desierto* (n. 5 above), 48–49.

⁸⁰ 2 Kings 17:14, parallel to Jer 7:25–26 (further passages for the linking of servants and prophets are mentioned in n. 7 above). Jer intensifies this feature, by repeating it very often and using it as a kind of definition in Jer 7:28: «This is the people who did not listen to the voice of Yhwh, its God».

⁸¹ The parable of the wine-growers (Mk 12:1–12) mentions several kinds of maltreatment (v. 3–5 and v. 7–8). In a similar vein, Lk 11:49–51 characterizes prophetic existence as endangered by persecution and murder throughout all ages.

⁸² Some features of Isa do not occur in Jer, e.g. the motif of the «tomb» or the «death» of the servant (Isa 53:9) for Jeremiah, or the motif of *asham*, as representative suffering.

two factors are mainly responsible for this. First, the suffering servant in Isa is a representative figure, standing for an 'ideal' Israel — in contrast to Jeremiah, as a person with a specific, 'real' history.⁸³ Secondly, this kind of literary technique, selecting just some striking expressions, is typical of the way in which the author of Jer proceeds with other biblical books.⁸⁴ By doing so, Jer achieves a multi-faceted and extremely rich, moving picture of the figure of the prophet Jeremiah as well as of God's messages.

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⁸³ Yet that does not mean that all indications given in Jer have happened exactly the way they are described. An element of literary formation is also present, as the discussion about Jeremiah's biography (see n. 8 above) shows.

⁸⁴ Most recently and extensively G. FISCHER, *Prophet* (n. 43), 170–262; for earlier systematic presentations see also *idem*, *Jeremia 1–25* (n. 8), 68–75, and *idem*, *Jeremia* (n. 31), 134–143.

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