

# THE SALVIFIC TASK OF THE SUFFERING SERVANT IN ISAIAH 42:1-7: A CONTEMPORARY PERSPECTIVE

Temba Rugwiji

Department of Biblical and Ancient Studies, UNISA

52 Modutlare Street

Lotus Gardens 0008

Pretoria, South Africa

E-mail: rugwiji@yahoo.com

(Received 27/06/2014; Accepted 24/10/2014)

## ABSTRACT

The theme of salvation is central in the servant songs. In Isaiah 42:1-7, the theme of salvation prefigures the significant task of the suffering servant. First, this essay commences with a critical analysis of Isaiah 42:1-7. This analysis will shed light on the context from which the text emerged in an effort to decipher salvific themes in the text. Second, the study maintains that Yahweh's exclusivist proclamation in the Old Testament (hereafter OT) is revised in order to also include non-Jews in his salvific programme of the universe. Third, the term salvation is defined as depicting liberation in the OT. Liberation comprises various facets, including but not limited to political freedom, economic emancipation, democracy, justice, poverty eradication, and equal rights, amongst others. Fourth, this essay will explore divergent views on the identity of the suffering servant in the servant songs, such as Jeremiah, Cyrus, Jacob/Israel, and Jesus. The Christian view of the suffering servant will also be considered. Fifth, this article will discuss servant leadership in our contemporary context, in which Nelson Mandela as a representative example of a servant leader is explored. The overall objective of this research is to identify some salvific tasks of the suffering servant in the first servant song in order to inspire, inform and legitimise socio-political transformation<sup>1</sup> in our contemporary society.

## INTRODUCTION

Isaiah 42:1-7 falls within the broader perspective of the four "servant songs"<sup>2</sup> in Deutero-Isaiah (hereafter DI).<sup>3</sup> There are varying interpretations about who the

<sup>1</sup> This discussion on the salvific task of the suffering servant will also encompass particularities of socio-economic transformation. For the idea of inspiring, informing, and legitimising socio-political transformation, see Henneman & McIntosh (2009:340).

<sup>2</sup> The four servant songs were first identified by Bernhard Duhm in 1892. Cf. Duhm (1892), amongst more recent sources.

<sup>3</sup> DI constitutes Isaiah 40-55.

servantis in these “servant songs,” and this essay will attempt to examine these interpretations. This study commences with a critical analysis of Isaiah 42:1-7 in order to shed some light on the context from which the text emerged. References will also be made to other texts on the servant songs (Is 48:16-49:12; 50:4-9; 52:13-53:12).<sup>4</sup> These passages will be explored in order to broaden the scope of detailing the “suffering servant” in respect of the first servant song in Isaiah 42:1-7.<sup>5</sup>

The debate further explicates that during ancient biblical times, Israel was wholly exclusive. For example, when the Israelites were to have a king amongst them, they were instructed to “be sure to appoint over you the king the Lord your Yahweh chooses. He must be from amongst your own brothers. Do not place a *foreigner* over you, one who is not a brother Israelite” (Dt 17:15, emphasis added). However, according to DI (Is 44:28; 45:1, 13), Yahweh appoints the Persian king, Cyrus – a foreigner – as king over the Judeans, who was also tasked to rebuild the temple for Yahweh. It is articulated in this paper that the OT’s exclusivist ideology was “revised” in order to also include non-Jews when Yahweh’s agenda of “salvation” became “global”.

Some biblical interpreters have opined that the servant could be either DI or Israel. Others say that the servant is Cyrus, while the New Testament (NT) or Christological view holds that Jesus is the servant. Although divergent claims about the identity of the suffering servant in the servant songs in general have been advanced, these claims cannot be validated with certainty. A rereading of the first servant song in particular shows that the identity of the suffering servant remains unknown.

However, the main task of the unknown servant remains fundamentally that of salvation of the exiles. In the present account, the term “salvation” is explored as depicting “liberation”. In the Hebrew Bible, the word “salvation” implies the idea of deliverance, safety, preservation, healing and soundness.<sup>6</sup> Taking salvation/liberation as the main task of the suffering servant within the first servant song, the main aim of

<sup>4</sup> According to Lindsey, the above mentioned servant songs have been the most controversial passages debated by OT scholars (Lindsey 1982:12).

<sup>5</sup> See also a profound discussion of the first servant song by Lindsey (Lindsey 1982:12-31).

<sup>6</sup> In the biblical text, the Hebrew noun *יְשׁוּעָה* (*yēsha'*) means liberty, deliverance, prosperity, salvation. For example, see Isaiah 45:8.

the present project is to interpret Isaiah 42:1-7 from a contemporary perspective in order to situate the relevance of the task of the suffering servant in our post-biblical society as opposed to the significance of the narrative being trapped between the pages of the biblical text. The focus of this article is to articulate the salvific task of the suffering servant in Isaiah 42:1-7, a theme which is also presented in the other servant songs (cf. Is 49; 50; 53). Due to space constraints, the other servant songs will not be discussed in detail in this paper.

The uniqueness of discussing Isaiah 42:1-7 in this essay lies in the following three main suppositions which I find to be lurking in the previous works on the suffering servant: (1) The previous contributions did not sufficiently explore the theme of “salvation” as being central in the first servant song which the present essay accounts for; (2) previous works did not delineate the ideology of “servanthood” and “servant leadership” in view of the contemporary context which the present discourse does by discussing Nelson Mandela as a servant leader; and (3) the question of the relevance of the OT to society in view of the tasks of the servant has not been examined as a fundamental issue warranting attention. It is argued in this study that the Bible should be relevant for the people who read it everyday. The above three suppositions collectively constitute the core which threads through the entire essay.

In Africa, the question of the relevance of the OT to society should be taken seriously. When Goldingay observes that “theocracy and socio-political equality go together” (Goldingay 1987:66), his idea is in solidarity with the African context and its readership. According to Africans, the Bible must address particularities of their everyday lives. In Goldingay’s own words, the OT has a capacity to speak with illumination and power to the lives of communities and individuals (Goldingay 2003:18). Along the same lines, one would also agree with Upkong’s opinion when he talks of the “actualization of theological meaning of the text in today’s context so as to forge integration between faith and life, and engender commitment to personal and societal transformation” (Upkong 2000:24). Goldingay’s and Upkong’s observations about the African context and the readership are also supported by Adamo’s position which maintains that reflecting on the question of suffering in the modern sense of the

word because of the problem of suffering is a problem that cannot be ignored in human existence (Adamo 2005:161). Clines (1995:76) – who reaffirms that the Bible is a cultural artefact in our society, and not just an ecclesiastical object – also joins the list of the proponents of the ideology of the relevance of the OT to society.

In my view, the Bible must be critically examined in any case, and its themes appropriated in some cases depending on their positive meaning for contemporary contexts. People's interpretation of the biblical text is influenced largely by their worldview and how they conduct themselves in everyday life.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The present discourse derives from the author's hermeneutical persuasion which is inclined towards appropriating ancient biblical themes in our modern post-biblical context. I have argued elsewhere (Rugwiji 2013:17) for a method called "hermeneutics of appropriation". I have maintained that hermeneutics of appropriation as a method is a narrower thrust of a rhetoric-narratological approach (also known as literary-rhetorical approach) (Rugwiji 2013:14). In hermeneutics of appropriation, ancient biblical themes are appropriated in our post-biblical context. Although numerous publications on the servant songs are available, none has made an attempt to appropriate the theme of the suffering servant in our modern context to date, especially in Africa, which the present essay does. However, this paper complements in a unique way other previous efforts on the suffering servant. I admit that it is an insurmountable task to discuss every contribution that has been made on the theme of the suffering servant. In my view, a fairer and more detailed discussion on the servant songs is comprehensible if the contributor focuses on one of them as opposed to discussing all four servant songs in DI in a single discourse. Admittedly, one could borrow from and discuss common themes within the servant songs. The present study on the suffering servant in Isaiah 42:1-7 has managed to include some common themes as depicted in other servant songs. In addition, this study has benefitted immensely from previous research contributions of other scholars on the theme of the

suffering servant within the servant songs. Various scholars have written on the suffering servant. The following representative examples are noteworthy: Lindsey (1982); Ulrich Berges (2008); Biyere (2011); Fischer (2012); and Muutuki (2013). These contributions have informed my present discussion on the salvific task of the suffering servant in Isaiah 42:1-7. This article commences by analysing Isaiah 42:1-7.

## A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF ISAIAH 42:1-7

Isaiah 40-55 was written in the last part of the sixth century by an unnamed prophet/poet who shared with the Jews their exile in Babylonia (Wilson 1968:69). Isaiah 42:1-7 forms part of the “servant songs” in DI (cf. Is 48:16-49:12; 50:2-51:16; 52:13-53:12). Admittedly, the most controversial passage in the Hebrew Bible is Isaiah 53:1-7 (Schreiber 2009:35). Berges’ (2012) recent research on the fourth servant song (Is 52:13-53:12) is equally critical in reformulating my present argument on the servant song in Isaiah 42. The servant songs in Isaiah 42, 49, 50, and 53 continue to be considered as sections with a particular message and focus; they are not isolated (Berges 2012:490). Although opinions continue to differ on the issue of the authorship of the second half of the book of Isaiah (Schreiber 2009:36), the differences are not so acute as to dispute the ideology of DI as being amongst the suffering exiles. There is now general consensus amongst Jewish and non-Jewish biblical scholars that the second half represents the work of DI (Schreiber 2009:37).

In Isaiah 42:1, Yahweh announces his choice of an *‘ebed* (bondman, servant; from the root word *‘abad* to work, serve). Yahweh chose this servant as his worker. With the Spirit (*rûwach*) of the Lord, the servant’s task is to bring justice to the nations. In other words this salvation is not only for Israel, but everybody in the world (Limburg 2000:326). The servant cannot do the function of demanding justice to and on behalf of the nations without the spirit of Yahweh (cf. Is 48:16b). This is typical of Isaiah 61:1, where yet another “servant” claims to have received *rûwach* from the Lord to preach good news to the poor, amongst other tasks. The salvation of those suffering depended largely on the spirit from Yahweh (Dahood 1967:7). In Is 42:2, the servant is not

eloquent; he is neither a public speaker nor could he go out to proclaim Yahweh's justice on the streets. As opposed to the Exodus liberation motif where the Israelites "cried out" to Yahweh for salvation/deliverance (Ex 3:7; 12:37; Wright 1990:4), the servant in DI does not cry. In Isaiah 42:3, the servant will not break the bruised "reed",<sup>7</sup> typical of Moses and the Exodus (cf. 48:21). "Bruised" in 42:3 also reverberates a continuum of the bruised and sufferingservant, a concern which – for consistency sake – is also being addressed in 53:4-5, where it says: "in his bruises we are healed" (Schreiber 2009:35). The servant will be "faithful" in bringing justice. Verse 4 expresses the view that the servant will not do wrong no matter what people say or do about his tasks in order to bring justice, and establish it on earth. People can hope in the servant to deliver justice as he will use the law in doing his work. This law to the servant might have been a renewal of the law given to Moses as a "reminder on your forehead that the law of the Lord is to be on your lips" (Ex 13:9a) which is now being affirmed in Deuteronomy 6:6-7 that:

These commandments that I give to you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you wake up (NIV).

Further still, Deuteronomy 6:9 says: "Write them on the doorframes on your houses and your gates."<sup>8</sup> The commands are probably emphasizing symbolically the need for the continual teaching of the law (Walvoord & Zuck 1985:274-275).

The servant would also remind the exiles to uphold the law because it was previously the neglect of the law which had led to the catastrophe of the exile (Wright

---

<sup>7</sup> Some scholars have suggested that this verse, amongst others, is reminiscent of the Exodus from Egypt. Hence, reference is made to the restoration from exile in Babylonia as the new Exodus. The explanation is that the servantsongs in Isaiah 40-55 are typical of the song sung by the Israelites when they escaped from Egyptian bondage after crossing the Sea of Reeds (Ex 15:1-21).

<sup>8</sup> Scholars have interpreted "write them on the doorframes" by referring to the Jewish custom of attaching a small vessel called a "mezuzah" to the doorpost. In it is placed a small scroll containing the text of Deuteronomy 6:4-9, 11:13-21 and God's name "Shaddai". See Radmacher, Allen & House (1997).

1990:9). In verse 5, Yahweh himself is presented as the creator of the heavens and the earth. He is the one who gives breath to every living thing including humans. Yahweh reminds the servant that he is the same Yahweh who created the universe (Gn 1:1), and that he formed the first man and gave him the breath of life (Gn 2:7). Isaiah 42:6 expresses Yahweh defending the choice of the servant, that is, the task of *tsedeq* (equity/prosperity/righteousness) from the root word *tsâdaq* (to be right/just or righteous). The term carries the same meaning as “to save” (hence “salvation”). We also see the theme of “covenant” also presenting itself clearly. Muutuki (2013) admits that the Mosaic covenant is being reintroduced as the preferred covenant in Isaiah 42:6. He further affirms that the whole idea of covenant made a turnaround when the servant of the Lord became the covenant community of believers (Muutuki 2013:n.p). Muutuki adds that Yahweh assures his presence to the chosen covenant community to exercise acts of mercy and justice in a blind and dark, hurting world. Hill & Walton (2000:81) also convey the notion that the covenant-making ideology which was instituted at a ceremony at Mount Sinai constitutes the high-water mark of the OT salvation history. It is apparent that when the term covenant is mentioned in a salvation/deliverance/prosperity programme in the servantsongs (Is 45:8, 17; 46:13; 49:6, 8; 51:5-8; 52:7, 10), DI might have been reflecting on the Exodus liberation motif(cf. Is 42:6b; 49:8; 54:10; 55:3). The Exodus deliverance is depicted as the act by which Israel was brought into being as a people and it is therefore the beginning of Israel’s history (Durham 1987:xxiii). In my opinion, this Exodus deliverance history is being enacted by the suffering servant in DI. When Westermann (1969) speaks of the royal features of the servant in 42:1 and his prophetic features in 42:2-4 in which Moses is portrayed as the servant, he is asserting DI’s attempt to identify the task of the servant with that of Moses as the “liberator” in the Exodus liberation tradition.

In verse 7, we read that the servant’s tasks – which read like the tasks of the “anointed” of Yahweh in Trito-Isaiah 61:1 – include opening the eyes of the Gentiles who are blind, setting free the captives, and releasing those in darkness. Although the blind actually existed during DI’s time, his use of the term “blind” might have referred to the ignorance or inability of the audience (the exiles) to realise that Yahweh was

setting them towards a “life of freedom, deliverance and service” (van Groningen 1990:603). If Israel is regarded as the “servant” as depicted in Isaiah 6:9-10, 29:9-14 and 42:18-20, 22, then this servant (Israel) who has blind eyes, is in darkness, and lives in prison houses, would soon be released. These themes could have been the tasks which necessitated Yahweh raising up a servant who would suffer in order to save them.

## OT EXCLUSIVIST IDEOLOGY REVISED

The Bible depicts the notion that Israel is the believing community of Yahweh. The OT generally views salvation as something that could take place within the believing community (Pyne 2000:37). One could be excluded from the community due to sin, and also one could gain entrance into the community from outside (Is 56:3-8). However, in any case the individual is related to Yahweh by being related to the community of Yahweh’s people (Ex 20:19). Pyne maintains that the legitimate application of the law to strangers reinforces this point (Ex 12:48; Lv 19:34; 24:22; Nm 9:14; Dt 10:18). The law had a regulatory purpose in that it was given to make Israel a holy nation distinct from Gentile nations in her relationship to Yahweh and in her behaviour (Ex 18:5-6; 31:16-17; Dt 4:20; 7:6). Deuteronomy 17:14-20 stipulates qualifications of a king over Israel who should strictly not be a foreigner, so that Israel would neither associate with pagans nor “imitate the detestable ways of the nations there” (Dt 18:9). Deuteronomy 6:4 makes it much clearer: “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one”. Some scholars, for example Merrill (1994:163), believe that the above notion gave rise to the concept of monotheism – the belief in one Yahweh, and points to the *shema* in Deuteronomy 6:4-5 as an expression of full-fledged monotheism.

In contrast to the instruction in Deuteronomy 17:15, Yahweh appoints the Persian king, Cyrus – a foreigner – as “liberator”<sup>9</sup> of the Judeans from Babylonian domination.

---

<sup>9</sup> Cyrus could also be designated as “king” over the Judeans. Although there is no direct declaration in DI about Cyrus’s kingship over the Judeans, phrases such as “to subdue nations before him,” “to strip kings of their armour” (Is 45:1b), “bestow you a title of



Cyrus was also tasked to rebuild the temple for Yahweh (cf. Is 44:28; 45:1, 13). However, the Judean exiles were released to return to Palestine when Cyrus became king in 539 B.C.E., and Isaiah 45:1-7 refers to Cyrus as “Yahweh’s anointed” (Spangenberg 2006:168). This surprising designation explains why critical questions are often raised about the level of consistency in the biblical tradition, to the extent that scholarship posits that the Bible is self-contradictory in many instances (Allegro 1971: preface). By including a Persian in his liberation agenda, Yahweh shifted from his exclusivist approach in order to make the Gentiles repent of their sins by means of which Yahweh showed that his concern is not only for the welfare of Israel but also for that of the Gentiles (Gräbbe 2000:18). This revision of exclusivist approach might have led Zechariah to say: “And the Lord will be king over all the earth. On that day, the Lord will be one and his name one” (Zc 14:9). The depiction we get from the biblical text is that anyone can be a “servant” to proffer salvation either to Israel as the chosen nation of Yahweh or to society in general (see Lindsey 1982:313). The next section examines salvation in the OT.

## SALVATION IN THE OT

The belief that salvation is an attainment of “future life in heaven after death” is not an OT concept. In the “servantsongs” (cf. Is 45:8, 17; 46:13; 49:6, 8; 51:5, 6, 8; 52:7, 10), the Hebrew equivalent of the English term salvation is employed about eleven times (it appears twice in 46:13). The number of appearances of the term in the entire book of Isaiah (i.e., about 28 times) denotes the importance attached to it during OT times. In Isaiah 45:8, the noun *yēsha* (יְשָׁעַ) means liberty, deliverance, prosperity, salvation. In 45:17, the term *rēshū’âh* (רֵשׁוּ׳אָה) is used, which still carries the same meaning: deliverance, help, safety, salvation, or victory (Holladay 1988:147). The same meanings are implied in 51:5, 6, 8; 52:7 and 52:10. Alternatively, in Isaiah 49:6 and 46:8, the word *yēshūw’âh* (יְשׁוּ׳וֹאָה) is used to refer to “something saved”. The above term – which is used to describe Jesus in the NT – is also freely used of Yahweh in the

---

honour” (45:4), portray Cyrus as a political figure and a person of authority.

OT (Purkiser 1977:160).

The term “salvation” in the OT means emancipation in the sense of everyday life. Von Rad (1974:194-209) – who is supported by both Loader (1985:26) and Klopper (1992:200) – argues that Judaism never taught the attainment of everlasting salvation in a life after death. *Salvation* – in the sense of the German term *Heil* (the condition of wholeness and goodness) – was experienced by Israel as earthly salvation in this life (König 1986:79-81). Klopper (1992:200) reaffirms the position she held previously by ratifying that:

Those who lived in harmony with Yahweh’s will enjoy his blessing of good health, prosperity and contentment. It was not a condition of being saved unto life hereafter. To die in good old age, an old man, and full of years (Job 42:17) was to have reached a point which Yahweh had measured and now completed.

Further explanation on the same notion in view of the Hebrew term *y<sup>e</sup>shûw’âh* (meaning “salvation”) is also offered by van Groningen (1990:603), who states that in the OT the term *y<sup>e</sup>shûw’âh* includes deliverance from sin and its bondage, entering into a living relationship with Yahweh, and being involved in a life of freedom, deliverance and service. The following section discusses divergent views on the identity of the suffering servant.

## **DIVERGENT VIEWS ON THE IDENTITY OF THE SUFFERING SERVANT**

### **Jeremiah as the suffering servant**

Some kind of link between Jeremiah and the second book of Isaiah seems to authenticate the supposition that Jeremiah is the suffering servant. A better understanding of Jeremiah is essential to understanding DI and his mysterious servant, and the method available to us is a textual and linguistic analysis of the words of those two prophets (Schreiber 2009:38). One of the views for Jeremiah being the suffering servant has cited Jeremiah 11:19, which says, “I had been like a gentle lamb led to the

slaughter ...” which compares well with Isaiah 53:7:

He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth (NIV).

Another supposition put forward is that Yahweh had chosen Jeremiah at birth (cf. Jr 1), a theme which Isaiah 53:2 refers to. In addition, descriptions such as loss of priestly rank (53:2), hiding (v.3), and suffering (v.4) amongst others, are themes which directly feature in the book of Jeremiah. Fischer also acknowledges some parallels on the suffering servant between DI and Jeremiah. Fischer reads Isaiah 49:1: “Yahweh called me from the womb...” as parallel to Jeremiah 1:5a: “Before I formed you in the womb...” (Fischer 2012:285). Fischer further comments on the other similarities between Isaiah 49:6: “and I will make you a light for the nations...” and Jeremiah 1:5b: “I make you a prophet for the nations” (Fischer 2012:285). The question that one may ask is: “Why does DI not mention him by name?” However, other scholars are opposed to the view that Jeremiah is the suffering servant in the servant songs. One such opponent is Sheldon Blank (Blank 1958:100) who writes:

The bitter experience of Israel, whom the Second Isaiah here personified as servant-prophet, led him necessarily to Jeremiah for the features of his personification – to that prophet within his tradition who, more than any other, had, like Israel, endured reproach and suffering. Inevitably, Jeremiah must sit as a model for his portrait of Yahweh’s servant-prophet. This is not to say that the servant and Jeremiah are to be identified.

Currently, it does not seem that modern scholarship follows the notion of Jeremiah being the servant as previously held by earlier scholars.

### **Cyrus as the suffering servant**

The biblical text does not present Cyrus as the servant. For instance, Isaiah 45:1 reads as follows:

This is what the Lord says to his anointed, Cyrus, whose right hand I take hold of to subdue nations before him and to strip kings of their armour, to open doors before him so that gates will not be shut (NIV).

Although Cyrus liberated the Judeans from Babylonian captivity, he is not explicitly mentioned as the servant in the servant songs. The above observation is cemented by DI avoiding the term “servant” for Cyrus (Wright 1990:8). In Isaiah 45:1, Cyrus is mentioned by name, but for a different role. Wright further maintains that Cyrus was not a Jewish captive to suffer the exile as a servant. In view of the above contestations, Cyrus is not the suffering servant in the servant songs.

### **Jacob/Israel as the suffering servant**

Isaiah 42:1-7 does not mention the identity of the servant (Scheffler 1992:212). Although other passages in DI (cf. Is41:8-9; 44:1; 44:21; 45:4; 48:20; 49:3) conceptualize Jacob/Israel as the “suffering servant”, Duhm (1892) maintains that within the servant songs, the “servant” appears to be an individual. Blank’s (1958) traditional view – which contradicts Duhm’s – regards the Jewish people as the servant.<sup>10</sup> In addition, Isaiah 44:1 and 44:2b mention Jacob/Israel and Jeshurun, respectively, as the servants. In Deuteronomy 32:15, it is stated that Jeshurun “grew fat and kicked, filled with food, and became heavy and sleek; he abandoned the Yahweh who made him and he rejected the Rock his Saviour”. If Jeshurun in Deuteronomy 32:15 was the same person as the one mentioned in Isaiah 44:2b, his identity does not portray him as one who was suffering.

### **Jesus as the suffering servant**

Isaiah 9:6 is used in the NT to refer to the coming of Jesus Christ as the expected messiah (cf. Bright 1953:18-19; Musendekwa 2011:2) who would have an earthly kingdom. However, in contrast, Jesus clearly declares that he is not the expected messiah. For example, in John 8:36 Jesus says, “My kingdom is not of this world. If it

---

<sup>10</sup> For more information on this view, see Schreiber (2009:39); Blank (1958).

were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jewish leaders. But now my kingdom is from another place” (NIV). Although Jesus’ statement denies involvement in the earthly kingship and his tasks of salvation of humankind, Christians regard DI as being “prophetic” in making reference to revolutionary tasks that Jesus finally fulfilled during his ministry. The conversion of the Hebrew term *y<sup>e</sup>shûw’âh* (for salvation) already explored above (see van Groningen 1990:603), is also regarded by Rambsel (1996:11) as another name for Jesus. This probably led others to conclude that Jesus is the suffering servant. Christians believe that DI foresaw the future coming of the messiah who “carried our affliction” and “in his bruises we were healed” (Is 53:4-5; cf. Schreiber 2009:35). Schreiber further states that the traditional Jewish belief was that the messiah would deliver his people from suffering during their time of need, rather than it being a futuristic event. Schreiber’s analysis is also supported by other critical biblical commentators who have argued that Jesus of Nazareth has by no means been interpreted right from the beginning as being the servant of Yahweh who is viciously suffering death (cf. Berges 2012:485). One of the arguments raised by some scholars who are opposed to Jesus as the suffering servant is the notion that the servant was amongst the exiles in Babylonia and addressed the exiles in their situation of suffering (cf. Kaiser 1984:277; Scheffler 1992:208). Although I maintain my position that the suffering servant remains unknown – which concurs with the views of the majority of modern critical scholars – the traditional view of both the NT and Christian church is that Jesus is the suffering servant. Amongst scholars who oppose to the notion of Jesus being the suffering servant is Fitzmyer, who holds that the messianic figure remains anonymous (2007:40).

### **The Christian view<sup>11</sup> of the suffering servant**

Jesus and his acts of liberation (as depicted in the Gospels)<sup>12</sup> – feeding the hungry, healing the sick, raising the dead, making the blind see, and the lame walk, amongst

---

<sup>11</sup> See further the illuminating contribution of Reventlow (1998:23-38).

<sup>12</sup> According to Clifford, the Gospels show us that Jesus was, indeed, deeply concerned for people who were poor or in some way on the fringes of society (cf. Clifford 2010:6).

others – forms the nexus of the preaching of the Church today. The Christological understanding of Jesus as the suffering servant is that the biblical text cannot be interpreted outside the plethora of human sufferings – poverty, political oppression, drought, floods, genocides, and the HIV/AIDS pandemic, amongst other crises (Clifford 2010:3). The fact that the Christian church and some Christian organisations (e.g., Christian Aid, Clifford 2010:3) have been taking a leading role in ethical teachings and humanitarian aid – building schools, hospitals and clinics, giving food to the hungry and providing feeding schemes for drought stricken communities, as well as clothing and erecting shelters for victims of natural disasters such as storms and floods – seem to support the assertion that Jesus emerged as the suffering servant for the service of humanity. Jesus’ teachings about loving one’s enemies (cf. Mt 5:44; Lk 6:27) and loving one’s neighbour (cf. Mt 19:19; Mk 12:31; Lk 10:27) also lends credibility to the claim about him being the suffering servant mentioned in the servant songs. Lindsey (1982:12) also writes that the traditional conservative view of Christian scholars is that the servant of whom the servant songs speak is none other than Jesus the messiah (cf. Acts 8:26-39). Everywhere in early Christian literature Jesus is called the messiah (cf. Hengel 1995:1-72). Along this view, the church regards itself as the agency effecting the emancipation of those who suffer. Whether the church plays this role to the fullest is debatable.

Taking the discussion to another level, Clifford has also affirmed that development agencies exist to encourage and to direct the most basic human impulse to care for one’s neighbour in need.<sup>13</sup> This concern for “one’s neighbour”, as Clifford puts it, remains central to the ethical responsibility and teaching of the church (hence “liberation theology”) in acting as an agency of change towards economic development to transform the lives of communities. Fitzgerald – who concurs with Clifford’s opinion – describes liberation theology as “the communitarian nature of the just economy as a precursor of the Kingdom”.<sup>14</sup> Fitzgerald’s assertion, in my view,

---

<sup>13</sup> The point here is that “suffering servant/s” regard/s the suffering of another person as their own. Cf. Clifford (2010:6).

<sup>14</sup> The church should position itself towards the liberation of those experiencing various types of oppression, both politically and socio-economically (Fitzgerald 1999:260).

suggests that the biblical emphasis of the “Kingdom”<sup>15</sup> begins with delivery of justice. This concern for the delivery of justice stratifies Clifford’s observation that “Christian ethics will promote justice in a global setting, not just in a narrow local one” (Clifford 2010:6).

In the Gospel of Luke (4:17-19) Jesus quotes Isaiah 61:1-2, in which he states that his “anointing” for the service of humankind included preaching good news to the poor, freedom for the prisoners, recovery of sight for the blind, and releasing the oppressed. In view of the above texts, Clifford raises the following question: “If the message of Isaiah 61 and Luke 4 is one of hope for people who have experienced stigmatization because of HIV, loss of livelihoods, climate change, and so on, what exactly can they hope for?” (Clifford 2010:30). She further notes that Jesus associated freely and often with the marginalized – tax collectors and sinners – and welcomed the company of women and children and others held in low esteem in the culture of his day (Clifford 2010:29). Clifford maintains that such people were the object of many of his healing miracles, and they took their place amongst his followers (Clifford 2010:29). To my mind, both Clifford and Fitzgerald support the Christian view that Jesus was the expected messiah and the suffering servant in DI. It is the same line of thinking advanced by White (1999) when he concurs with Clifford and Fitzgerald that Jesus is the suffering servant.

## **CONTEMPORARY PERSPECTIVES ON THE SALVIFIC TASK OF A SERVANT**

It is imperative to read Isaiah 42:1-7 in view of the situation prevailing in our modern society in which various themes deriving from real life issues present themselves. The terms “suffering servant” and “salvation” are the major themes underpinning the entire anecdote with so much illumination. From these major themes, other “minor” themes which have emerged from the foreground symposium and interpretation constitute the

---

<sup>15</sup> In the Gospels, the phrases the “Kingdom of God” (KOG) and “Kingdom of Heaven” (KOH) appear in the following examples: KOG (Mt 12:28; Mk 1:15; Luke 4:43); KOH (Mt 3:2; 5:3; 7:21; 8:11).

appropriation part of this article. In view of the task of the suffering servant in DI, the following themes will be appropriated in our contemporary context: delivery of justice, ethical responsibility, life and health, and servant leadership. Discussion on the above themes in our contemporary context is followed by exploring Nelson Mandela as a servant leader.

### **Delivery of justice**

One of the tasks of the servant is to establish justice to the nations (cf. North 1956:186). The biblical text depicts Yahweh as always being amongst his people, which, as Kwakkel (2002) affirms, he did through the establishment of a covenant with Israel. This covenant between Yahweh and Israel was so binding that the Exodus and conquest of Israel's enemies were not due to Israel's own "power" or "righteousness" but due to the wickedness of the nations and Yahweh's promises to the patriarchs (Dt 7:7-8, 8:11-20, and 9:4-6) (Bird 2008:304). It is evident that due to the covenant Yahweh would devastate and conquer Israel's enemies. According to Yahweh's terms, the covenant is so binding that salvation transpires for Israel when Yahweh executes justice against the nations oppressing Israel (Seifrid 1992:38-45).

The depiction we get from the servant song is that Yahweh chose a servant from among the exiles for the task of liberating the captives from the unjust treatment exerted upon them by their captors. In view of delivering justice by the leadership in the African context, it is argued that there is "an ever growing chasm between a few elite in leadership positions who oppress and a vast majority of followers grounded by the load of oppression" (Nyiawung 2010:791). For example – with a particular focus on the political situation in DR Congo – Joseph Mavinga has lamented that there is need for "a loyal leadership capable of restoring social justice in the community" (Mavinga 2011:118-141). In the Zimbabwean situation, the role of the church is called for in the sustenance of peace, justice, reconciliation, national healing, prosperity and equality as solutions to the socio-economic crises bedeviling the southern African nation (Togarasei & Chitando 2011:211-214).



## Ethical responsibility

The servant is portrayed as one who would interact and socialise with society as well as enlighten them as part of the assignment. In my opinion, the church must function as a servant in our modern society. Having the same viewpoint, Theron and Lotter (2009:467) have also proposed that Christians should rather participate in transforming all areas of society “by applying biblical, moral and ethical principles”. In addition, Klopper’s observation is also illuminating when she writes on the ethical responsibilities for reading Genesis 34 about the OT story of the rape of Dina (Klopper 2010:652-665). While other interpretations of the biblical text tend to avoid sexual violence, Klopper sees it as appropriate to suggest that “unethical readings of the story have the potential to encourage sexual violence” (Klopper2010:661). It is Klopper’s opinion that by naming biblical rape texts and expressing discontent will inspire (*enlighten*)<sup>16</sup> readers to break the silence about rape (Klopper 2010:663). If society remains in the dark about the consequences of rape, “it will remain in the shadows and dark places where those who perpetuate sexual violence want it to remain” (Scholz 1998:132).

## Life and health

Underpinning the servant’s tasks is the concept of preserving life and health. According to the servant song under discussion, life and health are gifts from Yahweh and that the servant would have to understand him as creator and giver of health and life. The servant’s task of preserving life and health are also mentioned in other passages in the OT. Hasel (1983:191) admits that it is apparent that themes of healing, forgiveness, and salvation are not (and cannot be) separated in Scripture. Psalms 6:2 pleads with the Lord: “Be merciful to me, Lord, for I am fainting; O Lord, heal me, for my bones are in agony”; Psalms 38:7 complains of his back “filled with searing pain; there is no health in my body”. Because of illness, someone’s health has deteriorated and has been “reduced to skin and bones” (Ps 102:5). While some are complaining of ill health, others acknowledge that: “They have no struggles; their bodies are healthy

---

<sup>16</sup> Italicized insertion is mine.

and strong” (Ps 73:4). The beginning of Psalms 41 speaks of the spiritual and physical solace in time of trouble that comes from serving others (Freeman & Abrams 1999:3). The postexilic literature also shows that health was an important subject during biblical times.<sup>17</sup> Deuteronomy 30:15-20 has been described as the clearest expression of the Israelite view of life because it demonstrates that life is contingent upon Israel’s faithfulness to Yahweh’s commands (Swain 1967:105-107). Israel would enjoy a prosperous physical life through obedience (Pyne 2000:31). This shows that Israel’s focus was on life and deliverance from death, and they had faith in the Yahweh whom they knew to be sovereign over all.<sup>18</sup>

Health, life and livelihood were critical in the lives of ancient biblical communities as they are in our contemporary context. For example, believing communities in Zimbabwe (and probably everywhere else) regard life as both spiritual and material. Most Christians are gainfully employed, while others are engaged in various types of businesses in order to sustain their families economically. When Christians are sick, they either go to hospital for treatment or seek traditional African medicine, while still “praying” that God will heal them. Mafico affirms the above view when he writes that the majority of African Christians go to church on Sunday and affirms the Christian God, but still believing that *n’angas* (Shona for witch doctors) or *vadzimu* (Shona for spirit mediums) can help solve their spiritual, social, and family problems, including illnesses (Mafico 1986:400-409). When Wafawanaka (2000:490-497) explains that poverty is real, materialistic and economic, he communicates the notion that ancient biblical communities looked at life holistically. The suffering servant in DI probably viewed life the same when he was concerned with the suffering of the exiles.

## **Servant leadership**

Greenleaf (2002:n.p.) defines servant leadership by saying “the main principle of servant leadership is that leaders are attentive to the concerns of their followers and empathize with them, including those with little power in a system”. Servant leaders

---

<sup>17</sup> See Zc 11:16; Mt 4:2; 2 Ch 30:20; Is 58:8.

<sup>18</sup> For further reading, see Pyne (2000:29).

make others better by their presence (Northouse 2007:n.p.). In view of Greenleaf's definition of servant leadership, one would say that for those who regard Jesus Christ as a suffering servant, they must represent him holistically in everyday life "since looking to Jesus Christ as a servant cannot mean looking away from the world, from men, from life, or, as is often said, from oneself. It cannot mean looking away into some distance or height" (Bromiley & Torrance 1969:150). Further placing Bromiley and Torrance's statement into perspective, one could also say that a servant leader should be one who sees corruption, bribery, violence, rape, murder, and poverty, amongst others, as evils which should be condemned in the strongest terms. Corruption is one "wickedness" that has negatively affected development in our modern society, and the servant leader must be able to face it head on. Corruption, particularly in Africa, has worsened the situation of poverty. Clifford suggests that in order to end poverty some big issues must be addressed. One such issue is that of corruption (Clifford 2010:28). When Clifford observes that "corruption is addressed effectively through in-country advocacy" (2010:29), she referred to citizens who should be prepared to challenge corruption by those in government who were elected to represent society to do so as servant leaders. Moody-Stuart (1998) explains that corruption is about exerting undue influence on decision-makers at a high level, and, at worst, will destroy nations. Vorster (2012:133) remarks that corruption is the misuse of public office or a position of authority for private material or social gain at the expense of other people. It is in the same vein that Clifford further reverberates that it is imperative for Christians to speak out about injustice in order to put right the relationships between the powerful and the powerless, between the rich and the poor (Clifford 2010:29). This study now focuses on Nelson Mandela as a servant leader.

### **Nelson Mandela as a servant leader**

Nelson Mandela's life in and out of prison demonstrated that he was a servant leader, particularly in view of his policies of forgiveness and reconciliation which were critical in averting the outbreak of political violence and racial intolerance, as well as poverty eradication amongst South African citizens. Mandela did not have hunger for

political power. Mandela's humility and servant leadership is largely demonstrated in his unselfishness to cling onto the reins of power. While other African leaders such as Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe has refused to relinquish power after 33 years as president and has become a tyrant,<sup>19</sup> Mandela walked away after only one term.

Mandela's servant leadership drew the support and solidarity of the international community who in return showered the South African leader with numerous accolades and awards.<sup>20</sup> People of South Africa (and perhaps other parts of the world) may need to emulate an example of servant leadership demonstrated by Nelson Mandela, first for opting to stay in prison for 27 years (as a protest to force the apartheid government to deliver justice to the majority of black people in SA) and second for preaching non-violence after he was released from prison.<sup>21</sup> On 16 December 1995, after Mandela had become the first black President of a democratically-elected government, he pronounced national reconciliation amongst those who differed ideologically and politically.<sup>22</sup> Mandela once acknowledged that: "To be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others" (Mandela 2005:145). In his reference to Nelson Mandela as a sporting fan, Carlin (2008) asserts that unable to see or identify with distinctions, Mandela challenged those distinctions when he wore the hated jersey of the Springbok rugby team at the Rugby World Cup held in South Africa. This somewhat simple gesture, Carlin further observes, was seen to bring a nation together if only for a time. Poverty eradication has been one of the prerogatives that Nelson Mandela had committed himself to tackling as head of state after South Africa's independence in 1994. Although literature we have to date does not explicitly mention that Mandela was influenced by the biblical view of the suffering servant, his selflessness, dedication and commitment to serving humankind qualify him as a servant leader, subsequently making him a

---

<sup>19</sup> Robert Mugabe is listed amongst Africa's tyrants such as Idi Amin of Uganda and Charles Taylor of Liberia, to name a few. For further reading see Rugwiji (2013:98).

<sup>20</sup> Mandela received numerous awards nationally and internationally for demonstrating "servant leadership." He also received international recognition for his policy of national reconciliation. Cf. Rugwiji (2008:93).

<sup>21</sup> Mandela was released from prison on 11 February 1990. See Coleman (1998:269); Wallis (2000); Meer (1993).

<sup>22</sup> See Maanga (2013:98).

unique icon amongst world leaders. Again, although we do not have evidence about Mandela being a Bible believer to be influenced by its teachings, Keller's observation that "ministering to the poor is a crucial sign that we actually believe the gospel" (Keller 2008:8-15) seems to describe Mandela very well.

In his effort to emancipate society economically, Mandela established a children's fund named after him for the purpose of eradicating poverty and suffering amongst children. My anonymous informant revealed that when Mandela became president, he undertook to donate one-third of his salary (i.e., R150 000) to the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund which was established to address the needs of the marginalized youth.<sup>23</sup> In the area of housing, Mandela introduced a reconstruction programme called Reconstruction Development Programme (hereafter RDP) for marginalized communities. Some home owners also confirm that RDP<sup>24</sup> houses (e.g., in Atteridgeville, Lotus Gardens, Mamelodi, in Pretoria, and many other places) were constructed by funds solicited by Mandela to cater for the formerly marginalized and poverty-stricken members of society who did not have shelter (Rugwiji 2013:116).

Outside South Africa, it is believed that political and civil conflicts devastating human lives across the globe could be resolved if servant leaders like Mandela were involved. For example, on the long-standing Israeli-Palestinian conflict, when Yaacov Bar-Siman-Tov (2010:44) writes that "there is no Palestinian Mandela", his statement suggests that Mandela as a statesman and liberation icon was understood as a peacemaker. Biyere (2011:117) also esteemed Mandela as a type of a suffering servant in our contemporary context. In the United States of America, Mandela's task as a servant has been highly acknowledged. For example, in his compliments of Mandela and his servant leadership, New York Mayor Richard Dinkins described him as "a modern day Moses leading the people of South Africa out of enslavement" (Nixon 1994:187).

Although Mandela did not regard himself as a peacemaker – which he expressed when he reported that he did not consider himself a peacemaker or a unifier but

---

<sup>23</sup> See Nussbaum (2003:2).

<sup>24</sup> For RDP, see Lodge (2003).

instead saw them as roles to be played (Mandela 1995:488) – one would still believe that he possessed both attributes of peace-making and unity-building.

## **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

It was discussed in this study that Isaiah 42:1-7 is one of the four servant songs which fall within DI (Is 40-55). The paper argued that although the author of Isaiah 40-55 is traditionally known amongst scholars as DI, the suffering servant addressed by the servant songs is unknown. Although speculations are that Israel, Cyrus or Jesus might be the servant, it was critiqued that the identity of the servant is not readily available in the servant songs. Some believe Cyrus to be the servant because he is mentioned at the beginning of Isaiah 45 as the “anointed one of God”. However, that theory was not supported because Cyrus is not designated as the servant in the servant songs. In addition, the suffering servant was amongst the captives, and Cyrus was not. Recent scholarship has not agreed with the claim by some that Jeremiah was the servant in the servant songs. Those for Jeremiah as the servant base their assertion on the similarities of themes found in both the book of Jeremiah (cf. 11:19) and DI (53:7).

The study explored Jesus as the suffering servant as postulated by some, especially by Christians. However, this supposition is disputed by critical scholarship. The suffering servant was physically amongst the captives. The task of the servant was to liberate the captives from the prison and set them free. It was contested that Jesus himself had rejected the ideology of setting up a kingdom on earth because his kingdom was a kingdom of heaven.

The article explained that the term salvation in Hebrew means deliverance/prosperity. The salvific task of the servant was to bring salvation/deliverance to the oppressed. The Judeans were finally released from captivity by Cyrus, but still the servant songs are silent about the servant and his task after the restoration. It was presented that in view of salvation in Judaism, the ideology of the messiah was the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth. The concept of salvation being eschatological is not known in the OT.

The essay articulated that OT themes can be appropriated in our modern society as tasks towards emancipating people experiencing various forms of suffering and/or oppression. For example, themes drawn from Isaiah 42:1-7 such as delivery of justice, ethical responsibility, life and health, and servant leadership were articulated in various ways in view of particularities of our contemporary context. It can further be affirmed that the suffering servant in the servant songs can be anybody whose contribution to the liberation and emancipation of society has been a grand achievement in the history of humanity. As a representative illustration, one notable liberation icon, namely Nelson Mandela has been explored as a suffering servant of our own time.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adamo, T D 2005. *Explorations in African biblical studies*. Benin City: Justice Jeco Press and Publishers.
- Allegro, M J 1971. *The chosen people: A study of Jewish history from the time of the exile until the revolt of Bar Kocheba*. London: Hodder and Stoughton.
- Bar-Siman-Tov, Y 2010. *Barriers to peace in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict*. Jerusalem: The Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies.
- BBC 1990. Freedom for Nelson Mandela. Available: [www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk) [Accessed 2014/03/20].
- Bellinger, W H & Farmer, W R (eds.) 1998. *Jesus and the suffering servant: Isaiah 53 and Christian origins*. Harrisburg: Trinity Press International.
- Berges, U 2012. Servant and suffering in Isaiah and Jeremiah: Who borrowed from whom? *OTE25/2:247-259*.
- Bird, M F 2008. Judgment and justification in Paul: A review article, *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 18/2:299-313.
- Biyere, B M 2011. A postcolonial engagement with Babylonian exile and the suffering servant in Isaiah 52:13-53:12: A path for reflection on the Niger Delta crisis in Nigeria. MPhil dissertation. University of Birmingham.
- Blank, S 1958. *Prophetic faith in Isaiah*. New York: Harper.
- Boshoff, W, Scheffler, E & Spangenberg, I (eds.) 2006. *Ancient Israelite literature context*. Pretoria: Protea Book House.
- Brenner, A (ed.) 1998. *Genesis. A feminist companion to the Bible*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
- Bright, J 1953. *The kingdom of Yahweh: The biblical concept and its meaning for the church*. Nashville: Abingdon.
- Bromiley, G W & Torrance, T F 1969. *Church dogmatics* IV/4. Edinburgh: T&T Clark.
- Clifford, P 2010. Theology and international development: A Christian Aid report. Available: [www.christianaid.org.uk](http://www.christianaid.org.uk) [Accessed 2014/05/27].
- Clines, D J A 1976. *I, he, we and they: A literary approach to Isaiah 53*. JSOTS 1.

- Sheffield: University of Sheffield.
- Coleman, M 1998. *A crime against humanity: analyzing the repression of the apartheid state*. Johannesburg: Human Rights Committee.
- Dahood, M 1968. *The anchor Bible: Psalms 51-100*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday.
- De Villiers, P G R (ed.) 1986. *Healing in the name of God*. Pretoria: University of South Africa.
- Duhm, B 1892. *Das Buch Jesaja*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Durham, J I 1987. *World biblical Commentary vol. 3: Exodus*. Waco: Word Books.
- Fischer, G 2012. Riddles of reference: “I” and “We” in the books of Isaiah and Jeremiah: The relation of the suffering characters in the books of Isaiah and Jeremiah, *OTE* 25/2: 277-291.
- Fitzgerald, V 1999. The economics of liberation theology, in Rowland 1999:248-264.
- Fitzmyer, J A 2007. *The one who is to come*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company.
- Freeman, D L & Abrams, R J Z 1999. *Illness and health in the Jewish tradition: writings from the Bible today*. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society.
- Goldingay, J 1987. *Theological diversity and the authority of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- 2003. *Introduction to the Old Testament: Israel’s Gospel*. Vol I. Downers Grove, Illinois: Intervarsity.
- Grabbe, L L 2000. *Judaic religion in the second temple period: Belief and practice from the exile to Yavneh*. London: Routledge.
- Greenleaf, R K 2002. *Servant leadership: A journey into the nature of legitimate power and greatness*. 25 Anniversary ed. Mahwah: Paulist Press.
- Hasel, G F 1983. Healing in the Old Testament, *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 21/3:191-202.
- Hengel, M 1995. *Studies in early Christology*. Edinburgh: T & T Clark.
- Henneman, R & McIntosh, A 2009. The political theology of modern Scottish land reform, *JSRNC* 3/3:340-375.
- Hill, A E & Walton, J H 2000. *A survey of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.
- Holladay, W L 1988. *A concise Hebrew and Aramaic lexicon of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing.
- Kaiser, O 1984. *Einleitung in das Alte Testament*. 5. Grundlegend, neugearbeitete Auflag. Gütersloh: Mohn.
- Keller, T 2008. The gospel and the poor, *Themelios* 33/3:8-22.
- Klopper, F 1992. We have a right to believe differently: 2 Kings 5:1-27 and religious tolerance, in Wessels & Scheffler 1992:188-207.
- 2010. Rape and the case of Dina: Ethical responsibilities for reading Genesis 34, *OTE* 23/3:652-65.
- König, A 1986. Healing as an integral part of salvation, in Villiers 1996:79-96.
- Kwakkel, G 2002. *According to my righteousness: Upright behaviour as grounds for deliverance in Psalms 7, 17, 18, 26, and 44*. Leiden: Brill.
- Limburg, J 2000. *Psalms*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press.
- Lindsey, F D 1982. The call of the servant in Isaiah 42:1-9, *Bibliotheca Sacra* 139(553):12-31.
- 1982. The career of the servant in Isaiah 52:13-53:12, *Bibliotheca Sacra* 139/556:312-329.
- Loader, J 1985. “Theologiareligionum” from the perspective of Israelite – an argument, *Missionalia* 13:14-32.
- Lodge, T (ed.) 2003. *Politics in South Africa: From Mandela to Mbeki*. David Philip: Cape



- Town.
- Maanga, G S 2013. The relevance and legacy of Nelson Mandela in the twenty-first century Africa: An historical and theological perspective, *African Journal of History and Culture* 5/5:96-113.
- Mafico, L J T 1986. The Old Testament and effective evangelism in Africa, *International Review of Mission* 75:400-409.
- Mandela, N 1995. *Long walk to freedom: The autobiography of Nelson Mandela*. New York: Back Bay Books.
- Mavinga, J N 2010. The influence of the spirit world on African leadership: A contextual reading of 1 Samuel 28:1-25, *Journal for Semitics* 19/2:499-526.
- Meer, F 1993. *The codesa file*. Durban: Madiba Publishers.
- Merrill, E H 1994. *Deuteronomy*. Nashville: Broadman and Holman.
- Moody-Stuart, G 1998. Corruption and its victims. Conference paper. Available: [www.21stcenturytrust.org/corrupt.doc](http://www.21stcenturytrust.org/corrupt.doc) [Accessed 2014/06/06].
- Musendekwa, M 2011. *Messianic expectations as prophetic responses: A Zimbabwean perspective*. MTh dissertation: University of Stellenbosch.
- Muutuki, J M 2013. Covenant in relation to justice and righteousness in Isaiah 42:1-9. PhD thesis: University of Stellenbosch.
- Nixon, R 1994. *Homelands, Harlem and Hollywood: South African culture and the world beyond*. New York: Rutledge.
- North, C R 1956. *The suffering servant in Deutero-Isaiah. An historical and critical study*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Northouse, P 2007. *Leadership: Theory and practice*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Nussbaum, B 2003. African culture and ubuntu: Reflections of a South African in America, *Perspectives* 17/1:1-12.
- Nyiauwung, M D 2010. The prophetic witness of the church as an appropriate mode of public discourse in African societies, *HTS Teologiese Studies* 66/1:791-799.
- Purkiser, W T 1977. *Yahweh, man and salvation*. Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press.
- Pyne, A R 2000. Salvation in the Old Testament, *Theology* 404:29-40.
- Radmacher, E D, Allen, R B and House, H W 1997. *The Nelson Study Bible. New King James*. Nashville: T. Nelson Publishers.
- Rambsel, Y 1996. *Yeshua: The name of Jesus revealed in the Old Testament*. Toronto: Frontier Research Publications.
- Reventlow, H G 1998. Basic issues in the interpretation of Isaiah, in Bellinger & Farmer 1998:23-38.
- Rowland, C (ed.) 1999. *The Cambridge companion to liberation theology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Rugwiji, T 2008. Reading the Exodus tradition from a Zimbabwean perspective. MA dissertation. University of South Africa.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2013. Appropriating Judean postexilic literature in a postcolonial discourse – A case for Zimbabwe. PhD thesis. University of South Africa.
- Scheffler, E 1992. Dimensions of suffering in Deutero-Isaiah, in Wessels & Scheffler 1992:208-224.
- Schreiber, M 2009. The real “suffering servant”: Decoding a passage in the Bible, *Jewish Bible Quarterly* 37/1:35-44.
- Seifrid, M A 1992. *Justification by faith: The origin and development of a Pauline theme*. Leiden: Brill.
- Scholz, S 1998. Through whose eyes? A “right” reading of Genesis 34, in Brenner 1998:150-

171.

- Spangenberg, I 2006. The literature of the Persian period (539-333 BCE), in Boshoff, Scheffler, & Spangenberg 2006:168-198.
- Swain, L 1967. The Bible and the people: Eternal life in the Old Testament, *Clergy Review* 52:105-107.
- Theron, M & Lotter, G A 2012. Corruption: how should Christians respond? *Acta Theologica* 32/1:96-117.
- Togarasei, L & Chitando, E 2011. Be therefore reconciled to one another: The church's role in justice, healing and reconciliation in Zimbabwe, *Missionalia* 39/3:210-227.
- Upkong, S J 2000. Developments in biblical interpretation in Africa: A historical and hermeneutical perspective, *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* 108:17.
- Van Groningen, G 1990. *Messianic revelation in the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House.
- Von Rad, G 1974. *Yahweh at work in Israel*. Nashville: Abingdon.
- Vorster, J M 2012. Managing corruption in South Africa: The ethical responsibility of churches, *Scriptura* 109:133-147.
- Wafawanaka, R 2000. African perspectives on poverty in the Hebrew law codes, in West & Dube 2000:490-497.
- Wallis, F 2000. *Nusdahboek: feite en fratseoor 1000 jaar*. Kaapstad: Human and Rousseau.
- Walvoord, J F & Zuck, R B 1985. *The Bible knowledge commentary: An exposition of the Scriptures*. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.
- Wessels, W & Scheffler, E (eds.) 1992. *The Old Testament science and reality*. Pretoria: Verba Vitae.
- West, G O & Dube, M W (eds.) 2000. *The Bible in Africa: Transactions, trajectories and trends*. Leiden: Brill.
- Westermann, C 1969. *Isaiah 40-66: A commentary*. Philadelphia: Westminster.
- White, R E O 1999. *The indomitable prophet: A biographical commentary on Jeremiah*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Wilson, R 1968. *The Old Testament foe modern explorers*. London: Bladford Press.
- Wright, C J H 1990. The people of Yahweh and the state in the Old Testament, *Themelios* 16/1:4-10.