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Given on the occasion of his sixty-fifth birthday, this collection of fifteen essays is a fitting tribute to Hans-Jürgen Hermisson's active career in teaching and research at the universities of Heidelberg, Bonn, and, since 1982, Tübingen. All the essays have been previously published (the earliest in 1971) and are divided into four main "chapters": 1) Jeremiah; 2) Isaiah and Deutero-Isaiah; 3) The Servant; 4) Wisdom. Prefacing each chapter are Hermisson's introductory remarks.

The first essay, "Jahwes und Jeremias Rechtsstreit," published originally in 1987, is a thematic investigation of Jeremiah's confessions. While denying that Jeremiah's confessions exhibit psychological significance, Hermisson demonstrates, contra Gunneweg, that the confessions are more than merely a collection of psalmic material imbued with prophetic commentary; they embody the ambivalence of prophetic existence resulting from the prophet's dependence upon YHWH's word and the isolation that same word causes. The confessions deal specifically with the unfulfillment of YHWH's word. Theologically, such prophetic self-understanding reflects the tension between God's mercy and wrath.

In the second essay, "Die 'Königsspruch'–Sammlung im Jeremiabuch–von der Anfangs- zur Endgestalt," (1990), Hermisson treats the "royal sayings" (the words of the prophet addressed to the king) in Jer 21:1-23:8 as a redactional unity. Hermisson posits an originally independent, predeuteronomistic collection that was then expanded by at

least two stages of deuteronomistic redaction in the form of commentary and subsequent supplementation.

The third essay, "Kriterion 'wahrer' und 'falscher' Prophetie im Alten Testament" (1995), focuses on Jer 23:16-22; 28:8-9. Concerning Jer 23:16-22, Hermisson identifies a criterion operative within the context of prophetic conflict, namely, the impossibility of a salvation pronouncement to evil-doers, the "criterion of moral corruption" (*Kriterium sittlicher Verderbtheit*). Jeremiah 28 employs the "fulfillment criterion" (vv. 8-9; cf. Deut 18:21-22), one that can also be found in Isaiah. Such criterion was supplemented in Deuteronomy, which aligns true prophecy with Mosaic Torah (Deut 18:15).

In his fourth essay, "Zukunftserwartung und Gegenwartskritik in der Verkündigung Jesajas" (1973), Hermisson explores the relationship between future expectation and present judgment in Isaiah by examining the function of "salvation expectation" (*Heilserwartung*). Identifying 1:21-26 and 11:1-5 as authentically Isaianic, Hermisson finds that the prophet's future expectation serves an eminently critical function. After the siege of Jerusalem in 701, the prophet's conception of future salvation changed: Jerusalem will remain in ruins forever (Isa 32:14). Enduring in the prophet's expectation, however, are judgment against a lost generation and hope in YHWH, in whose future lies also Israel's future. In an epilogue, Hermisson explores contemporary implications for the Christian community, calling for active engagement with the world while maintaining hope in God.

In the fifth essay, "Der verborgene Gott im Buch Jesaja," originally published in French (1994), Hermisson argues that the theme of the "hidden God" constitutes an integral element in the judgment message of the prophet Isaiah, the message of Deutero-Isaiah, and is echoed in Trito-Isaiah. To advance his argument, Hermisson discusses Isa 8:16-18; 40:27-28; 54:7-8; 45:14-15, as well as 45:18-19; 57:17-18; 59:1-2; 64:5-6; 65:1.

In his sixth essay, "Jakob und Zion, Schöpfung und Heil: Zur Einheit der Theologie Deuterocesajas" (1990), Hermisson explores two pairs of central themes in Deutero-Isaiah: Jacob and Zion, creation and salvation. Jacob and Zion, connoting Israel and Jerusalem, presents a gender balance: Jacob as wandering patriarch and Zion as the "mother-city" of all Israelites, Jacob's destination. Hermisson also finds Zion profiled as queen, whose elevation necessitates Babylon's defeat. The Servant Songs speak of the prophetic sector of Israel (see below). As the prophet represents the model for Israel, so Israel is the model for the world. Regarding the second pair of themes, YHWH's creative word is the central theological motif of Deutero-Isaiah's pronouncement. Hermisson differs (deferentially) from his teacher Gerhard von Rad regarding the allegedly subordinate role of creation in Deutero-Isaiah. Creation is the theological horizon that encompasses God's saving activity. Salvation is new creation.

In the seventh article, "Einheit und Komplexität Deuterojesaijas" (1989), Hermisson addresses the literary development of Isaiah 40-55. He identifies several stages of redaction, including a *qarob* layer comprised of texts that stress the nearness of salvation (*Naherwartungsschicht*), passages that focus on idol making, and other secondary texts, some of which resemble Trito-Isaianic (e.g., Isa 50:10; 66:24) and deuteronomistic material as found in Jeremiah (e.g., 48:1-11), or reflect scribal activity (*Schriftgelehrsamkeit*; 52:3-6). Hermisson argues that the Zion texts concentrated in the second half of the book and the Babylon poem of chapter 47 are authentic to Deutero-Isaiah, as well as the first three servant songs. The *ipsissima verba* of the prophet, however, are unattainable.

In his eighth essay, "Diskussionsworte bei Deuterojesaja" (1971), Hermisson examines the so-called "words of disputation" in Isa 40:21-31, 27-31; 44:24-28a and argues against identifying a clearly defined form-critical structure. Attempts to divide sharply the rhetorical contours of the texts into components that include a common theological premise (*Diskussionsbasis*) and concluding inference (*Schlußfolgerung*) are misguided. The prophet's disputation with his people is from the outset theological.

The ninth essay, "Der Lohn des Knechts" (1981), explores a motif shared by the four Servant Songs, namely the reward (*Lohn*), success (*Erfolg*), or vindication (*Rechtfertigung*) of the Servant. Hermisson examines, in order, 49:4; 50:4-9; 42:1-4; 52:13-53:12. He finds that the prophet's success, amid resistance, is accomplished only through YHWH's success. In 42:1-4, the Servant is commissioned and equipped for the royal office of the prophet to establish YHWH's *mišpāt* (dominion) on the earth (cf. Jer 1:5, 10). The fourth Servant Song, the product of a disciple, also addresses the issue of reward/success, but in a remarkably different way by introducing the notion of vicarious suffering. Specifically, the "reward" of the servant is progeny and long life, the fate of the righteous (53:10), as well as reincorporation into the community that had rejected him (v. 12). As YHWH conquers the world through the word of the servant, so the "spoil" is the reward to be shared with the "many."

In the tenth essay, "Israel und der Gottesknecht bei Deuterojesaja" (1982), Hermisson attempts to cut the Gordian Knot of the Servant's identity. While acknowledging the Servant's collective identity in those texts that refer to Jacob/Israel as Servant, Hermisson argues that other texts outside of the Servant Songs convey a more particular, individual identity. Isaiah 43:10a, for example, contains two subjects: "you" and "servant." The Servant is situated between Israel as passive, disloyal witness and Israel as an active, ideal witness to the world. Isaiah 44:26 imbues the Servant's role with prophetic significance. The Servant is the prophet Deutero-Isaiah, who represents a prophetic circle. In the Servant Songs, God's Servant serves as a model for corporate Israel, the standard for "true Israel." In 49:1-6, two Servants are differentiated: Israel, which assumes international office *vis-à-vis* the nations, and the prophet, whose prophetic office is instrumental in leading Israel back to God (v. 5).

The next two essays, "Das vierte Gottesknechtslied im deuterocesajanischen Kontext" (1996) and "Gottesknecht und Gottes Knechte. Zur ältesten Deutung eines deuterocesajanischen Themas" (1996), advance and refine the arguments laid out in Hermisson's earlier work. As earlier, Hermisson notes in the first essay that the presence of a prophetic Servant is necessitated by Israel's unwillingness to receive and respond to YHWH's saving word. The Servant Songs are *Reflexionstexte* that describe the prophetic office amid Israel's resistance. In contrast to the cycle of the first three Songs, the fourth one addresses the "reward" and "success" of the Servant's legacy for the future. The suffering and death of the servant are past events from the perspective of the disciples of Deutero-Isaiah. The reward, as "spoils" (53:12), is directly tied to the success of YHWH's plan of salvation, the divine conquering of the world and the establishment of a salutary order among the nations.

In the latter article, Hermisson identifies the earliest, inner-Isaianic interpretations of the Servant. By examining Isa 51:4-8, 12-16; 49:7; 54:11-17 as "continuations" (*Fortsetzungen*) of older texts set within new horizons of meaning, Hermisson notes connections between the Suffering Servant and the Servant Israel by which the prophetic Servant takes on the representative role for Israel. Hermisson finds that the collective references to the Servant are more prominent in later texts within Deutero-Isaiah, which deemphasize the original, prophetic role of representation. Isaiah 61, however, balances the collective and original prophetic references to the Servant.

The last three essays in the collection focus on wisdom. The first, "Zur Schöpfungstheologie der Weisheit," was originally published in English in 1978. Hermisson's essay builds upon Zimmerli's observation that wisdom theology is creation theology. To advance this, Hermisson begins with "old wisdom" reflected in several proverbs that acknowledge a meaningful created order. Whereas cultic hymns consider creation as an ongoing act of divine struggle against chaos, the wisdom texts (Proverbs; Job 38-41; Psalm 104 [!]) fundamentally exclude chaos.

The penultimate essay, "Notizen zu Hiob" (1989), lists brief observations that provide "possibilities for interpretation." Building upon the reflections of Hartmut Gese, his colleague at Tübingen, Hermisson addresses the discursive logic of the dialogues, the sapiential theology of the friends, Job's understanding of God, and God's discourse and conclusion of the book. Driving Job's discourse is his insistence in clinging to *both* his innocence and to God, an "impossible possibility" in light of God's perceived hostility and overwhelming might. Job is convinced that only with God can he be justified against God's wrath. In so doing, Job threatens to split the image of God in two: God as friend and God as enemy, the resolution of which requires the cessation of divine wrath. In the theophany, Job is both justified and rebuked. God accepts Job's oath of integrity by preserving Job's life amid the storm-theophany (9:17) but rebukes Job for questioning God's purposeful activity in the world (38:2; 42:3). God's answer to Job reveals God's hidden creation-wisdom.

The last essay, "Von Gottes und Hiobs Nutzen: Zur Auslegung von Hi 22" (1996), addresses the question posed rhetorically by Eliphaz in Job 22:2. "Can human beings be of use to God"? Hermisson argues for the general literary integrity of the chapter 22, while noting occasional disruptions, particular in vv. 16-19, 24-25. Continuing the theme of his first discourse (chaps. 4-5), Eliphaz's speech marked the original conclusion to the friends' discourse. Denying divine interest in human piety, Eliphaz emphasizes respect before God's sublime greatness, but does so without knowing what has transpired in heaven in chapter 2. By denying a utilitarian relationship between God and humankind ("Not God, rather human beings benefit from their sensible conduct."), Eliphaz stresses God's honor, a point of disputation with Job. In the end, however, Job must bear his suffering for God's benefit, as Martin Luther correctly perceived.

Together, these essays provide a representative sampling of Hermisson's contribution to biblical scholarship. He consistently combines close readings of texts with theological sensitivity. The results are frequently profound and provocative. His most original work can be found in his work on Deutero-Isaiah, which, if one accepts that a prophet was responsible for the corpus, presents a perspective to be reckoned with. One can critique Hermisson for, *inter alia*, using theological consistency as the primary tool for determining the redactional development of texts and their various settings. Yet it is precisely his theological reflections that make his essays enduring for future readers.