

JESUS: THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD (‘O VIHSOUJ TO FWJ TOU KOSMOU JOHN 8,12; 12,46) AS A FULFILLMENT OF ISA 42,6 AND 49,6:AN EXEGETICAL-CHRISTOLOGICAL STUDY

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Abstract

Jesus is variously titled by different people in the Fourth Gospel. For John the Baptist for example, he is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (John 1,29.36). Andrew sees him as the Messiah (John 1,41). For Nathanael he is the Son of God, the King of Israel (John 1,49). Only on few occasions did Jesus arrogate any title to himself directly. In John 6,35.41 for example, Jesus describes himself as the bread of life. He is also the door of the sheep as we read in John 10,7. He is equally the Good Shepherd (John 10,11); the Resurrection and the Life (John 11,25). Light of the World is one of these few titles (John 8,12; 12,46. Cf. also John 1,5.9). Exploration into the meaning of this concept for John is the major preoccupation of this section. Its rapport with Isaiah’s idea of the Servant of God as light to the nations makes it necessarily an aspect calling for a deeper study.

Keywords: Jesus, Light, World, Exegetical, Christological, Kosmou, John.

Introduction

~Umei/j de. ti,na me le,gete ei=naiÈ is believed to be Jesus’ question to his disciples (cf. Matt 16,15; Mark 8,27). This has remained a perennial question for the NT authors, scholars, exegetes, believers and even unbelievers. Peter immediately answered that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God (Matt 16,16). The evangelists have their individual propositions about the person of Jesus. Mark posits him as one who came to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many (Mark 10,45). Luke sets out to give a definition to Theophilus regarding the personality of the historical Jesus (Luke 1,4). Later NT writers and commentators have all tried to picture the personality of Jesus. Individual Christians are not left out. For some he is the saviour. Others see him as a miracle worker. All Christians believe him to be the Messiah. Unbelievers are not unconcerned about him too. Thus even Moslems consider him one of the prophets. John the Evangelist has his own answer. He interprets the OT as talking about Christ (John 5,39). He tends to be more historical and scriptural. He structures his gospel within the context of Jewish feasts. In his concern to give meaning to the personality of Jesus, he finds his answer in that part of the

Not many textual problems are observable in the text. Part of the text reads οὐκ ἔστιν ἡμεῖς/ἡμεῖς. The definite article οὐκ is omitted by $\hat{\iota}^{75}$ B. Since the text studied is witnessed in vast majority of the MSS, we understand it to be closer to the original.

Also *BT Or* have *moi*, as an alternative reading to *evmoi*. The paucity and dating of the MSS that have this alternative reading cast question as to its originality. On the other hand, the text used is witnessed in $\hat{\iota}^{66}$ \times D L W Θ Y 0250 $\text{f}^{1.13}$ 33 $\hat{\Upsilon}$. Considering the number of the MSS that testify to this together with their ancient nature, we confidently interpret it as closer to the original.

b) *Translation*

The researcher proposes the following as the working translation of the text: "Then again Jesus spoke to them saying, 'I am the Light of the World' the one who follows me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the light of life".

c) *Delimitation*

The text could be delimited from the point of view of the structure, audience and the theme under discussion.

The researcher understands *παλιν οὐκ* as resumptive indicating the beginning of a new section. This delimits the text from the pericope shortly before it. John 8,9-10 which forms part of the section just before the text under study presents Jesus as acquitting the woman caught in adultery after her accusers have left. It is part of a larger section of John 7,53-8,11 dealing on the adulteress. Metzger (1998) documents its conspicuous absence in some early and diverse MSS like $\hat{\iota}^{66.75}$ \times B L N T W X Y D Q Y 053 0141 0211 22 33 124 157 209 565 788 828 1230 1241 1242 1253 2193 *al.* In the East, the *syr^{c,s}* and *syr^p* MSS as well as Sahidic, Sub-Achmimic versions and Boharic MSS all omit it. In the West, it is absent from the Gothic and Old Latin MSS. No Greek Church Father before Euthymius Zigabenus (12th) commented on the passage. The pericope is therefore considered as secondary and did not make part of the original Fourth Gospel. It was after Jesus has completed the acquittal that he then began to speak again. By implication, John 8,12 is entirely independent of this pericope because the action of the preceding text already came to a completion. It is also delimited from the subsequent unit by the same fact. In fact in v. 21 one meets the resumptive *οὐκ ἔστιν παλιν* which gives an introductory linkage to what comes after.

The audience addressed also delimits our text. The personalities involved in the pericope antecedent to the text studied are the scribes and Pharisees (John 8,3.4.6-7.9); the woman caught in adultery (John 8,3.4.10.11) and Jesus himself (John 8,2.4.5.6-11). In the text studied, the audience are still the Pharisees (John 8,13); perhaps some other Jews (John 8,2.20) and Jesus himself (John 8,2.12). In the section following the text, the audience is basically the same but whereas in John 8,12, the Jews were inactive except the Pharisees who challenged Jesus' claim as Light of the World, in the text that follows, the Jews were very much involved in the event.

The theme of John 8,12 is on the personality of Jesus, posited by Jesus himself. He calls himself the Light of the World. The preceding text is on the woman caught in adultery and the subsequent text is on where Jesus was to go.

d) *Exegesis*

John 8,12 is dominated by the semantics of speech and movement. The location of the preaching is in the temple area. Thus, it immediately recalls John 7,37-38 which is addressed to all and sundry.

Pa,lin ou=n indicates the beginning of a new section as well as a continuity with what has gone before but does not fix the context of the discourse. However, the *auvtoi/j* helps locate the context. Already in John 8,2 we read that Jesus was in the temple area. All the people gathered about him and he sat down and taught them. This is followed immediately by an intervention by the scribes and Pharisees who brought in a woman caught in adultery. We are prone to see this other group as coming from some other part of the temple. Perhaps they were not originally part of the people that gathered around Jesus. In John 8,9 we read that they all left leaving Jesus and the woman. The text did not say anything about "all" the people that gathered around Jesus and were taught by him. We only know that in John 8,21, we see the Jews with him again. They were being taught by him most probably in the same location. Evidently, it is not the scribes and Pharisees that left in shame that he was telling that he is the Light of the World. The inclination therefore is to favour the conclusion that after the accusers of the woman had dispersed, some people came back probably to see what he would do to the woman. Jesus then used it as an occasion to reveal his identity as the Light of the World. It is the position of the researcher that as

Bernard (1928) observes the *auvtoi/j* refer to this group that gathered later, Pharisees included, hence their reaction in John 8,13.

With the linkage indicating another beginning, coupled with the verbs of speech — *evla,lhsen* [...] *le,gwn* Jesus goes on with his discourse which commenced in John 7,52. There is no indication of change of place. Jesus is still in the temple. The verbs of speech used introduce the words spoken (cf. John 3,11; Matt 14,27). John's adoption of two different verbs of speech here — *lalei/n* and *le,gein* arrests attention. These two words generally appear synonymous. They both mean "to say". The only subtle difference is that *lalei/n* has to do with the fact and manner of utterance while *le,gein* concerns with the substance of what is said. Bernard (1928) observes correctly that in John "*lalei/n* suggests frankness or openness of speech" (p. 109). Hübner (1994) is of the view that *lalei/n* is only distinguished from *le,gein* in that it only rarely means "say that" or is followed by indirect discourse as in Rev 17,1; 21,9; Matt 28,18; John 8,12. «*lale,w*». Debrunner (1995) traces the difference to the historical meaning of the words. He discovers that originally *lale,w* is related to Latin *lallare* (to lull to sleep); German *lallen* and English *lull*. It means "to babble or prattle", while *le,gw* means "to gather, to count, to narrate, to enumerate, to say".

The words spoken present one of the great «I am's» of the Gospel coupled with a Christological neologism. Jesus says: *evgw, eivmi to. fw/j tou/ ko,smou.*

VEgw, is a nominative personal pronoun. It is often used in the NT as in classical Greek to make an emphasis. It occurs about 494x in John. In the NT it enjoys a preeminent theological significance because of its revelatory nature. Schweizer (1974) made a thorough study of this expression. He gave its manifold interpretations and uses in religious history and different cultures. He then narrowed his excursus down to Johannine understanding in relation to predicative nouns. In the Fourth Gospel, Jesus uses it to express what he is (John 6,35; 8,12; 11,25); where he comes from (John 7,29; 8,42); what he gives (John 4,14; 17,14); what he speaks and to what he bears witness (John 5,36; 6,63) and that he is to judge the world (John 7,7; 8,16; 16,30). Using *evgw,* as a revelatory term, Jesus expresses two things. One is transcendental, the other is immanent. In the same *evgw,* he teaches his relationship to the Father on the one hand and the gift of salvation to mankind on the other (Schottroff, 1994). John uses various soteriological terms and metaphors to express this salvation that is effective in the revelation — the True Vine (John 15,1.5); the Bread of Life (John 6,35); the Door (John 10,9); the Good Shepherd (John 10,11); the Resurrection and the Life

(John 11,25) and the Way, the Truth, and the Life (John 14,6). John 8,12 comes under this category. In the manifestation narratives in the Synoptic Gospels, it serves a mode by which the revealer introduces himself to the recipient of the revelation. Cf. Acts 9,5. The recipient is then commissioned. Cf. Acts 22, 15. He also uses it to convey a message to the recipient. Cf. Mark 6,50 and Luke 1,19. Mark 13,6 holds that one of the signs of the eschatological disturbances is that false prophets shall arise presenting themselves as *evgw, eivmi*. 'Egw, eivmi is therefore self representative. Stauffer (1995) notes that the logic of the *evgw, eivmi* revelatory sayings together with the predicative nouns used indicate an equality rather than subordination. In other words, he is these predicative nouns in a supreme and ultimate sense. Used by Christ, it expresses God-consciousness as well as his redemptive role for man. It is indicative of Christ's mediatorship. It expresses *in nuce* the *o;noma* of Jesus. It gives a defense of his identity and personality. In John 8,12, Jesus calls himself to. *fw/j tou/ ko,smou*. The figure of speech used is not a simile. He does not say 'I am like [...]' He calls himself the Light of the World. The expression is very akin to his words about himself as the Living Water (John 7,37.38) or the Living Bread (John 6,51). The nature of the saying indicates a reference to a light known to the audience. A brief historical excursus into the significance of light will perhaps set us right in understanding this image of Jesus as presented by John.

In the ancient oriental world, light is rooted in nature. Light, sun, life and salvation all go together. The Hebrews believed that God gave them light. Ps 27,1 for example says "The Lord is my Light". Isa 60,19 promises that God shall be everlasting light. It is notable that for the Hebrews, God is not light. Light for them denotes relation, not being. God is the cause of light (Job 37,3). He is the sovereign Lord of light and darkness (Amos 5,8). Light for them is God in action (Hab 3,4). S. Agrelo (1975) gives a good summary of the significance of light for the Hebrews in his conclusion to his research on the biblical theme of light. He believes that

La simbología de la luz en el Viejo Testamento, simbología compleja y unitaria, depende fundamentalmente del hecho que Dios se manifiesta en la luz, y se manifiesta como Salvador. La teología de la salvación considera el mundo como algo perdido, que de por sí marcha hacia la muerte, y que sólo Dios puede librar de la ruina (pp. 389-390).

In the NT, *fw/j* occurs 73x. It occurs 15x in the Synoptics, 23x in John's Gospel, 6x in 1John, 10x in Acts, 6x in Paul, 5x in Ephesians, 4x in Revelation and 1x each in

Col 1,12; 1Tim 6,16; James 1,17; 1Pet 2,9. Conzelmann (1995) notes that for the Greeks, light is not just a medium of sight, but also its object. Light in connection with vision is the possibility of grasping and hence of mastering the world. He further observes that the Pre-Socratics interpret light as a moving and emanating substance. While the Pythagoreans understand it as one of the antithetical principles, light is for Plato true being. In cults, it is believed that light drives out darkness.

In the Synoptics, it is used in three senses – literal, figurative and transferred senses. Literally, it refers to appearance of light at an epiphany. Example is Matt 17,2; Acts 9,3; 22,6.9.11; 26,13. Figuratively, it is used of person and his teaching (Matt 5,14.16; Luke 2,32; Acts 13,47; Rev 2,19). It is used of the Christian proclamation of salvation grounded in the person of Jesus, his words and works so much so that the follower of Christ now also becomes light of the world (Ritt, 1994). In its transferred sense, it signifies openness (Matt 10,27). Paul's usage lies within the bounds of Jewish understanding. Between light and darkness is always a polemic. Thus he renders the plan of salvation before and now with the contrast of darkness and light (Cf. 2Cor 4,6; Rom 12,1-13,14; Eph 5,8-14; Col 1,12). In the Apocalypse, the extinction of light is viewed as the end of all signs of life (Rev 18,23). This short historical tradition behind the understanding and uses of light gives us an idea of the possible meaning of the concept for John. Strayer (1900) traces the saying to a possible influence by the Feast of Dedication which was called *ta. Fw/ta* because the whole city was brilliantly illuminated at the time of the feast. It is the belief of the researcher that John's usage in our text transcends the common denotation of light for the Hebrews. God for them is not light. He is the cause of light. To think of the Feast of the Dedication as the only tradition behind John's idea of Jesus as the Light of the World will be an excessive limitation of the meaning of this concept for John. Wiles (1960) has made an extensive study of the Fathers and their interpretation of the idea of Light and World.

In John's "Light of the World" is a clear marriage between soteriology and cosmology. Isa 45,7 comes to mind here where God created light and darkness, salvation and destruction. John's Gospel sums up the NT use of light and darkness. Lee understands the symbolism of darkness in the Fourth Gospel in threefold senses: It symbolizes the power of sin and evil in opposition to God; it symbolizes lethal estrangement from God resulting in death and finally it is pointer to human ignorance and unbelief in the face of revelation. John makes use of *fw/j* in various senses. He adopts the literal sense of it for example in John

5,35 where he talks of the lamp set aflame and burning. Another example is in John 3,20 where he talks of it as brightness avoided by the wicked who shun the light. Close to his literal use of light is his figurative use of it. John 12,35 is a good example of the figurative use of fw/j. Here light is likened to the brightness of the day which figuratively represents the presence of revelation or even the revealer himself. By identifying light with revelation and revelation with the revealer, John differs from the Gnostics who see God as emanation of light. John never called God the light. The concentration of his teaching is on the person of the revealer — evgw, eivmi. This implies that for him, there is no light independent of the revealer. The revealer gives his revelation to the world. Thus, he is light of the world — tou/ ko,smou.

Tou/ ko,smou is genitive. It expresses the functionality of Jesus the Light in relation to the world. Jesus, the Light as revealer confronts the unenlightened world orientated to illumination. In the synoptics, the word used often for earth is gh/. This word is used 13x in John's Gospel. The word ko,smoj occurs about 78x in John with wide range of meanings. In John 15,5; 21,25 it refers to the universe and the earth. In John 16,21 it is used as a reference to the human inhabitants of the earth. In John 7,4 it denotes the general public. John 3,19 gives it an ethical bent of thought referring to it as humanity alienated from God and in need of salvation. In John 4,42 it refers to nationality. John 7,7; 8,23 presents it as referring to the realm of evil. Hendriksen (1969) notes seven different meanings of the term in John. It includes the world of moral agents as well as the sum of physical forces. It stands for mankind at large as well as for the earth which is man's habitation (John 6,51; 7,4; 12,19). Barrett (1978) documents that in John, it does not refer to the totality of creation but to the world of men and human affairs. He notes John 11,9; 17,5.24; 21,25 as exceptions. It is more an ethical term. Ferreira (1998) sees John's proximity to Gnosticism in his understanding of the world but with a striking departure from Gnostic depiction in that for John, ko,smoj refers to the world that has fallen away from God but yet not rejected by God. Instead the Father loves the world and sends the Son into the world to save the world. We do not intend to give any strict definition of the meaning of ko,smoj for John. The term is too ambiguously used to be streamlined to a particular definition. John 7,7; 8,23; 14,17 give an antithesis between Jesus and the world and then again in John 3,16, God is said to love the world and Jesus is sent to save the world (John 3,17; 12,47) as its saviour (John 4,42) taking its sin away (John 1,29). Again John 6,33.51 talk of Jesus as giving life to the world. Also in the prayer of Jesus in John 17,9, he does not pray for the

world but then later in John 17,21 he prays that the world may be saved. It is sufficient to interpret the term to refer to that which opposes Jesus' mission but yet having a potentiality of coming to belief. Unlike Paul, John does not see God as reconciling the world to himself (Cf. 2Cor 5,18-19; Eph 2,16). For John, the world is overcome (John 16,33).

If we bring our interpretations of the individual parts of "I am the Light of the World" together, John's message stands prominent. The *evgw, eivmi* is emphatic. It is like saying in Italian "Io devo dire la verità" or in Spanish "Yo mismo lo he hecho". It strikes a note of emphasis on the person of the subject — I. Thus, in calling himself the Light of the World, Jesus is not being figurative. He is the true light. The definite article denotes the exclusiveness. No other person is the light of the world. He alone is. Again, since the presence of light means absence of darkness it follows that when Jesus describes himself as the Light of the World, he is also expressing the functionality of his person. He is using metaphorical language adopting what is known to them to express his personality. It is another way of saying, I am the Saviour of the World. This explains why he said that whoever walks in him can never walk in darkness (John 8,12) because for him, God is Light and in him there is no darkness (1John 1,5). This is why the one who follows him cannot walk in darkness but will have the Light of Life. John consistently depicted Jesus as the Light. The prologue presents the Word of God as the Light while John the Baptist only testifies to it (John 1,8). This Light who is the *verbum incarnatum* lights every man. This Light is Jesus (John 3,19; 12,46). It is therefore comprehensible why John puts *evgw, eivmi to. fw/j tou/ ko,smou* into the mouth of Jesus in John 8,12 (cf. also John 9,5).

The second part of the verse follows logically from the understanding above. If Jesus is exclusively the true Light, it means there is no darkness in him and so, his follower cannot walk in darkness but will enjoy the Light, the salvation which is life itself — *o` avkolouqw/n evmoi. ouv mh. peripath,sh | evn th/ | skoti,a | (avllV e[xei to. fw/j th/j zwh/j.*

vAkolouqein refers to the act of discipleship. John 1,37 presents it as the first act of discipleship. John 21,22 enjoins it as something essential. It means conducting (*peripatei/n*) oneself after the example of Christ who is the way, the truth and

the life (John 14,6). The LXX often renders the Hebrew term $\$lh$ with *peripatei/n* eg. Prov 8,20; Eccles 11,9. It is used in this sense in many parts of the NT. Cf. Mark 7,5; John 12,35; Acts 21,21; 1John 1,6.7; 2,6.11; 2John 6; 3John 3.4. It is expressive of the obedience of faith. It designates the specific character of human life (Cf. John 11,9-10; 12,35). The one following him will not walk in darkness but will have the Light of Life because Jesus is Light as well as Life (John 11,45; 14,6). In John 1,4-5 we read: *Quod factum est in ipso vita erat, et vita erat lux hominum; et lux in tenebris lucet, et tenebrae eam non comprehenderunt.*

In conclusion we opine that for John, *evgw, eivmi to. fw/j tou/ ko,smou* describes a soteriological function rather than a cosmological one. As the Light, Jesus is the Saviour of the world. He is actively saving the world. It is because of this that the followers are said to be delivered from the world (John 1,5; 12,35.46). They are not just delivered. They are blessed with life because Jesus, the Light has life in himself and therefore gives life (Cf. John 4,10.14; 6,35.51).

e) *John 8,12 in the light of Isa 42,6 and 49,6*

Many scriptural passages talk about light. In Zech 14,7 for instance, we read “it will be a unique day without daytime or nighttime – a day known to the Lord. When evening comes, there will be light”. Job 33,28 reads “He redeemed my soul from going down to the pit and I will live to enjoy the light” (cf. also Job 33,30). Ps 36,9 says “For with you is the fountain of life and in your light we see light”. These passages undoubtedly have references to light but none defines the light. John 8,12 reveals the identity of this light. He presents it as one of the “I am” sayings of Jesus. It is the submission of this paper that Isa 42,6 and Isa 49,6 provide closest parallels to this text of John. Both texts talk of the Servant of God as one who will be light to the nations. John is aware of these texts and in his perfect idea that Jesus is a realization of the Servant of God prophecy, presents him as defining himself as the Light of the World.

Isa 42,6 reads that the Servant of the Lord is to be a covenant to the peoples and a light to the nations. In Isa 49,6 he will be made a light to the nations in order to bring God’s salvation to the ends of the earth. It is the belief of the researcher that there is a clear confluence in meaning between Isaiah’s Servant Songs and John. The reasons for this position are obvious. They are group under geographical, epistemological and theological rapport.

Isaiah and John manifest agreement in geographical ambient. The Servant of the Lord of Isaiah is called to be a light to the nations, by implication to the world.

There is no geographical restriction to Israel alone. In Isaiah's concept, the gentile world is a connotation of ignorance of God. Whoever does not know God is in darkness. He is a gentile whether of Jewish or non-Jewish origin. This is why the Servant of God is charged to bring justice to the nations, i.e to teach them God's laws (Isa 42,1) and gather all back to God (Isa 49,3.5). The Servant of God is to be a light to all, Jews as well as gentiles. Thus, he is the harbinger of salvation. He is confirmed in his office. God's Spirit (Isa 42,1; 48,16) is his power. The wide world is his field of work. It is the same sense that we read in John 8,12. Jesus calls himself the Light of the World. Our studies have shown us that world in John is not just physical world as such but refers to mankind as well as his habitation as such. It refers to man estranged from God and yet not abandoned by God. Because it is estranged from God, it is ignorant of God and so in darkness. Jesus as the Saviour is to be its light bringing it out from this dungeon of darkness. Like Isaiah, John gives perspective to the heathen nations (John 1,4-10; John 10,16; 12,19.20-22; 12,32; 17,20). The only difference between Isaiah and John is that while the Servant of Isaiah is "to be", Jesus of John is the Light in actuality. Isaiah's Servant of God is the light in potency. He is in the process of becoming. Jesus is one in actuality. And because he is the Light, he is one exclusively. One reason accounts for this ontological difference. While Isaiah's Servant of God is one yet to come, John sees Jesus as the expected Servant of God.

Both Isaiah and John are in epistemological or gnoseological interface. In Isaiah the Servant has the vocation to be a light to the gentiles. In other words, he is charged to show the way to God to those who do not know him. Obedience to this light means victory over ignorance of God. It is salvation *in se*. It follows from here that as a light to the gentiles, the Servant is the Saviour of the Gentiles. Hence the task for the Servant that he is to bring God's salvation to the ends of the earth (Isa 49,6). The same meaning is expressive of Jesus' personality as the light of the world. Already in the OT, light connotes salvation. Jesus as Light to the world is Saviour of the world. It implies then that just as Isaiah's Servant of God is light/saviour to the nations, Jesus is Light/Saviour to the world. The genitive construction, ~yIëAG rAaæ, fw/j evqnw/n in LXX translation (Isa 42,6; 49,6) or to. fw/j tou/ ko,smou (John 8,12) means not only that the nations will be saved but also includes the implication that the salvation is through God's intervention. It expresses the Servant/Jesus' task in relation to the world.

Theologically, the rapport is no less prominent. Isa 49,6 repeats Isa 42,6 that the Servant is to be a light to the nations. It is the consistent teaching of Isaiah that it is God who forms the light and not man (Isa 45,7; 60,3). The two texts set light

and salvation in parallel such that there is a cross-illumination between the two. This is why Isa 49,6b explains that the Servant is light to the nations so that salvation might reach the ends of the earth. Light is salvation and salvation is light. This is because to be saved means to be in the light (Cf. Col 1,13). Since God is the one who forms the light, it means that He is light in himself and by implication He is salvation personified. To be in His light is to be saved. Not to be there is to be condemned. Knight (1965) it as saving love in action. Since the text talks of salvation for the whole earth, there is no reason to confine it to the tribe of Israel only. It is salvation in the amplified sense. Koole (1998) holds that it is salvation in the broadest and deepest sense of the word. John extends the logic of Isaiah's theology of light and salvation to its logical limit. For John, Jesus is God because he is the Incarnate Word (cf. John 1,1-12). He is God's Light made manifest. To be in him is to be saved. Not to be in him is to be in darkness. For God sent him into the world not to condemn the world but in order that through him, the world may be saved (John 3,17). Thus in John 12,46 he makes it clear that he is in the world as Light so that whoever believes in him will not remain in the dark. He will have eternal life and never incur God's wrath (cf. John 3,36). Negation and refusal to believe means judgment and condemnation because Jesus is Light in the world (cf. John 3,19). We can therefore confidently say that Isaiah's Servant of God has the vocation to be light of the nations. John conceives this as fulfilled and actualized in Jesus. He therefore pictures Jesus as confirming this fact about himself in his own words — evgw, eivmi to. fw/j tou/ ko,smou\ o` avkolouqw/n evmoi. ouv mh. peripath,sh| evn th/ | skoti,a| (avllV e[xei to. fw/j th/j zwh/j.

It is striking to note that John presents Jesus as one who restores sight to the blind (John 9). Evidently, this points to both a metaphorical and literal healing considering the sequence of discussion between Jesus and Jews in John 8,31-44. They have always believed themselves to be sons of Abraham and so true sons of God. John has another view about them. They are prisoners of a way of life and so are blinded to the truth. Thus they are unable to recognize Jesus who is life himself even before Abraham (John 8,58). It is because they think they see that Jesus makes it clear to them that actually they are blind (John 9,40-41). It is not just a coincidence that John brought up all these discussions under the theme of Jesus as the Light of the world. He is being faithful to his source of influence. In Isa 42,6, the Servant of God is presented as light to the nations. Immediately after, precisely in Isa 42,7 he is described as one who will give sight to the blind. It is exactly the same sequence of events and understanding that we see in John

8-9. In John 8,12-20, Jesus is presented as the Light of the World. From vv. 31-47 he makes it clear to the Jews that they are blind in the real sense of it even though they think the opposite about themselves. In John 9, Jesus as the Servant of God sets out to restore their sight just as Isa 42,7 says he would do. Thus we are in favour of the conclusion that Isa 42,6 and Isa 49,6 are the most likely sources for John's Christology of Jesus as the Light of the World in John 8,12.

Evaluation and Conclusion

Prophecy is one thing. Understanding and interpretation of the prophecy is quite yet another. This is particular evident in the Isaiah's Servant of God concept. Scholars in history have tackled the unveiling of the identity of this unique man, foreseen by Isaiah as a taunting and titanic issue. Spanning through four chapters of the Deutero-Isaiah (cf. Isa 42,1-9; 46,1-6; 49,4-9 and 52,13-53,1-12), he is projected in many lights especially in his functionality. The true identity of this Servant of God is unfortunately not given by Isaiah. In the New Testament, aspects of the qualities of the Servant are seen scattered here and there like Mark 10,45; Matt 8,17. In Paul, Phil 2,6-11 enshrines some of the characteristics. 1Pet 2,24 still has part of it. A full revelation of Jesus as the Servant of God prophesied by Isaiah is seen in the Fourth Gospel. This paper limited her purview to only one of the characteristics: Jesus as the Light of the World. Linguistic rapport, epistemological interpretation and geographical extensions as seen above give a sound proof that apart from other qualities of the Servant of God seen different parts of the Fourth Gospel, Jesus as the Light of the World in John 8,12 also depict Isaiah's influence in the construction of the Fourth Gospel. John did not use the term Servant of God but just as Uranus as in existence ever before it was discovered by scientists in 1781, so the attributes of the Isaiah's Servant of God resound in all parts of the Fourth Gospel's Christology. This paper has proven beyond doubt that John 8,12 is one these attributes and the author could not have depended less in Isaiah for its construction.

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