

PREFACE

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This *Festschrift* is offered to Hallvard Hagelia on the occasion of his seventieth birthday and his retirement as Professor of Biblical Studies at Ansgar College and Theological Seminary in Kristiansand. The initiative for this *Festschrift* was taken by Ansgarskolen's director together with the steering committee of the Department of Theology, in gratitude for Hallvard Hagelia's decades-long faithful engagement as a teacher for many generations of students at Ansgarskolen and in recognition of his promotion of the academic study of the Hebrew Bible.

Hallvard Hagelia has written extensively on several topics within the field of Old Testament studies, but clearly the Book of Isaiah is one of the most important among them. This is the reason why the Book of Isaiah was chosen as the overarching subject of this *Festschrift*. Such a choice does of course have a certain disadvantage by limiting the number of potential contributors; on the other hand, this disadvantage is more than outweighed by the potential a more focused collection has to be used as a tool in research and in the broader scholarly debate.

The contributions collected in this *Festschrift* cover a wide range of various issues related to the Book of Isaiah, from historical and linguistic questions to a number of theological topics,

¹ Markus Zehnder is also the editor of the present volume.

such as God's self-limitation motivated in his love; the connection of spiritual and political elements in the concept of salvation; the function of the Spirit in God's redemptive work; the shaping of a new world of peace through God's intervention; the identity of Deutero-Isaiah's 'Servant of the Lord', to name just some. Questions of the Book of Isaiah's interpretation and reception in various post-modern settings, including in post-colonial Africa, are also dealt with, as well as its use in the context of pastoral care. In addition, the reader is introduced to two of the most influential commentators of the Book of Isaiah in the past 150 years, Wilhelm Gesenius and Brevard Childs.

The studies collected in this volume represent a broad diversity not only in topics, but also in approaches and theological background of the contributors (both denominationally and culturally). Traditional and more recently developed methods in various branches of the social sciences inform the articles.

It is our hope that this book will both be a valuable gift for the honoree and a source of inspiration and incentive to further studies for a broader public interested in the Book of Isaiah, a book whose treasures will not be exhausted as long as biblical studies continue on this side of eternity.