

Allan MacRae, Isaiah 40-56, Lecture 9

This is lecture 9 delivered by Dr. Allan MacRae at Biblical Theological Seminary on Isaiah 40-56:

Your assignment for next time is to take Isaiah 53, verses 4, 5, 8 and 9, and to compare them in the King James version to any modern version and note any significant differences.

Now we were looking last time at the section of Isaiah that included chapter 50. We noticed in chapter 50, the first three verses, really belong with the previous chapter. They are another stanza of the same discussion as found in the previous chapter. And you really should start a new chapter with verse 4. With verse 4 we have statements made that would be difficult to explain if we had not already in chapter 49 had the Servant of the Lord speaking and telling how the Lord was going to use him to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and also to bring light to all the nations. Thus having had the Servant of the Lord speaking so recently, it is a viable option to see whether he might be speaking in verses 4 and following.

We noticed there that there are statements made that would hardly fit Israel. It wouldn't seem likely that Israel would say, "The Sovereign Lord has opened my ears and I've not been rebellious; I've not drawn back" (verse 5) because Israel has been criticized by Isaiah in previous chapters for being rebellious. Going on, "I did not hide my face from mocking and spitting" (verse 6). Well, that certainly doesn't sound like Israel talking. It doesn't sound like Isaiah talking either. Isaiah may have, perhaps, in the last part of his life suffered some persecution, but we certainly have no evidence of his having ever voluntarily submitted to humiliation as described here. Of course, it is not God speaking because "the Sovereign Lord has given me this, the Sovereign Lord has done this." So that the best option remains that it is the Servant.

We've have learned quite a bit about the Servant of the Lord in previous chapters. Now, beginning in verse 4 "The Sovereign Lord has given me," the NIV says, "an instructed tongue." The King James says, "the tongue of the learned." The trouble with

that in present day English is that "learned" suggests a scholar, somebody like that. If you take the word "learned" in its literal sense, it fits exactly as a good translation but it doesn't quite give the idea today. We think of a learned person as possibly having received a doctor's degree and doing great research when we say "the tongue of the learned." But the translation "the tongue of the one who has been instructed" is not correct because "the one" has the plural form. The King James, in this case, conveys that ideal well, because in modern English we do not use an adjective as a noun except for a plural. We say "between the quick and the dead," we don't mean one person and another person; we mean the plural. In most languages you can use it for singular or plural. But in modern English only for the plural. Here it is plural, so the translation "an instructed tongue" is not very literal in the NIV. It is "the tongue of those who have been instructed," but perhaps there is not much difference in the sense there. In Old English you could use it for singular as you can in most languages. So where we read in Isaiah 11 that "he shall smite the wicked," and we read that in 2 Thessalonians, "Then shall that one be revealed, that wicked whom the Lord will strike with the breath of his lips," and so on, "that wicked" should be "that wicked one;" it is singular. But in Old English you could use the term for singular or plural.

So here the Lord is giving him a tongue that is "like the tongues of those who are instructed." You remember people said of Jesus how does this man know so much having never been schooled? Well, he knew everything, and he showed a knowledge far beyond what they expected him to have. "To know the word that sustains the weary; he wakens me morning by morning, wakens my ear to listen like one being taught" (verse 4). And the Gospels show us how Jesus lived in constant communion with his father. There is a great stress there in the New Testament on the relationship between the Father and the Son. This might be said of Isaiah, but the whole context wouldn't fit Isaiah. But it does look forward to Christ very definitely: what he will do and what he can do. "The sovereign Lord has opened my ears, and I've not been rebellious; I have not drawn back. I offered my back to those who beat me, my cheeks to those who pulled off the beard; I did not hide my face from mocking and spitting" (verse 6).

The New Testament tells us how Jesus voluntarily suffered. He said, "I laid down my life, no man takes it from me." He said to Pilate, "You could do nothing if it was not given to you." He had all power, but he chose not to use it. "Because the Sovereign Lord helps me, I will not be disgraced; therefore, I have set my faith like flint" (verse 7). Everybody said to Jesus, "Don't walk back to Jerusalem. You will be killed. You will be injured." We read in the New Testament, "He set his face to go to Jerusalem." "And I know that I will not be put to shame. He who vindicates me is near. Who then will bring charges against me? Let us face each other. Who is my accuser? Let him confront me. It is the Sovereign Lord who helps me. Who is he that will condemn me? They will all wear out like a garment. The moths will eat them up" (verses 7-9). Very interesting how he compares his endless light to the light of the people who were attacking him and persecuting him. "They will wear out. The moths will eat them up," but he will live forever.

Then in chapter 50, verses 10 and 11, the servant addresses the people in general. He says, "Who among you fears the Lord and obeys the word of his servant? Let him who walks in the dark, who has no light, trust in the name of the Lord and rely on his God." This is describing the life of the Christian who does not know what is ahead. He does not know what God's plan is for him. He is to some extent walking in the dark. He should use all the light he can get, but still he's walking in the dark. We don't know what's ahead for any one of us, but we can trust in the name of the Lord and know that if we are truly His, we can rely on Him.

But in chapter 50, verse 11, he turns back to those who do not trust in the Lord, who do not look to the Word of God for their wisdom. He says, "But now all you who light fires and provide yourselves with flaming torches." You who think that by human wisdom you are going to find the answer to your problems. You who think you can direct your life in the way you should. You who think you can figure everything out on a human basis. "You light fires and provide yourself with flaming torches." He says, "Go walk in the light of your fires and of the torches you've set ablaze. This is what you will receive from my hand: You will lie down in torment." Of course, God wants us to use all the

light we can get. He gave us our brains to use, but we don't know what's ahead, but we can put all that we can learn by purely human means in a secondary place in relation to the Word of God, which is the primary source of our knowledge. So he said, "Those who trust only in their own wisdom," he says, "They will lie down in torment."

Then in chapter 51 we start a long poem of reassurance. This long poem of reassurance is, to a large extent, addressed to Israel thought of as inevitably going into exile and written in such a way as to comfort the Israelites in exile, but at the same time recognizing some of the development of thought in the previous chapters: that, after all, the reason they are going into exile is because of their sin. If God delivers them from exile and does not deal with the sin question, there will be other exiles inevitably. But in this passage the question of sin is only touched on a little. There is hardly any rebuke in this section; it is more assurance: assurance that they can trust in the Lord; that if they put their faith in him, they can know that he is going to fulfill his promise. He's going to bring them back from exile, and the suggestion, not strongly emphasized in this section, that he is also going to deal with the sin question, which is, after all, the cause of the exile as he has been gradually developing the thought from chapter 41 on. Chapter 40, you remember, was a prelude to the whole section touching upon the general themes that we find throughout the section. We have, to some extent, a reminiscence in this section of chapter 40 as we again touch on certain of its main ideas.

So he says in 51:1, 2, "Look to me you who pursue righteousness and seek the Lord. Look to the rock from which you were cut and the quarry from which you were hewn. Look to Abraham, your father, and to Sarah, who gave you birth. When I called him he was but one, and I blessed him and made him many." God has given great blessings to Abraham. Look back at what he's done. Now, don't despair and say, "God won't give anything to you." You can trust in him. Isaiah continues through this section with reasons for assurance for the people to trust in God.

But in chapter 51, verses 4 and 5, he goes way beyond the immediate situation and promises what he is going to do in the future. In verse 4, "Listen to me. . . .The law will go out from me; my justice will become a light to the nations. My righteousness draws

near speedily; my salvation is on the way, and my arm will bring justice to the nations. The islands will look to me and wait in hope for my arm. Lift up your eyes to the heavens, look at the earth beneath. The heavens will vanish like smoke. The earth will wear out like a garment and its inhabitants die like flies. But my salvation will last forever; my righteousness will never fail.” And so he continues with these assurances of God’s continuing blessing.

In chapter 51, verse 9, he says, “Awake! Awake! Clothe yourselves with strength, O arm of the Lord; awake, as in the days gone by, as in generations of old. Was it not you who cut Rahab to pieces?” Well, these nations around Israel observed human sacrifice, but God never commanded it to Israel. So why would somebody say that it was the arm of the Lord that cut Rahab to pieces. Well, here we have a strange thing that the very same word that was the name of Rahab, the woman who was blessed for helping the Israelites as they went into the land, that exact same sound is a common term occasionally used in the Scripture with the idea of a monster. It often is used specifically for Egypt because of the way that Egypt held the Israelites in bondage and the way that God brought them out. There are two or three instances out of the very few times this word occurs this way.

There are two or three instances where it definitely means a monster, and two or three where it definitely means Egypt, and one or two where we’re not quite sure which is meant. But here he refers undoubtedly to Egypt as the pierced monster because the next verse states, “Was it not you who dried up the sea, the waters of the great deep, who made a road in the depths of the sea so that the redeemed might cross over?” Here he’s looking back to the deliverance through the Red Sea as he delivered Israel from Egypt. He says, “The arm of the Lord has done this.” We can expect him still to give us deliverance. We can trust him even as he delivered them.

And then in chapter 51, verses 12 to 16, we have perhaps the last great stress on the idea of God’s creative power in this section. You remember how that’s been stressed in chapter after chapter previously. Between Isaiah forty and here we have more stress on God’s creative power than in any other section of the Bible except the book of Job.

There is this tremendous stress on God's creative power because it is dealing with his power to rescue the people from exile and his power to deal with the cause of the exile--to deal with the problem of sin.

So there is here the last great stress on this in chapter 51, verse 13, and following. "That you forget he is the Lord your maker who stretched out the heavens and laid the foundations of the earth." Astronomers today are agreed that the heavens were "stretched out." Fifty years ago there were many of them who doubted that. Perhaps even twenty years ago many thought that the heavens had always been exactly as they are now. The universe was static, there was no beginning. But today all astronomers agree that all the universe was at one time a small ball of matter. That this small ball of material had a tremendous explosion, and that after this tremendous explosion all the stars and galaxies that formed have been moving rapidly away from one another. Nobody knows what caused them to do it. Some astronomers have tried to say that the universe has always been here but it's just been continuously expanding and contracting. Over time all this matter will stop going out and gravity will take over and it will all come together and we will again have a great ball of matter, or a small ball with all the matter of the universe together and again it will explode. But most astronomers would say there is no reason that the universe is going to collapse, and if there's no reason to think it is going to collapse, there is no reason to ever think it did collapse. All the evidence today that science has points to the whole universe having started at one time and then gone out with a tremendous motion in all directions, and is exactly fits what is said here: "The Lord, your maker, who stretched out the heavens," not who simply made them as they are, but who "stretched them out."

It is an interesting thing that this phrase, "stretched out the heavens," is used a few times of the Lord in the prophetic books: "the Lord who stretched out the heavens," but there are a few times when instead of using the perfect tense as you have here it uses the participle, "who is stretching out the heavens." And why should such an idea have ever occurred that "he was stretching out the heavens"? He simply did not do something once, but he is doing it; it's a continuous action. Well, anybody up until fifty years ago would

have said, of course, that's just a formal expression. You sometimes say "stretched out," you sometimes say "is stretching out," but we know now for the last fifty years--I don't "know" whether we should use the word know for anything that we do not have on the evidence of the Scripture--but I will say that as far as all scientists believe today, they all believe that the whole universe is "being stretched out." That is, all parts of the universe that are moving away from all other parts at a rapid rate as a result of the discovery made in the first decade the Twentieth Century, which all astronomers now agree shows that this is the situation. If that is true, we have here a very interesting use of this participle, suggesting the idea that this could not have been constructed from science from the time of the Bible, but there is a suggestion there which, when we make the discovery, we find that what the Scripture says fits exactly with the discovery. I've never heard that pointed out by anybody else, but I was struck by the difference in the verbal form used in Hebrew and then when I came across the knowledge that this is so generally believed by astronomers, it struck me as very interesting that there was already a suggestion of it here in the Scripture. So Isaiah refers to the Lord's great power that here in this verse is the beginning of it. Now, specific emphasis on the continuation of that power is that he stretched out the heavens and laid the foundations of the earth.

Isaiah continues with the words of assurance to Israel with the emphasis on the way he is to deal with their problems; but not only that, he is going to deal with the cause of these problems. So here there is a considerable amount of mention of their suffering and their sad condition. There is no rebuke, really, through here. In earlier chapters we had very strong rebuke, although nothing like other parts in the prophetic books. From chapters forty on the theme is mostly comfort with just an occasional reference to the fact that the cause of all their problems is their sin. But it is mostly comfort because they are thought of as those who primarily need comfort here, rather than rebuke. But there is an occasional slight rebuke to bring to their attention the cause of all the suffering that they are going through.

Chapter 52 is a clear continuation of what precedes. We've had these very sections starting with, "Awake, awake," and then going on. Chapter 52 begins the same

way, "Awake, awake, O Zion; clothe yourself with strength. Put on your garments of splendor." He continues with his promises of blessing to the people and of deliverance from the exile. In verse 7 and following we have a very strong echo of chapter 40: "How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news." Remember in chapter 40, "O Jerusalem, get you up into the high mountains; O Zion, bring assurance of blessing to God's people." "How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those bring good news who proclaim peace, who say to Zion, 'Your God reigns.'" This fits with deliverance from exile, but it also fits with deliverance with the problem of sin. Both are being dealt with throughout this section. "Listen, you who lift up your voice together; they shout for joy when the Lord returns to Zion; they will see it with their own eyes." Then verse 11 is very definitely getting back to the idea of the deliverance from exile. "Depart, depart, go out from thence, touch no unclean thing. Come out from it and be pure you who carry the vessels of the Lord" (52:11). Do you remember that when Cyrus gave the decree for many people to go back from exile, he ordered that the vessels of the temple, which had been taken by Nebuchadnezzar when Jerusalem was conquered, which were in Babylon, be given to the Israelites to take back to the new temple to be built in Jerusalem.

So, "You who carry the vessels of the Lord. But you will not leave in haste or go in flight, for the Lord will go before you; the God of Israel will be your rear guard" (Isa 52:11-12). You think of the Israelites in captivity far away from their homeland and they might conceivably manage in the time of revolution or difficulty in the Babylonian government to escape and to flee back in danger, but that is not what God says is going to happen. "You will not go by flight." You won't have to leave in fear. God is sending Cyrus who will issue a decree for permitting the Israelites to go back--to all those who desire to--and giving them help to go back and rebuild Jerusalem, the city, and to set up the temple again.

Now in chapter 52, verses 11 and following, "Depart, depart, go out from there; touch no unclean thing. Come out and be pure you who carry the vessels of the Lord. But you will not leave in haste or go in flight, for the Lord will go with you; the God of Israel

will be your rear guard."

This is where there should be a new chapter division. And it is truly unfortunate that the English archbishop in the twelfth century A.D., when he rode on his horse going on his pastoral calls, made his chapter divisions in the Latin Bible, which were later taken over into the Hebrew. Instead of putting the chapter division here where it belongs, he put it three verses later. It breaks up the thought, and the result is that you will find commentaries discussing Isaiah 53 who will begin, "Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed." Who is talking, they say? Who is talking? Why, it is evidently the great voice of the succession of the prophets who has believed our message.

The King James says, "Who has believed our report." Personally, I do not think that either "report" or "message" is a good translation here. I think that the American Standard Version is a much better translation. I'm not speaking the Revised Standard, I'm speaking about the version that came out in 1901 which is, "Who has believed what we have heard." The verbal form here is definitely a passive participle. "Who has believed what we have heard?" Now, "what we have heard" is a message, of course. What if it was talking about who has believed what we have given out? Why you would expect it to use a different form than the passive participle. Of course, it does carry over the idea that not everybody is going to believe the message, and so the New Testament very properly uses it in that sense: that not everybody is going to believe the message, and that is a factor in interpreting this verse, but not the primary thought of the verse in the Hebrew. The verse is saying, "who has believed what we have heard?" And so all this discussion and commentaries would be quite needless, quite unnecessary, if they had only noted this: that the chapter begins three verses earlier with 52:13. That is, this theme, this subject, begins three verses earlier, and there should not be a break at this place where the break is made. I think we lose a great deal of the value of Isaiah 53 when we omit the three verses just before.

I've known many people who have memorized the whole of Isaiah 53, but I've never met anyone who has memorized from Isaiah 52:13 on through 53 and I don't think

you really get the sense of Isaiah 53 without the last three verses of 52. The fact is, there is a lot of tremendous truth there: the picture of how God is going to deal with sin and the picture of how the Servant of the Lord is going to do his great work in this chapter. But you don't really get the proper introduction to 53, or the proper understanding of it, when you leave out the previous three verses that are so important.

So chapter 53 should begin with 52, verse 13, where he has finished his long poem of reassurance, and where he begins again with the theme of the servant of the Lord, a theme that we have seen at several instances between chapter 41 and here, where the Lord has introduced it, presented the theme of the Servant of the Lord, who is Israel as God's servant.

God brought Israel into the world in order that a certain work be done. Not all of Israel can do this work. Some of them are definitely hostile to God. They certainly can't be part of the service. It must be a part of Israel. Israel has the responsibility for the work being done. Yet the servant who is to do the work, who is a part of Israel, who can represent Israel, who can do the work for Israel as well as for the rest of the world, is an individual, and so now we find out how this servant is going to do his work.

This is the great climax of the book of Isaiah. It is one of the great climaxes of the Old Testament: chapter 53 beginning with 52, verse 13. So it begins with a line that is impossible to translate exactly into English. We notice it begins, "See, my servant will act wisely" in the NIV. But there is there a footnote that says, "or will prosper." And here we have a Hebrew word, which has a specific meaning for which I know of no English word. It means that he will do what is effective and that what he will do will be successful. So the translation, "He will act wisely," is entirely true; and the translation, "He will prosper," as rightly understood, is entirely true. But it does not mean to prosper simply through chance or good fortune, or because things turn out your way. It means to do that which accomplishes the results desired. So really "to act wisely and as a consequence succeed in what he is undertaking" is what this Hebrew word means.

You find even between two languages as similar as English and German it is extremely difficult to make a good translation because the words don't exactly mesh. An

English word will have certain meanings in it that a particular German word won't have, and the German word will have certain meanings that the English word won't have. If you translate word for word it often doesn't get the sense across. If that is true between English and German, how much more with a language so different from ours as Hebrew.

But we can find out by studying how the word is used in context exactly what it means. That is why I believe the most useful thing for study of the Bible is *Young's Analytical Concordance*. I don't believe that there is any commentary that is worth half as much to the person who wants to find out what the Bible means as *Young's Analytical Concordance* because in that you find every way that a particular Hebrew or Greek word is translated. Then you look under the English word, they have put together there the Hebrew or Greek words with that English translation. So it may take you a little time to find the different cases, and sometimes you'll find a Hebrew word translated ten times one way in English and two hundred another. When you do, you want to see whether they have made proper translations in the ten times in English or whether, perhaps, that gives you an idea of a certain phase of the meaning that you wouldn't have immediately gotten because the only way to tell in any language is by context.

It was thought widely 100 years ago that by etymology you could tell what a word meant. That doesn't tell you what a word means. Etymology gives suggestions as to what it might mean. You take the old Germanic word from which the German "knecht" and the English "knight" are derived. "Knecht" in German is the servant, and "knight" in English is a mark of respect. But the word as used originally was sort of in-between. The German "knecht" is the one the king looked down at. And it today, in German, it simply means "servant." But in English the "knight" was the one whom the king looked down at, but whom the bulk of the people saw riding the big horse with armor around him, and they looked up to him. And so we have two words derived from the same original which, you might say, have opposite meanings currently. But we can see how they developed from the same one original meaning. And sometimes when words develop like that you will have two very different meanings in English, but you can trace back how they came from one original root. While in other cases as in Rahab, which I mentioned a few

minutes ago in Hebrew, it's the identical word, but Rahab meaning Egypt and Rahab who helped the spies are entirely different.

Just like the English word "light." I can hold something up and hold up a little black book and I can say this is lighter than that. On the other hand, I can hold a big heavy book and a little book here and say that is much lighter than this. Because our word "light" can mean "light color" or it can mean "less heavy." Two utterly different meanings are included in the sense of our word "light." They are utterly different, and they are not derived from each other even though today they are the same word, a homophone.

So this word, "he will act wisely," means he will act in such a way as to accomplish his purpose. Then we have his exaltation. "He will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted." The servant is going to be highly exalted. That is a tremendous thing to say. He is highly exalted, but we've got that in Isaiah 42. We've got it earlier, but we also have his humiliation in chapter 50 and, to some extent, in chapter 49. And our very next verse describes his humiliation. "Just as there were many who were appalled at him [or, you, see below], his appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any man and his form marred beyond human likeness." His exaltation is immediately followed by his humiliation. This is a strange combination that never would have occurred to a man simply making something up. But God revealed this in giving a prediction, a tremendous prediction of the work of Christ. He is going to be greatly exalted and he is going to succeed in what he undertakes, but he is going to undergo great humiliation.

Well now, I am glad the NIV says, "Just as there were many who were appalled at him." The word is often translated in such a way as to convey the idea "many who were surprised at him." But the Hebrew word does not mean "surprise." It is more like "shocked." "Appalled" is a very good way to render this word into English. The other gives quite a false idea. "Just as there were many who were appalled at him" the NIV says. Then it has a footnote which says, "The Hebrew, 'you' after the 'him.'" Well, what are we trying to do in a translation? Are we trying to tell you what the translators think, or are we trying to show you what the Hebrew says. There is no other source that

I know of except in those very few cases where a mistake has come in copying the Hebrew. The Greek Septuagint, the very early translation of the Hebrew into Greek preserves the correct reading. There are a few such cases but not a great many. Ordinarily, the Hebrew text can be depended on. And so here the NIV footnote simply says, "Hebrew you" If the Hebrew is "you," let's keep the "you."

"Just as many were appalled at you." Well who is the "you"? Well all through the chapter before we have been talking about Israel. "Awake, awake, O Zion, put on your garments of splendor, O captive daughter of Zion. You were sold for nothing, without money you'll be redeemed," We've been talking about Israel before. Now it is a very good guess that when he says "you" here, he is talking to Israel, especially since he has been talking about the servant in the third person.

And there's another thing that the NIV translators did not bring out in the translation, neither does the King James. Verse 14 in the Hebrew begins "just as," which is a good translation, but the next part here is, "his appearance was so disfigured." The "so" is the beginning of the phrase in the Hebrew. The same Hebrew word *ken* can mean "just as" or "like this" or "so." "Like this" you have been appalled. "Like this" he is going to be humiliated. It is a definite comparison or showing of a result. The word shows close relationship, and we have three statements given all of which begin with this Hebrew word *ken*.

"Just as many were appalled at you." Many people may have said, "Look at Israel, a great nation with great power there. The kingdom of David and Solomon. Look at the long history of Israel and now you can hardly take Israel as a nation. It is a part of the Babylonian empire. The people are off there in exile, in suffering, in humiliation. It doesn't seem like a nation anymore." "Just as many were appalled at you, so his appearance is disfigured, beyond that of any man; his form marred beyond human likeness."

There is a comparison to Israel. They there are recognizing that the "you" is referring to Israel. We could say, "Just as many were appalled at you, my people." There is no "my people" expressed. But the "you" is all through the chapter before. And the

servant is here spoken of in the third person. And so it is the natural interpretation that it is "his people" he's speaking of. So the NIV added the footnote in order to show what they thought the "you" is meant, which is, I think, much better than changing it to "him" like most modern translations do.

Just as Israel seemed not to be a nation, disfigured, we might say, as an entity, "so his appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any man and his form marred beyond human likeness" (52:14). Then the next line, which should be the end of the verse, we encounter the word, "so," again: "So marred was he, so shall he sprinkle many nations." There should be a paragraph break at the end of that line. Just as many were astonished, were appalled at you, so is he to seem hardly a human for what he suffered. With the scourging, with the crown of thorns, with the terrible suffering of the crucifixion, he will hardly seem human. Such is what he's going to go through. His humiliation is compared to the sufferings of Israel in exile.

Then we have his exultation. We have his humiliation and then we have his accomplishments. "So shall he sprinkle many nations." Now the translators of the Greek Septuagint didn't get any sense of that, "so shall he sprinkle many nations." So we have a footnote here that says, "Hebrew; Septuagint, 'So will many nations marvel at him. So they will marvel at him.'" But that's not what the Hebrew says; the Hebrew says, "So shall he sprinkle many nations." The RSV says, if I recall correctly, "So shall he startle many nations." And they have a footnote which says, "Hebrew obscure."

Well, this Hebrew word occurs about 22 times in the Old Testament. And in about 20 of them the RSV translated it as "sprinkle." In one of them they translated "spatter" and then in this one they say "Hebrew obscure." And, of course, the reason is because the translators of the RSV, just like the translators of the Septuagint, could not get any sense out of saying "So shall he sprinkle many nations." But the word is the word that is commonly used many, many times in the Pentateuch to express the sprinkling with blood of the instruments in the temple in order to purify them. It is the common word for the sacrifices and the purification in the temple. It is a word whose meaning is perfectly plain that way. The only time I think of when it doesn't mean that is when they threw Jezebel

out of the window and she was broken when she hit the ground and her blood "spattered" against the wall. The word definitely means "So shall he sprinkle," but they couldn't get any sense of it. I can't blame the translators of the Septuagint for not getting any sense out of it. The Jews in those days did not understand what it meant. If they just translated what was there instead of making a guess and saying "so shall many nations be startled, many nations marvel at him," it would have been much better.

But Peter knew; Peter knew what it meant. And so let's look at what Peter said. We look at 1 Peter, and we read there in 1 Peter 1, verse 1, "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, of God's elect, strangers in the world, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia." Well now, how would you express many nations better than that: Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia? Now, what about these many nations? He says, "Who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father by the sanctifying work of the Spirit for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood" (1 Pet. 1:2). So Peter says, I know what it means that "He shall sprinkle many nations." That is what Jesus Christ has done by bearing their sins upon the cross and making it possible to purify them from their sins, and making this available not just to the Jews, but to many nations, being a light even for the Gentiles.

That should be the end of one paragraph, and you should start a new paragraph leading to Isaiah 53 with the second line of verse 15. We will have to wait until next week to do that.

Transcribed by OT Lit class group fall 2009

Initial editing by Ted Hildebrandt

Final editing by Dr. Perry Phillips

Re-narrated by Dr. Perry Phillips