

which involves a difference of only one letter. ^28 Actually, decision between the two does not affect the meaning of the passage, since the previous clause already states one of these meanings, and the interpretation in the King James Version is merely an anticipation of what will be clearly said in verse 6. (An identical textual variation in Isaiah 9:3 results in a similar difference between translations.)

Verse 6 begins with a hyperbole. The raising up of the tribes of Jacob is not a small thing but a great task. Calling it a small thing is simply a rhetorical way of indicating that the Servant has also a far greater task to perform, that of bringing light to the nations and salvation to the ends of the earth.

Verse 7 has the first clear statement of the humiliation of the Servant, a thought briefly suggested in verse 4. When the verse speaks of Him as "the one abhorred by the nation," it would seem definitely to point to the rejection of Christ by a large portion of the nation of Israel. The latter part of the verse strongly emphasizes His exaltation, which will result in the submission of great kings and princes.

Throughout this passage, the faithfulness of God is emphasized. It will be God in Christ who will bring salvation to the world (2 Cor 5:19).

There are five more verses in this passage, which read as follows:

(8) Thus says the LORD, In a favorable time I have answered you, and in a day of salvation I have helped you; and I will protect you and give you for a covenant of a people, to restore the land, and to make them inherit the desolate heritages; (9) saying to the prisoners, Go forth, to those who are in darkness, Show yourselves. They will feed along the roads, and their pasture will be on all their heights. (10) They will not hunger or thirst, nor will scorching heat or sun strike them, for he who has compassion on them will lead them, and will guide them to springs of water. (11) And I will make all my mountains a road, and my highways will be raised up. (12) Behold, these will come from the north and from the west, and these from the land of Sinim.