

Isaiah 52:13-53:12

Since I have devoted considerable time to the particular study of this extremely important section of Isaiah I shall make a number of comments in the order of their occurrence.

At the beginning of v.13 I am glad to see the verb translated "act wisely," along with "will prosper" in a footnote. Both ideas are contained in the Hebrew word and I know of no way to include both ideas in one English word. Both ideas are involved here. Placing one in the text and the other in the margin impresses me as excellent, and I am glad I do not have to vote as to which should be relegated to the margin.

In the next verse (v.14) I believe there is a comparison. The Hebrew says, "Just as many were appalled at you, so disfigured is his appearance beyond that of any man." The Hebrew has "so" at the very beginning of the second line. I believe the verse compares Israel's condition in the suffering of exile to the terrible suffering that must be borne by the coming One. The Hebrew reads: "as many were appalled at you," and it is stated in the footnote that the Hebrew says "you." Since our purpose is to translate the Hebrew I would think that "you" ought to be included in the text instead of "him." (Incidentally, the Septuagint also has "you" here. Also it might be noticed that earlier in this same chapter the second person is used several times to refer to Israel.) If "him" is kept in the text the note should read "Hebrew and Septuagint you."

The first line of verse 15 is a definite prediction of the cleansing and redeeming work of Christ. In 1 Peter 1:2 there is a clear reference to this passage. After speaking of many nations in 1 Peter 1:1, the apostle says that people from these nations have been "sprinkled with the blood of Jesus Christ." I am glad that no reference is made to the RSV substitution of "startle," along with a footnote reading, "The meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain." Since