

Now there are more emphases on the Servant in some passages following that, but I want you to look forward to the great climactic passage about the Servant. That is one of the best known passages in the OT--the 53rd ch. of Isaiah. The ch. that describes the work of God's servant. But there is a very unfortunate thing--that the ch. does not begin where it ought to. You know in the Bible originally there were not ch. divisions. In fact there were no ch. divisions until about 1000 yrs. after the time of Christ. The vs. divisions were made very early, but the ch. divisions were a comparatively late thing.

It was an English Archbishop who in his Latin Bible put in the ch. divisions for both OT and NT, and somebody has said that as he made these divisions in the Latin Bible as he was going about on horseback to make his calls, and as the horse stumbled he made a fresh division at the wrong place. I heard Campbell Morgan the great expositor of a generation ago say that he that in 9 cases out of 10 he thought the ch. divisions were in the wrong place. I don't think that is true, though they are wrong in a great many places and so I think it always good when you read a ch. to look at two or three vs. before, and see if there is a break there or if they are closely connected. Do the same at the end. Very often you will find that there is a summary of the ch, particularly in the book of Hebrews, the ch. is summarized or concluded by the first vs. in the next ch. Very often it is. There are great breaks where there should be breaks, but there are many cases where the ch. divisions divide the thought where they should not.

In this case the last 3 vs. in ch. 52 should be tightly combined with ch. 53, and some highly praised commentators have said the most absurd things because they have started the section at the beginning of ch. 53, instead of starting where it should at 52:13, where he says, "See my servant will act wisely." That's the way the NIV has it. I believe the KJV has "Behold my servant. . ." It describes here the great work the Servant is to do, and it runs through the last verse of this and into the next ch.

In this ~~xx~~ whose section Isaiah is speaking to people in exile. When the nation seems to have lost its identity, in fact, many of the ancient nations did lose their identity through the exile. They were taken into exile, scattered among other nations and completely lost their identity. Many of the Israelites disappeared into the surrounding peoples among whom they happened to be taken into captivity. It looked as if the nation had been destroyed. It was just a part of the great mass of people in the Babylonian empire which was then taken over by a Persian king. But there were many who did not lose their identity because there were many who believed they were God's people raised up for a definite purpose, and rejoiced greatly when they had opportunity to go back and reestablish themselves in Jerusalem.

So we find the word "act wisely" is a word which is hard to translate. Some give "will prosper." It has two aspects: the aspect of doing things wisely, but it has the aspect of doing things in such a way that they accomplish results. Here he is saying that there is something the Servant is going to do that will accomplish the great result that is needed. The great result that is ~~xxxx~~ needed has been developed and brought out in the previous chapters. They tell time