

no good purpose in itself. It is proof of Israel's inability to carry out the work assigned to her. The humiliation of the Servant is not due to any sin of His own, for He is without sin. He is the One who calmly and without haste proceeds to the accomplishment of His work. Yet He must undergo humiliation. Why must He do so? The following verse gives us the answer: "So shall he sprinkle many nations."

The word translated "sprinkle" here is the word which is used repeatedly in Leviticus for the ceremonial cleansing of the objects in the temple. Sometimes this was done with water and sometimes with blood. The purpose of the humiliation of the Servant is to cleanse many nations. It is to bring to them God's redeeming power and to free them from their sin. Thus right in the beginning of this passage we have its great note touched upon. The Servant is to accomplish His work and as a result to be exalted. He is to go through great humiliation but the result of His humiliation is to be the purification of the nations.

Under the word "sprinkle," the Revised Version has a footnote which says "or startle." Many modern interpreters like to substitute the word "startle" for "sprinkle." There is no philological justification for this. The word "sprinkle" in this form is used repeatedly in the Pentateuch to describe the sprinkling of water, oil, or blood on the various vessels of the tabernacle in order to cleanse them. It is exactly the work which He is to do--to bring purification to the nations by means of His suffering. The only way that the idea of "startle" is found here is by assuming that just as one causes water or blood to jump when he sprinkles it, so he causes the nations to jump or leap in joy. There is no use of the word in such a sense anywhere else in the Hebrew. In favor of reading "startle" it is suggested that it parallels the beginning of verse fourteen and the rest of verse fifteen. But this is not really the fact. In verse fourteen the word translated "astonied" in the Authorized Version would be much better translated "appalled." It is not an attitude of joy or excitement, but rather such an impulse as would cause one to close his mouth in misery. Moreover, the idea of the rest of verse fifteen is altogether different. If the kings were startled you would expect them to open their mouths, rather than to shut their mouths. The passage means that many kings will stand in silent awe. The Servant has shown the