

purify themselves? Naturally by going to the temple and utilizing the means that were there available, and these means would involve sprinkling them as an indication of ceremonial cleansing. Surely any O. T. believer would understand that it means that the servant is going to provide a cleansing, not a mere ceremonial cleansing like that in the tabernacle and in the temple but a carrying out of that which was represented by those ceremonies, he is to sprinkle many nations. The reference to many nations would not be clear to one who thought only in terms of the nation of Israel alone. However, ~~to~~ any reader of the previous chapters would see that the work of the servant of the Lord is supposed to affect many nations, He will be a light to the Gentiles, He will bring judgment to the nations, to the very end of the earth. His cleansing work is thus to apply to distant nations as well as to Israel itself.

To a N. T. student, it should be equally simple to see what the phrase means. In the beginning of the ~~epistle~~ First Epistle of Peter, the apostle mentions his hearers as being people belonging to many nations. At least a dozen are mentioned in verse 1. Then in verse 2 he speaks of the individuals to whom he is writing as those who enjoyed the blessing of "sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." Peter declares that Jesus has by his blood already sprinkled people from many nations.

In the RSV and in various other translations made in recent years, the word sprinkle is replaced by the word spatter. It is interesting to note that the RSV has a footnote which says the meaning of the Hebrew word is not clear. It does not claim thus that the Hebrew word specifically means spatter. Some commentators do make such a claim. However, it is a claim which cannot possibly be substantiated.

Nor is it true to say that there is anything that is not clear about the Hebrew word. It is used, aside from this passage it is used 23 times in the O. T. and in every one of them the word sprinkle exactly fits. In the RSV itself, the word is translated sprinkle 20 times, every one of the 20 dealing with ceremonial cleansing. It is translated spatter once where it speaks of the blood of Jezebel when she was thrown out of the window being spattered on the walls, and ~~once~~ once is in Isaiah 63 where it speaks of the one who