

42 40:1-5

and there is no basis for introducing the idea of blessing into the word "double."

The solution to the difficulty lies in recognition that the Hebrew word used here, ⁴ one of several that are commonly translated "double," can properly be considered as similar to the English word "double" when used to represent a person who looks so much like another that it is difficult to distinguish them. Each of them is the "double" of the other, but neither is to be considered as equal to twice the other. It might be clearer to render it "equivalent," "counterpart," or "substitute." The phrase looks forward to the time when God will declare that the equivalent for the sin of all believers has been paid. No man could pay this penalty; only the divine Servant of the LORD could do it.

After the proclamation at the end of verse 27 it is natural to expect further detail. The following verses, while highly figurative in nature, aptly describe an important step in the great victory over sin. All four gospels take them as a prediction of John the Baptist. Luke 3:4-6 designates verses 3-5 as a description of his work and its results. The other three gospels quote John the Baptist as applying verses 3-4 to himself (Matt 3:3; Mark 1:2-3; John 1:23).

Those who have been raised on the King James Version do not realize how different an idea others might receive from the King James Version quotation: "the voice of one crying in the wilderness" (Luke 3:4). In modern English, cry generally conveys the idea of weeping. In these passages the word should be rendered "cry out," "cry aloud," "call," or "proclaim."

Verse 5 shows that the great climax of the redemption proclaimed in these verses is not a mere human deliverance but a vision of the glory of God which all kinds of people will see. Thus these verses look forward to the incarnation and are an appropriate introduction to the whole development described in Isaiah 41-56. So wonderful is the promise that a special attestation is given at the end of verse 5: "For the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

As the chapter goes on, it is easy to see in much of it the