Letter Differences in Isaiah 52:13-53:12
Between the Hebrew Text Used by Bible Code Proponents (the Masoretic Text) and the Dead Sea Scroll material (the Great Isaiah Scroll, 1QIsa*)

*There are 3 lines for each verse:

**Line 1** = The actual Dead Sea script (once you compare line 1 with line 2, you’ll see how easily a scribe could have confused certain letters; you’ll also see how the letter styles have changed. At times the manuscript is damaged, so readability varies). The photos of the script comes from *The Great Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa): A New Edition*, ed. by Donald W. Parry and Elisha Qimron (Leiden: Brill, 1999).

**Line 2** = The Dead Sea scroll script put into modern type-face for readability.

**Line 3** = The Masoretic Text, used by Bible Code Proponents (from “BHS” – *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*).

**How to Understand What You’re Seeing:**
The reader needs to visually compare the spelling (the letters) of LINE 2 and LINE 3 (the DIFFERENCES are colorized for your convenience). You will find that there are many letters in the words IN the Dead Sea Scroll (DSS for short) that are MISSING from the text used by Bible code practitioners. In other words, there are undeniably MANY spelling differences between the text used by Bible Code proponents and the Dead Sea Scrolls – the scrolls CLOSEST to the biblical period (roughly 200 BC), and so the scrolls that most likely preserve the spelling of the biblical Old Testament text when put in its final composed form (typically viewed as no later than Ezra’s day – 450 BC).

My question is simple – how do we KNOW which text is right and which spellings were given by God so we could discover his code?

Letters marked in **blue** or **green** are letter differences – there are **115** of them (in only 15 verses)!! Anything marked in **green**, though, also is an example of a scribal practice OR some difference that may affect meaning.

We'll go verse by verse, from the end of Isaiah 52 (vv. 13-15) on into chapter 53 of Isaiah (12 verses in all; and so 15 total verses). However, the Dead Sea Scroll text has parts of verses on each line (i.e., one line may have v. 5 and the beginning of verse 6). We'll actually use the Dead Sea Scroll script / line as our template, so you can see the spelling differences. The image of the entire passage is available on my website – www.biblecodemyth.com.
Isa 52:13-14a

והנה מביאים עין עבדי, ודואים עליך הנבש מפלך. (13) הנבש עליך עבדי, ודואים עליך הנבש מפלך: 14 באשה שמורה. 13

Isa 52:14b

עליהם שפויה גוזר ופששת עבדיה וברחבה וнструדו וברחבה.

Isa 52:15a

וכנזה נגזרה עליה מרוח ורחמה ורוממה ורחמה. (15) כנזה נגזרה עליה מרוח ורחמה ורוממה ורחמה: 15

Isa 52:15b

לא אספר לך Erdogan לא אמרתי את הסופר והpanied את כליו בחרום לא אספר לך Erdogan לא אמרתי את הסופר והpanied את כליו בחרום.

Isa 53:1-2a

אף על פי שהיא בוהקת יד אהנה אמי מעלתהSabrina Hoxton.

(1) Mi hemam leshametenu ורותי הזה אל נגלה (2) roślin קדם לﻔנינו

(1) Mi hemam leshametenu ורותי זה אל נגלה: 2 נוכל פיניק לאנו.
Isa 53:2b

Note the tiny raised yodh (') above the second last word (from left) in the DSS – it's a scribal correction.

Isa 53:3b-4a

Isa 53:4

Isa 53:5
Isa 53:5b-6a

The last word in the line (reading right to left) is a different verb form in the DSS (where we see כפ instead of כָּפַל). In the MT (and our English Bibles) the verb reads "and he would not / will not open his mouth." Thus it sounds prophetic (it's a Qal Imperfect). In the DSS, though, the scribe has "he opened not his mouth" - it apparently made more sense to him that the action would already be PAST - he apparently did not take this phrase to be a prophecy. This is an example of a content disagreement in a manuscript. The scribe is not speculating on any "fulfillment" since he sees no prophetic content here. It's odd since the other imperfects and prophetic context are the same as MT. It's a good contextual argument for seeing MT (in this case) as the better reading. The Bible code proponent nevertheless has another letter disruption.

Isa 53:7b

Note again the raised letter in the second word from the right in the DSS to correct the text (and MT had it right).
Isa 53:8b

The last four words in this phrase are transcribed smaller and bracketed because in the DSS manuscript (you can't see it well without the color photo) these words ARE in fact lighter - they were most likely ADDED by a second or subsequent scribe who thought they belonged in the text (probably on the basis of another copy he was referencing). At any rate, this is only for interest - except for the blue highlight, the MT and DSS match.

Isa 53:9a

The (ז) in parentheses in the transcribed version reflect an ERASURE made by the scribe in his scroll (one that would show up in magnification or infrared - see the yellowed blotch).

Note a - See the raised dot above the third word from the left (תָּוָּו - MT has תַּוָּו). This is a dot written by scholars who transcribed this text for in book from which I photocopied the DSS script. The DSS text had תָּוָּו originally, and a scribe put the correct letter over the wrong one (see the actual script for a raised letter above the rest; it's a scribal correction).

Note b - There are also two dots over two of these letters (again, placed there by modern scholars) to tell us there was great difficulty determining the lettering of the script (it could be couple things grammatically).

Isa 53:9b-10a

The last word in this line (reading right to left) is different in the DSS. The word there means "he (God) profaned him (the sufferer in the chapter)". In MT it means "he (God) made him sick/weak". A slight difference, but not terribly significant - unless you are counting letters - here there would be six variations in a single word.
Isa 53:10b

Isa 53:10c-11a

Isa 53:11b-12a

Isa 53:12b

Isa 53:12c