

30 The King of Persia as Deliverer

pronouns in Verse 14. It is most reasonable to believe that the statement "the LORD has loved him" refers to the many ways that God had shown His love and mercy to Israel in days past. There is some disagreement among interpreters as to whether the next clause means that God will carry out His purpose against Babylon, or that Cyrus will carry out God's purpose against Babylon. But there can be little doubt that verse 15 refers to Cyrus, whom the LORD has brought forward and whom He will enable to succeed in his long career of conquest.

Thus the scattered statements about Cyrus bring out certain facts: (1) God raised up Cyrus for His own purposes; (2) the great successes of this Persian king, going beyond those of any known previous conqueror, are a vital part of God's plan; (3) the coming of Cyrus was predicted far in advance; (4) Cyrus is called God's messiah, since God set him apart for a specific work; (5) God's purpose in giving Cyrus his great successes was to make him His instrument for delivering Israel and causing Jerusalem to be rebuilt.