

was to topple Babylon from its high position, and within a few centuries all that would remain would be some heaps of ruins.

(16) Then I will lead the blind by a way they did not know. I will guide them in paths they have not known. I will make darkness light before them and crooked places straight. I will do these things, and I will not forsake them.

The fact that the beautiful promises of verse 16 come directly after the picture of violent destructive action in verses 13-15 is evidence that those verses are directly related to the deliverance of the Israelites from Babylon rather than to the work of the Servant, so different in nature. Israel, blinded by her sin and suffering under Babylonian captivity, will be freed as a result of such violent occurrences as are figuratively described in verses 13-15. God will raise up a mighty conqueror who will destroy the Babylonian armies, tear down their defenses, and put an end to their empire. God will lead the blind by a way they do not know, making darkness light before them. Israel will be delivered as the result of a violent cataclysm that she herself has no part introducing.

(17) They shall be turned back and utterly put to shame, who trust in idols, who say to molten images, you are our gods. (18) Hear you deaf, and look you blind, that you may see.

Verse 17 shows the utter rout of the idols that seemed so powerful during the time of Israel's exile. All who trust in them will be put to shame.

Verse 18 is a transitional statement which some commentators connect with what precedes, while others consider it an introduction to what follows. It actually looks both ways. Those who are trusting in idols are told to open their eyes and see the truth about this foolish worship. Nature is filled with evidences of God's wisdom and power, which man tends blindly to ignore. God calls on everyone to see the evidences of the true God that are all around us.

Yet this statement of the folly of idol worship leads to consideration of the failure of those who should be God's own, whose blindness has already been mentioned in verse 16.