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The verse continues, "Do not fear, for I have redeemed you." The Hebrew word translated "redeemed" <sup>^16</sup> originally indicated a very definite concept, picturing the reclaiming of a person (Lev 25:48), an animal (Lev 27:13), or a piece of land (Lev 25:25; cf. Ruth 4:4-6) by making a payment or by providing a substitute.

Not only has God created Jacob and developed the nation, He is even ready to redeem it after it has been lost through its own sin. Despite the strong criticism leveled at Israel in the verses immediately preceding, deliverance from Babylon is here specifically promised.

The second verse follows naturally from the first. Even when God's redeemed people go through fiery trials, they can know that He is with them, to lead and to protect.

While these two verses relate primarily to Israel, they are equally applicable to every true believer, since each one is a special creation of God. God's creative power was necessary to turn us from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to the power of God.

All men have been lost through their sin and need to be redeemed. Everyone who has been redeemed through the penalty that Christ paid on the cross belongs forever to the LORD and should know that nothing can ever happen in his life without God's definite purpose. Therefore he has a right to take the words "do not fear" as a solemn command and a definite assurance that he should not fear anything that can happen to him in this life. God controls all things and makes them work together for His own purpose in the development of His people. This fact is vividly illustrated by the second verse, with its references to danger from flood and fire and its promise that God will protect His own - all those who are called by His name (v. 1).

Every Christian could be greatly blessed by taking to heart the meaning of these two verses. His problems would be greatly simplified if he would realize that God has created him, has formed him, and has redeemed him, and that therefore everything that comes into his life is part of God's plan and is ultimately