

82 43:15-20

James Version translates as "nobles" ^19 is now more generally rendered "fugitives," but its meaning here remains uncertain. The leading group in Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon were called Chaldeans. Perhaps the verse contains an allusion to events or situations that are not at present known to us. In any event, its emphasis is clearly on the sovereign power of God in controlling history.

This leads naturally to continued emphasis on God's sovereign power in verses 15-17.

(15) I am the LORD, your Holy One, the creator of Israel, your king. (16) Thus says the LORD, who makes a way through the sea and a path through the mighty waters, (17) who brings out chariot and horse, army and warrior. They will lie down together and not rise again. They have been extinguished like a wick.

Here the deliverance of the Israelites described in Exodus 14 is recalled. God reminds His people of the way He made a path through the Red Sea to allow their ancestors to escape from the Egyptian warriors with their chariots and horses, and of how He caused these oppressors to follow the Israelites into the sea, where they were overwhelmed by the returning waters, lying down, never to rise up again.

(18) Do not remember the former things or consider things of the past. (19) See, I will do a new thing; now it will spring forth. Will you not perceive it? I will even make a roadway in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. (20) The beasts of the field will honor me, the jackals and the ostriches, for I have given water in the wilderness and rivers in the desert, to give drink to my chosen people. ^20 (21) The people whom I formed for myself will declare my praise.

Great as were God's wonderful works for His people in the past, He promises that future blessings will be even greater. In order to enable them to return from Babylon to their homeland, He declares that He will make a roadway through the wilderness, with abundant water available and all nature honoring its Creator.