

beyond the Babylonian Exile. This is particularly true of verse 12, as well, since it speaks of those who will come from far more distant points and from other directions. In the Babylonian Exile the prisoners were transported to the east, not to the north or to the west.

Verse 8 begins with a reference to a specific time when God will provide salvation. Paul quotes this verse in 2 Corinthians 6:2. The same apostle says, "When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son" (Gal 4:4). Jesus told the disciples that the time of His return was kept in the Father's hands and not to be known by them (Acts 1:7). Although there are many occasions when we do not know God's timing, we can be sure that it is exactly right and that He works all things together for the good of His people.

In the latter part of the verse God promises to protect the Servant and make Him the fulfillment of God's covenant promise to David. Through Him all that sin has wrecked will be restored and the desolate inheritances reestablished.

Verse 9 reiterates the promise of 42:7, that the Servant will bring out the prisoners and those who sit in darkness, and adds the promise of nourishment along the way.

Verse 10 can be understood as a beautiful statement in figurative terms of the spiritual blessings that God will give His people.

Verse 11 promises that the great obstacles that seem so formidable will be turned into roads for the progress of those who belong to the Redeemer.

Verse 12 describes the outreach of the work of the Servant of the LORD. The salvation that He provides is not to be limited to a small group. The fact that His work is to reach people of distant lands was stressed in chapter 42 and repeated to some extent in the earlier verses of chapter 49. Verse 12 pictures the people as coming from far off. It names two specific directions, the north and the west. The Babylonian army had come from the east and had taken its prisoners into captivity in that direction. A few had fled to the south, into Egypt. There is no evidence