

war. Babylon slowly declined until finally most of the city was in the situation here described. The picture given here suggests a sudden great catastrophe which results in overwhelming desolation that lasts a long time. It is a picture of the ultimate desolation of all that opposes God's will, and reaches its climax in the great catastrophe at the end of the present age. It parallels the description of the desolation of Edom in Isaiah 34. The condition of historic Babylon in recent centuries has been merely a foretaste of the complete fulfillment which is yet to come.

The passage ends with the words "and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged." It is necessary for us to recognize that this is looking at it from God's viewpoint. The time of wickedness seems very long from our human viewpoint, but from God's viewpoint it is really short. We know that He will indeed accomplish His great work, and we can rest our souls in patience, knowing that His purposes are certain of accomplishment.

Blessing on Israel

Isaiah 14:1-3 describes Israel's future happiness. This description is a specific declaration of God's mercy upon the Israelites, and describes them as having a power over their former oppressors such as has never come to Israel during the present age. It portrays something that is still future.

Verse 3 mentions the condition of the Israelites when God bestows His great mercy upon them, and introduces the taunt against the king of Babylon that follows.

The Fallen King of Babylon

Isaiah 14:4-20 deals with the leader of the great world power that opposes God. The great stress upon his personality and the fact that so much space is given to him show the importance of individuals in the world. Great personalities accomplish great things. It has been customary in many views of history to think that men are merely tools of their age. This may be true of the great mass of people, but great events are generally brought about by great men. If one would remove from the sixteenth century the influence of