

The concluding verses of this section (9-11) state that it is for the sake of His own name that God will desist from pouring out His anger further at this time, but will instead deliver His erring people.

Verses 12-15 again stress the omnipotence of God as the Creator who controls all things and point out that the deliverance of Israel through Cyrus is due to God's activity. It is God who has brought him and who is going to make his way prosperous.

Verse 16 again stresses the note of omniscience. God has spoken these things from the beginning; He has performed them and will continue to perform them. Thus the verse fits neatly into the context; yet it contains a new and striking idea, consideration of which we shall leave until after we have examined the chapter as a whole.

Verses 17-19 again express God's regret that Israel has sinned and gone its own way instead of following in the path which He has pointed out to it. The miseries of the exile would never have been theirs if sin had not come in and turned them away from Him.

Verses 20 and 21 declare that God is going to perform the great deliverance of the Israelites from Babylon. God calls on them to rejoice as His mercy goes with them on the return journey. They are to declare to the ends of the world the fact that God has redeemed His servant Jacob and has given them marvelous water out of the rock to quench their thirst. These words are a clear reference to the wonderful deeds of mercy which He performed for them at the time when they were going through the wilderness after He had delivered them from Egypt. The promise is that similar mercies will continue with them -- mercies which will be shown not merely in giving material water but also in giving great spiritual blessings which will meet the need of sinful and erring Israel. Verse 22 declares that, apart from God's mercy, true peace and well-being can never be found. While the verse stands alone here, it reiterates the thought of a great part of the chapter. It is taken by many as indicating the end of a main section of the book, because it occurs again at the end of the chapter 57. However, chapters 48 and 49 are closely linked together and there is no place for a main division of the book here. There is even less excuse for making a main division