

to come and he is speaking to them and through them and he is giving to the exiles that which they need to encourage them in faithful service to God. Chapter 40 is a prelude to the symphony and though it doesn't seem to deal specifically with factual material but it does stress various themes. You interpret all of ch. 40 as deliverance from exile. But much of it could also be interpreted in the light of the redemption that Christ will bring to pass 700 years after exile. The Book of Consolation actually is dealing with the whole history of redemption of which the exile is only a part. It is an emphasis upon certain emotions which are vital to all that is going to happen. In v. 1 it begins with the theme of comfort and then in v. 2 there is the reason for comfort and deliverance and she has received from the Lord's hands an equivalent for her sin. Vs. 3 and 4 is the preparation for the work of God--the opening up of the way so that God's complete work may be done. Is this the straightening out of the path so that the exile may come back or is it the preparing for the Gospel through Christ. It expresses a theme that God is preparing a way and will accomplish His work and anyone who is doing this important function in God's economy is carrying forth what God is speaking about in these verses. V. 5 stresses the glory of the exile. The people tend to think that God is out of the picture. Here there was the temple wrecked, the foreign gods have captured the city and have taken the people into captivity but God says No, the glory of the Lord will be revealed and all flesh will see it. All flesh saw the destruction of Israel and so all flesh will see the glory of the Lord. Then the theme of omnipotence--the mouth of the Lord hath spoken. You may not believe in God's glory with the city of Jerusalem having gone and the people have gone into exile but here is a proof of it--the mouth of the Lord speaks and then what He says is fulfilled--the ability of the Lord being able to predict the future is a wonderful evidence that God works and God reigns. These two themes are stressed more in this section 40-56 than in all the rest of the Bible--the theme of omnipotence here and in the latter part of Job is stressed more than all of the rest of Scripture put together. In the 7th and 8th verse the omniscience of God. Then in those wonderful verses--9 and 10 there is comfort again--God is coming with a strong hand. There is care and deliverance of God. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young. Then again in v. 12 following the omnipotence of God we have His omniscience stressed in verse 13.