

established on the islands around Greece or on those in the neighborhood of Asia Minor. A few years before Cyrus made his attack upon Babylon he carried a great campaign clear across Asia Minor from east to west and the Greek cities were filled with terror. In this campaign he conquered the famous Croesus, king of Lydia. Verses five and six depict the terror of these Greeks and other enemies of King Cyrus as he approaches. In verse seven we see them rushing to their idols for protection and even building new idols in the thought that thus they may be safe from the great force which God has raised up against them. Verse eight and the following verses contrast the condition of Israel with that of these who are filled with such terror by the approach of Cyrus. God declares that He is going to protect Israel and even to deliver her.

Verse eight is particularly interesting because in it the Lord gives the reason why He is going to protect Israel. He does not say that Israel is God's pet and that therefore He wishes to give her special preference over the nations. He declares instead that He has chosen Israel as one who is to be His servant to accomplish a work that He has planned. It is for this reason that Israel is to be maintained, in order that through her the great purpose of God may be accomplished.

Servant of the Lord

This is the first appearance of "the servant of the Lord" in the book of Isaiah. It is a theme which constantly grows in importance from chapter forty-one until its great climax in chapter fifty-three. At first sight it is not altogether clear exactly what is meant by the phrase "~~the servant of the Lord~~" and there has been much discussion about this. As we go on its