

Prophets -17-

of those who say that prophecy is just a general thing that has relevance to all periods and so this is a good description of Hitler and Mussolini and Stalin and all the other conquerors of the world's history all rolled into one. If you are going to take that sort of method you can make anything mean anything mean anything, of course. This is a specific description of some one great conqueror and what happened and we come to the conclusion later on that it is Cyrus who is described. Now in chapter 40 you have no such specific description of an individual. You have no one specific situation described.

Forty deals with general themes, 41 starts into a special action, and along with the analogy which I suggested, that chapters 40-56 are a great symphonic chorus, in which you have various themes presented and alternating from one theme to another, in connection with that analogy I believe that it is proper to add one more feature to the analogy; that is, that your symphonic form begins with a prelude. I guess you would call it a prelude to a symphony or an overture for an opera. In either case it would be a presentation which would give in general terms the main themes which will occur in the specific action which follows, and it impresses me that chapter 40 is a general overture or prelude which gives these main themes, without dealing with specific situations, and therefore that chapter 40 can be interpreted, every bit of it, in relation to the deliverance from Babylon, but it does not have to be so interpreted, because it is not dealing with specific situations but giving particular emotional approaches. And thus it begins with comfort, there is the power of God and the preparation for the revelation of His glory, the revelation of His glory and deliverance of His people from Egypt, the revelation of His glory and deliverance of His people from the power of sin, the revelation of His glory in delivering the world from the power of the devil. All this might be introduced by the prelude of chapter 40, and chapter 40, you can take every phase of chapter 40 and you can see a relevancy to the emotional ideas expressed to the situation of the exile in Babylon, but it is an introduction, not merely to the discussion of deliverance from Babylon, but to the discussion of God's deliverance of His