

21 Isaiah and His Contemporaries

Isaiah 44:28 assumes a situation in which Jerusalem has been destroyed:

Who says of Cyrus, he is my shepherd and he shall perform all my desire; saying of Jerusalem, she will be built and of the temple, your foundations will be laid.

Isaiah 45:13 includes the words:

He will build my city, and he will set my exiles free, not for price or reward, says the LORD of hosts.

Isaiah 46:1 speaks of the fate of the people who would take Judah into captivity. This theme is continued in 47:1-5. Isaiah 47:6 declares that it was God who sent His people into exile, but rebukes the oppressors for showing them no mercy. Isaiah 48:14 declares that God will show His great love for His people by punishing Babylon.

Isaiah 48:20 presents in poetic form one of the clearest statements of God's intention to deliver His people from Babylonian exile:

Go forth from Babylon! Flee from the Chaldeans! Declare this with joyful shouting, proclaim this, send it out to the end of the earth; say, The LORD has redeemed his servant Jacob.

Isaiah 51:14 reads:

The captive exile will soon be released and will not die in the dungeon, neither shall his bread fail.

Isaiah 51:17 promises deliverance to a suffering Jerusalem:

Rouse yourself! rouse yourself! Arise, O Jerusalem, you who have drunk from the LORD's hand the cup of his anger; you have drunk the cup of trembling; you have drained it out.

Isaiah 52:1-4 is a declaration that Jerusalem will be delivered from captivity and that its people will return. This promise of deliverance from exile reaches a great climax in verses 9-12:

(9) Break forth into joy, sing together, you waste places of Jerusalem: for the LORD has comforted his people, he has redeemed