

After these assurances the prophet breaks forth into song and gives a wonderful doxology in verses 10-12.

(10) Sing to the LORD a new song; sing his praise from the end of the earth, you who go down to the sea, and its fullness, the coastlands, and all their inhabitants. (11) Let the wilderness and its cities lift up their voice, the villages that Kedar inhabits. Let the inhabitants of Sela sing for joy, let them shout from the top of the mountains. (12) Let them give glory to the LORD, and declare his praise in the coastlands.

In the next three verses the tenor of the passage is interrupted by some statements rarely paralleled in this section of Isaiah.

(13) The LORD will go forth like a warrior. He will stir up his zeal like a man of war. He will utter a shout, he will raise a war cry. He will prevail against his enemies. (14) I have kept silent for a long time. I have kept still and restrained myself. Now I will cry out like a woman in travail; I will gasp and pant (15) I will lay waste mountains and hills, and dry up all their vegetation. I will make the rivers islands, and I will dry up the pools.

In sharp contrast to the picture in verses 1-7 of the gentle and confident progress of the Servant's work, this passage describes a time when God will exert His divine power in violent fashion, destroying enemies and making great changes in the external world. The Servant described in verses 1-7 does not lift up his voice or cry, but here the prophet describes a time when God Himself will raise a war cry, utter a shout, and cry out like a woman in travail.

This passage can serve as a reminder that God's silence will not last forever. For a long time human ideas and desires may seem to prevail, and God's patience may be misinterpreted as proving that He does not exist; yet every now and then He exerts His power in violent and unexpected ways. Great cataclysms occur that leave the shape of the world quite different from what it was before. Many such changes have occurred in the world's history. Babylon was for many centuries one of the greatest powers in the world, and at the time of Judah's exile it seemed to be the strongest of them all. Yet the coming of Cyrus