

80 43:3-7

in only fifteen of these occurrences). In eleven of these Old Testament occurrences it refers to God. Five of the eleven are in our present section.

The last part of verse 3 has a more temporary significance. Most scholars agree that it refers to the fact that Cambyses, the son of Cyrus, would extend Cyrus's conquests to include Egypt, Ethiopia, and Sheba, and that Isaiah thinks of these added conquests as being a ransom to Cyrus for having permitted the Israelites to return to Jerusalem.

God's love to Israel, His erring people, continues to be stressed in verses 4-7. Here there is a note that has not previously occurred in our section, that of searching out His people wherever they may be scattered, whether to the east or to the west (v. 5) or to the north or to the south (v. 6), and bringing them back to their own land.

Some interpreters consider that this was not fulfilled in the return from the Babylonian Exile because then a comparatively small portion of the nation took advantage of Cyrus's permission to return to the land of Israel. They therefore believe that it relates to a future regathering in which all the Israelites will be brought back to Palestine. It is not within the purpose of the present writing to take a dogmatic stand on one side or the other of this question. In any case, a Christian is entitled to draw from these verses the lesson that no matter where he may wander, God still has His hand upon him. God desires to bring back to Himself everyone who comes under the category described in verse 7, which strikes a universal note. The blessing described here applies to everyone who is called by the LORD's name, who was created for His glory and belongs to Him.

(8) Bring forth the people who are blind, yet have eyes, and those who are deaf, yet have ears. (9) Let all the nations be gathered together, and let the people be assembled. Who among them can declare this and explain to us the former things? Let them bring forth their witnesses, that they may be justified, or let them hear and say, it is true. (10) You are my witnesses, says the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen,