

are brought into close juxtaposition. Verses 14-15 describe Cyrus as the one whom God will use to accomplish His purpose of freeing the Israelites from bondage. Verse 16 presents the One who is to perform an even greater deliverance.

(17) Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I am the LORD your God who teaches you to profit, who leads you in the way you should go. (18) O that you had listened to my commandments; then your peace would have been like a river and your righteousness like the waves of the sea. (19) Your offspring would have been like the sand and your descendants like its grains. Their name would never be cut off or destroyed from before me.

Again God expresses His great disappointment that Israel has not kept His commandments, and He reminds them of the great blessings that could have been theirs if they had followed His desires. Yet this expression of disappointment is immediately followed by a very strong assurance that God will deliver them from the Babylonian Captivity, followed by a reminder of the way God blessed His people as they made the long trip from Egypt to Palestine.

(20) Depart from Babylon! Flee from the Chaldeans! Declare with a voice of singing. Tell this, utter it even to the end of the earth; say, the LORD has redeemed his servant Jacob. (21) And they did not thirst when he led them through the desert. He caused the water to flow out of the rock for them. He split the rock, and the waters gushed out.

The reminder of the way God provided for His people when they came out of Egypt serves as a suggestion that similar blessings will be theirs as they start the much longer trip from Babylon to the land of Israel.

(22) There is no peace, says the LORD, for the wicked.

Verse 22 might seem rather incongruous in such proximity to the great promises of blessing that immediately precede; but actually it fits right into the pattern, which has been followed throughout the chapter, of combining promises of great blessing