

These verses deal particularly with the outworking of the activity of the Servant. As we examine them, we should have in mind the great emphases that have stood out in our section thus far. We have seen that much attention has been given to the release of the exiles from captivity, even to naming the human instrument God would use to make it possible that those who desired should be able to return to their homeland. We have also seen that there is a gradually increasing realization that the problem of sin must be handled, or this return from exile will be only a temporary help. There has also been introduced the great figure of the Servant of the LORD, who is to bring light to the nations and to establish justice in all the earth.

It would be natural for an exile to find great comfort in these verses. The Servant is to be a covenant of the people; He will restore the land (v. 8). He will enable the true heirs again to possess the desolate inheritances - a natural term for the divisions into which Joshua had apportioned the land. These possessions were passed on from father to son through many generations, but as a result of the Exile they became utterly desolate.

Israel has been described as a prisoner, one who is blind, one who must make a long and difficult trip if he is to get back to his own land. There are many statements in these verses that would apply to these needs. The passage promises that prisoners will be released and that there will be provision for food and comfort on the long journey (v. 9). Water will be plentiful (v. 10), and the natural barriers will not interfere (v. 11). All this would bring great comfort to those whose eyes were focused on the desired release from exile.

Yet, in light of the context, another idea seems to be meant. Since our present passage deals with the great work of the Servant of the LORD, and since we have noticed in it many verses thus far that cannot be interpreted in any reasonable way except in relation to the coming of the promised Redeemer, it is reasonable to conclude that the latter is the primary emphasis in these five verses also. Besides, parts of verse 8 seem to look