

God's protecting care over Israel is further described in verses 13 and following. Verse 13, like verse 10, is one which the true believer may apply to himself. Next come verses 15 and 16, in which God predicts the destruction of those who injure His people, while in verses 17 to 19 He promises gentle care of His own. These three verses find a beautiful spiritual application in the lives of God's people through the ages, but will have a literal fulfillment in the time when God's righteousness shall cover the earth "as the waters cover the sea."

Evidence of Fulfilled Prophecy

Verse 20 reverts to the main theme of the chapter. Although the conquest of Jerusalem by the Babylonians might seem to have proved that God has no power and perhaps does not even exist, He is showing through His great acts in history that He is indeed the powerful and almighty God.

In verse 21, God again challenges the idols to bring any proof of their power or even of their existence.

Verses 22 and 23 introduce the thought of God's omniscience. We have already noticed what a wonderful proof of God's existence and power is available in the proofs of His omniscience. Only He can truly predict the future. Here He calls upon the false gods to give a similar proof for themselves. In the course of history many men have claimed to predict the future but few indeed have been able to justify such claims. Mohammed had the good judgment not to make any claims of this type. In the writings of ancient Greece and Rome we occasionally find attempted predictions. These were usually given in such ambiguous language that the prediction might seem to be true no matter what happened. How utterly different are the many cases in the Bible where God predicts exactly what is going to happen.

In verse 25 Cyrus is again referred to as the one who comes from the northeast who will destroy princes as mortar. Through him God will deliver Israel. Verse 27 declares that good tidings will be brought to Jerusalem.

As the chapter ends, the utter vanity and worthlessness of the idols and false gods of the heathen is stressed again.