

of Merodach, the great lord, I assigned them an honorable seat in their sanctuaries, as was enjoyed by all the other gods in their own cities. And daily I prayed to Bel and Nebo, that they would lengthen my days and increase my good fortune."

The policy of Cyrus was to secure the good-will of all the national gods of the nations whom he conquered. According to Sayce: "It is clear, therefore, that Cyrus was a polytheist, who . . . adopted the gods of the country he had conquered, from motives of state policy."

There were those among the Jews, also, who took the view that Jehovah was just a national God on a par with the other gods of the different nations, and that He was one in an uncertain conflict. The result of such a view was that there could be no providence as there was no Supreme Being, and human life was hopelessly a battle-ground of deities. This is the position taken by the false prophets of Jeremiah's time, who couldn't see that Jehovah was a God controlling all the nations, and therefore couldn't discern any purpose of Jehovah in Assyrian power, or Babylonian supremacy, or Jewish exile.

The true prophets of Jehovah fought a long, brave fight in face of fearful odds against the idol gods (the national gods represented by idols), and for the incomparable power, holiness and glory of Jehovah. Among them no one was more valiant, fearless and confident than *Deutero-Isaiah*. He foresees the result of the conflict between Jehovah and the idol gods when he says, "Bel hath bowed down; Nebo croucheth; their idols are given up to the beasts and the cattle" (Isa. xlv. 1).

The impotence of the Gods of Babylon and their certain fall, leads the prophet of Jehovah to the lyric outburst of the forty-seventh chapter: "Come down and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon. . . . Sit thou silent and get thee into the darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans, for thou shalt no more be called the lady of the kingdoms. . . . Let now the astrologers, the star-gazers, the monthly prognosticators stand up and save thee. . . . Behold, they shall be as stubble; the fire shall burn them" (Isa. xlvii. 1, 5, 13, 14).

How was this fall of great Babylon to be accomplished, and how was the hope of Jehovah's people for a return to Jerusa-