

22 Isaiah and His Contemporaries

Jerusalem. (10) The LORD has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God. (11) Depart, depart, go out from there, touch no unclean thing; go out from her midst, purify yourselves, you who carry the vessels of the LORD. (12) For you shall not go out in haste, nor go by flight: for the LORD will go before you, and the God of Israel will be your rear guard.

These quotations show clearly that Isaiah was writing for people to whom exile was a vivid reality. His words would first be read by his godly followers who imagined the situation as already present. They would bring even greater comfort and assurance to those who lived in exile over a century later.