

destroyed all the fenced of Judah except Jerusalem and he took thousands of the people of Judah into captivity so these people in Jerusalem had actually seen--people they knew and loved carried into captivity and not only had this happened in the southern kingdom but also in the northern kingdom--people whom they loved and spoke their own language, the customs, the habits and the background and there doubtless was a good bit of travelling back and forth and the northern kingdom doubtless had had individuals escape as well as in the southern kingdom and told those in Jerusalem what they were passing through and in time of peace there might ^{be} people from Judah that would go over to visit the people in exile, because we know that there was intercourse between these people and they knew that it was thing that had actually come to many others in their own day and Isaiah declared that it was going to come to the people of Jerusalem and to the rest of the people of Judah, and not from Assyria but from an insignificant city Babylon that was subject to Assyria. That of course was the great prediction that was given in ch. 39 and it is also given by Micah in the same period who lived at the time of Isaiah, and they had seen exile, seen survivors and knew what had happened to all these other people and it would be very easy for they themselves to imagine themselves in that situation.

the background

5. The material elements of Isa. 40 ff. were already present in Isaiah's day; comparatively little of the background material involved revelation of new facts. There were facts revealed in "2nd Isaiah" of what was going to happen. The facts are given for comfort but the background is mostly all assumed. It was already known through revelation that they were to go to Babylon and not to Assyria, and the followers of God would have already accepted that from the word of Isaiah and also the word of Micah. I don't think that God had to reveal to Isaiah what exile meant. Isaiah didn't have to explain to the people what exile was. As far as material things were--they certainly knew what Babylon was and where it was--they were familiar with the names of Bel and Nabu and familiar with the great two-leafed gates, if that translation be correct; some say that this proves it wasn't written by Isaiah because they would have had to be in exile to know about these two-leafed gates but a few great facts about Babylon would be disseminated quite well and after all there is not a great deal specific about the life in Babylon in these last 27 chapters. The ref. to trees are more to Palestinian trees and there is in the background a knowledge of Palestine and comparatively little that shows knowledge of Babylon. It is