

This word also occurs in the next chapter, verses 7 and 10, but in verse 10 it extends the vision to the whole world because all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God.

Thus this section of wonderful encouragement and blessing for Israel starts with strong stress on the idea of righteousness and holiness and it ends in verse 11, with a great stress on the fact that those who are to carry the vessels of the Lord must be clean, and must touch nothing unclean. God is not simply giving blessings to a people that He has chosen. He has chosen this people to show forth His righteousness and He is giving blessings to them as those who are to do this. Those who refuse to take their part in manifesting the righteousness of God are of course cut off from the blessings that are promised.

The passage ends in verse 12 with the assurance that it is not a matter of violence, or of haste or of flight, but a calm ~~unhurried~~ <sup>unhurried departure</sup> that is ahead of them. The Lord is going before them, the God of Israel is behind them. It is with the assurance of God's power that they are able to return to their homeland, This reminds us forcibly of Isa. 42 with its picture of the activity of the servant of the Lord who does not break a bruised reed or put out a smoking flax, but goes forward unhurriedly, calmly, without hesitation, to his wonderful task of establishing, of being a light to the Gentiles, and of establishing judgment throughout the world. The strong reminder of the activity of the servant of the Lord, with which the passage thus ends, and also the great stress in verse 11 on the necessity of righteousness, if God's blessings are to be secured, form a natural introduction to the great passage beginning in Isa. 52:13, describing the climax of the activity of the servant of the Lord. However, Isa. 52:13 to 56:8 is best put in a third main portion of the book of consolation.