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“LET THE METAPHORS  
SPEAK TO YOU”

An LDS Commentary on Isaiah

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ANN N. MADSEN

*Dedicated to those who live in the time about which Isaiah prophesied*

## **Isaiah 22**

**22:1.** Rooftops were used as an additional living space in the houses of ancient Israel.

**22:2.** In verses 2–3, Isaiah likely describes a city full of leaders that died not in heroic battle but in cowardly flight. One example of this is Zedekiah in circa 586 BC who flees to Jericho from Jerusalem to avoid the Babylonians.

**22:5.** In verses 4–5, Isaiah bitterly laments a future day when walls will be broken down and “my people” taken captive. The vision may point to the Assyrian attack in 701 BC. Or, it could additionally refer to the many other destructions of Jerusalem (or elsewhere), including the Babylonian captivity of 587 BC.

**22:6.** Elam (Persia) and Kir (Moab) formed part of the Babylonian attack against Jerusalem in 587 BC. They were also Babylonian allies in Isaiah’s day. Notice the reference to a shield again, suggesting preparations to fight.

**22:7.** Jerusalem is surrounded by valleys. There are five valleys that go up to Jerusalem, and they’re filled with chariots and horsemen. The NIV describes 22:8:

The defenses of Judah are stripped away,  
And you looked in that day  
to the weapons in the Palace of the Forest;  
you saw that the City of David  
had many breaches in its defenses;

you stored up water  
in the Lower Pool [Siloam].

**22:8.** The “house of the forest” was the part of Solomon’s temple complex where weapons were stored (Isaiah 39:2).

**22:9.** A single breach in a defensive wall created an entrance that would be easier to get through than the gate and was therefore disastrous for the defenders. As Hezekiah prepared for Assyria’s attack in 701 BC (from the Assyrian king Sennacherib), he channeled these waters through a narrow, zig-zagging, man-made chiseled tunnel, which workmen hollowed out from solid rock barely tall enough for a medium-sized man to stand up. But this tunnel was meant for water to flow from outside into the city, its source hidden from any attacking forces. The water was stored inside the city in the Pool of Siloam (verse 11) in case of siege. The tunnel exists today as one of the most interesting ancient archaeological sites in the Near East.

**22:10.** The massive Broad Wall built by Hezekiah to protect against the Assyrian invasion was discovered in modern times and is full of rubble taken from surrounding buildings. Other kings, such as Ahaz, may have engaged in similar efforts.

**22:11.** This again may describe either Ahaz’s efforts to gather and protect water from the Gihon Spring, or Hezekiah’s Tunnel built during his reign.

**22:13.** “Let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we shall die” is a familiar saying that has seemed appropriate many times since it was originally written here.

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