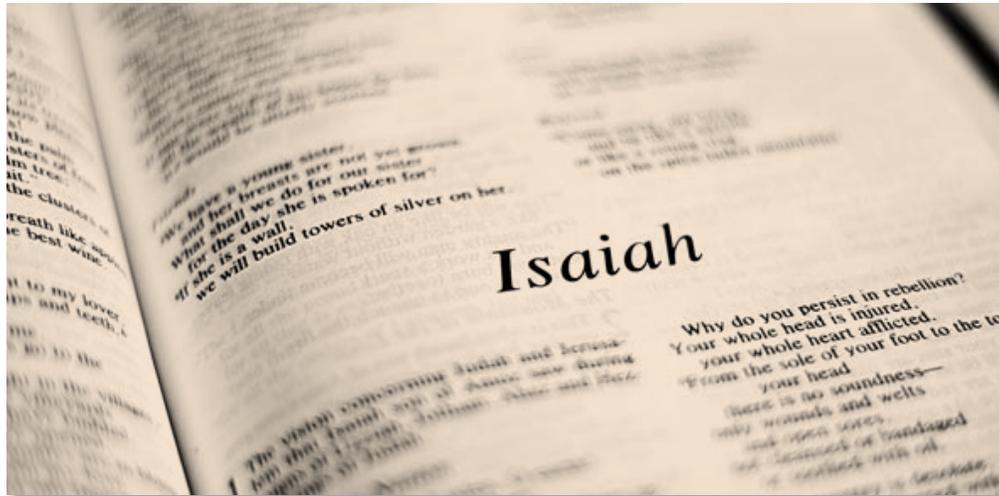


# THE BOOK OF ISAIAH

## GOOD NEWS!: ISAIAH 51.1-52.12



T. M. Moore

*A Scriptorium Study*

**The Fellowship of Ailbe**

Good News!: Isaiah 51.1-52.12  
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## Introduction to *Isaiah 51.1-52.12*

In these two chapters the sense of urgency increases, that the people of Judah and Jerusalem, knowing the suffering they are about to experience, should repent of their sins and prepare themselves for the coming salvation of the Lord.

The prophet calls them to remember the promises and faithfulness of God, and to listen to His Word, promising deliverance, salvation, and a Kingdom once their trial is through. They must not be dismayed, but hope in the Lord, Who is coming to rule the world. And even beyond that, God is making all things new, including the heavens and the earth, so as to fulfill His Word to His people and bring great glory to His Name.

The people of God must not be afraid, and they must not forget their God. His wrath is coming upon them, but it is only for a season. Salvation is coming, first at the hands of Cyrus, but ultimately, through the Servant God is sending for His people. Then they shall all know Him, and shall rejoice in His promised salvation.

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T. M. Moore, Principal  
[tmmoore@ailbe.org](mailto:tmmoore@ailbe.org)

## 1 Look to Abraham

*Pray Psalm 143.5, 6.*

I remember the days of old;  
I meditate on all Your works;  
I muse on the work of Your hands.  
I spread out my hands to You;  
My soul *longs* for You like a thirsty land.

*Read Isaiah 51.1-3.*

*Reflect.*

1. To whom does God point His people? Why?
2. God tells His people to look back, then to look forward. What's the connection?

*Meditate.*

If you say you are seeking the Lord, and if you want to live righteously, then you have to look back to Abraham, and the promises God made to him (vv. 1, 2).

Why? With Abraham (Abram) God first put His covenant into definite terms. He made six extraordinary promises to Abram in Genesis 12.1-3, and all the subsequent history of Israel from Abram to Isaiah has been a record of God's faithfulness. What God says He will do, He does. And even when His people do not listen to Him, He cannot fail to keep His own Word. The people who will not listen to their God will suffer the discipline promised in God's covenant, as the people of Isaiah's day would. But the promises and blessings God has made continue, even to the followers of Christ today (cf. Rom. 4.13-17).

The better we understand those promises, and the more consistent we are in living toward them, the more we will realize the blessings God has for us in all His Word. Just as God blessed Abraham with a numerous people and kings to rule them, God will keep all His Word, and those who trust Him will be blessed (Is. 9.6, 7; Dan. 7.13, 14).

So when God promises to comfort His people and to return them to His goodness and gladness (v. 3), the people of God must believe Him, and not go moping and whining and despairing to Babylon, but with their eyes on the promised salvation of the Lord, accepting His discipline with joy, and continuing to seek His promises by obeying all His Word.

And that holds true for all the people of God today.

*Prepare.*

1. Meditate on Genesis 12.1-3. How would you explain each of the six promises God offers here?
2. What does it mean to "live toward" those promises? What would it have meant for the people of Israel, facing captivity in Babylon? What does it mean for you?
3. How would you summarize, in terms relevant to your own experience, the salvation God promises His people in verse 3? Is this the salvation you experience? Explain.

He is leaving aside the unbelievers here in order to address those who have believed: it is to them that he

gives the name of enamored with God and with righteousness. He comforts them because they are few in number and invites them to turn their eyes toward their ancestors: he reminds them of Abraham and Sarah and the many thousands of descendants who came from them. This is similar to the term expressed in the divine Gospels: “Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” It is the same here. Theodoret of Cyr (393-566 AD), Commentary on Isaiah 16.51.1

Lord, hold out Your promises before me today, and help me to live toward them as I...

*Pray Psalm 143.*

As you pray, think back on all that God has done for you, and all that He promises yet to do. Make your requests to God and renew your commitment to Him for this day.

*Sing to the Lord.*

Psalm 143 (*Divinum Mysterium: Of the Father’s Love Begotten*)

Hear my earnest prayer, O Lord! Give ear to my pleas for grace!  
In Your faithfulness and righteousness, look upon me with Your face!  
Enter not to judgment with Your servant, Lord, with Your loving servant, Lord:  
None can stand before Your Word.

See, the enemy pursued my soul; he has crushed and cast me down.  
He has made me sit in darkness, Lord, like those dead and in the ground.  
Thus my spirit faints within me, Lord, faints within my weary soul,  
And my heart is no more whole.

I recall the days of old; on Your works I meditate –  
all the wonders of Your mighty hand, works both small, O Lord, and great.  
Lord, my thirsty soul cries out to You! To You, Lord, I reach my hand  
In a dry and weary land.

Answer quickly, O my Lord! Do not hide from me Your face!  
For my spirit fails and I am like those who do not know Your grace.  
In the morning let me hear Your steadfast love; Lord I trust You, show my way!  
I lift up my soul and pray!

Rescue me from all my enemies! Lord, I refuge seek in You.  
Let me know Your will, O Lord my God; make me know what I must do.  
Let Your Spirit lead me on to level ground; save my life! Preserve my soul!  
Rescue, Lord, and make me whole!

## 2 Salvation: The Long View

*Pray Psalm 19.12, 13.*

Who can understand *his* errors?

Cleanse me from secret *faults*.

Keep back Your servant also from presumptuous sins;

Let them not have dominion over me.

Then I shall be blameless,

And I shall be innocent of great transgression.

*Read Isaiah 51.4-8.*

*Reflect.*

1. How does God intend His justice and light to come to the peoples of the world?
2. How can you see that these verses point us beyond the Babylonian captivity and beyond the salvation of the coming Servant to a greater day of salvation yet to come?

*Meditate.*

These verses are packed with importance for all who “wait upon” the Lord God and hope to know His salvation forever. What God has to say in these verses is so important that He calls on His people to listen to Him no less than three times (vv. 4, 7).

These verses are about the salvation God will bring “in that day”, when even the Gentiles are reached by the justice and light of God (v. 4). There is an unbreakable connection between the salvation of God and His Law. Just because salvation has come does not mean that Law is eliminated; indeed, the justice and light of God only come to the world because His Law is going forth from the hearts of those who have come to know His saving mercy (vv. 4, 5, 7; cf. Rom. 3.31). When salvation comes to the world, the nations will look to God and trust in Him (v. 5).

But beyond “that day”, God is bringing a new world into being, a world where His salvation “will be forever” and His righteousness “will not be abolished” (v. 6). Isaiah will have more to say about the world after the earth and heavens “vanish away like smoke”, but he introduces the idea here, so that he can build on it in subsequent chapters.

God’s people, who know His righteousness because His Law is in their hearts (cf. Ezek. 36.26, 27), must not fear the reproaches and insults of men. What they have received from God will last forever, while those who taunt and scorn them will wear out and be destroyed like an old garment.

The message to God’s people is clear: Keep your focus on the ever-coming salvation and Kingdom of God! Don’t let the trials of the moment cause you to lose sight of the precious and very great promises yet to be fulfilled. And don’t let opposition from wicked men keep you from growing in righteousness and salvation, and from living according to the Law of the Lord.

*Prepare.*

1. We’re not saved by keeping the Law. But we’re not saved without keeping it. Explain.
2. Why should those who live in justice and righteousness according to God’s Law expect that people will reproach and insult them? What should we do when this happens?

3. We who have eternal life must work hard to live in the *foreverness* of our salvation. According to these verses, what does that entail?

*And that must be said that if the sky and the earth were to perish and grow old, then its inhabitants would also die and vanish, although we know that souls are everlasting and bodies are also resurrected. From this it is clear that heaven and earth do not perish and become reduced to nothing, but they are changed into something better.* Jerome (347-420 AD), *Commentary on Isaiah 14.8*

*Help me to keep focused on Your promises, Lord, and to live each day for...*

*Pray Psalm 19.7-14.*

As you pray, ask the Father to let His Law do in and for you all that He promises in these verses.

*Sing to the Lord.*

**Psalm 19.7-14** (*St. Christopher: Beneath the Cross of Jesus*)

The Law of God is perfect, His testimony sure;  
The simple man God's wisdom learns, the soul receives its cure.  
God's Word is right, and His command is pure, and truth imparts;  
He makes our eyes to understand; with joy He fills our hearts.

The fear of God is cleansing, forever shall it last.  
His judgments all are true and just, by righteousness held fast.  
O seek them more than gold most fine, than honey find them sweet;  
Be warned by every word and line; be blessed with joy complete.

Who, Lord, can know his errors? O keep sin far from me!  
Let evil rule not in my soul that I may blameless be.  
O let my thoughts, let all my words, before Your glorious sight  
Be pleasing to You, gracious Lord, acceptable and right!

### 3 Fear Not Man, Forget Not God

*Pray Psalm 126.3, 4.*

The LORD has done great things for us,  
And we are glad.  
Bring back our captivity, O LORD,  
As the streams in the South.

*Read Isaiah 51.9-16.*

*Reflect.*

1. How does God describe Himself and His relationship to His people in these verses?
2. What is God's purpose in redeeming His people?

*Meditate.*

In verses 9 and 10 the prophet, on behalf of the people, calls on the Lord to show His strength in their midst, as in days of old. Isaiah seems to be sympathizing with and expressing the longing of Israel. In verse 11, he carefully guides them into the long term promise of God, that Zion will again be established as chief among the mountains of the earth (Is. 2.1-4), and will be filled with joy and gladness (v.11). In this verse, Isaiah encapsulates all the promises God has been reiterating to His people: That they will return to Zion (Cyrus), that everlasting joy and gladness will be theirs (the coming Servant), and that a day is coming when even sorrow and sighing will be no more (the new heavens and new earth).

Then God breaks in as if to punctuate Isaiah's words with a strong exclamation point. He is the comfort and strength of Israel. They must not fear, and they must not forget Him during their time of trial (vv. 12, 13). They must remember that God is Creator and Sovereign over all things (v. 13), that He has overcome Israel's oppressors in the past, and has accomplished their deliverance from exile before (vv. 13, 14). Even the seas obey His Word! And He has put His Word – His Law – into the mouths of His people, that they might hear and learn and obey and teach His holy and righteous and good commandments (Matt. 5.17-19; Rom. 7.12). For thus they will know themselves to be His redeemed people, and on the foundation of His salvation and their work, God will bring His heavenly rule to earth (v. 16) with such power, that all Israel will know that He is with them, and they are His people.

How many different ways does God need to repeat these precious and very great promises of comfort, deliverance, life, and joy? As many as it takes. We need to hear these words every day, so that we will keep our eyes on the Lord, and not allow our circumstances to discourage us or cause us to despair. We are the people of the living God! Surely, His salvation is nearer today than ever before.

*Prepare.*

1. Why is it good that God reminds us so often of His precious and very great promises (2 Pet. 1.4)?
2. Why is it good that God reminds us so often of Who and how great He is?
3. How does God expect us to respond to His promises and the reminders of His greatness?

*It is by means of actions that I will teach you the truth of my words. "And I will shelter you under the shadow of my hand, with which I fixed the sky and founded the earth: and the Lord shall say to Zion, you are my people." It suffices to recall the creation to show the capability of his dynamic force that he has promised to convey to them; for he has indicated his dynamic force by the name "hand." Theodoret of Cyr (393-466 AD), Commentary on Isaiah 16.51.16*

*Lord, You have made me. You have saved and called me. You have put Your words in my mouth so that I...*

*Pray Psalm 126.*

What sorrow or trial or difficulty is threatening your peace and joy? How should you “sow” in the midst of this trial? What can you expect if you do? Let this psalm guide you into a new day of sowing in prayer, obedience, and witness to the Lord.

*Sing to the Lord.*

**Psalm 126** (*Truro: Shout, for the Blessed Jesus Reigns!*)

When God restored our fortunes all, we were like those who sweetly dream.  
Our mouths with joy and laughter filled, made Him our constant song and theme.

Then the astonished nations said, “The Lord has done great things for them!”  
Indeed, great things our God has done, Whose Name we praise, Amen, Amen!

Restore our fortunes, Lord our King! Let grace like flowing streams prevail.  
All they with tears of joy shall sing who sow while yet they weep and wail.

They who in tears of sorrow sow and cast their seed on every hand,  
With joy shall reach their heav’nly home, and bring the harvest of their land.

## 4 End of Wrath

*Pray Psalm 17.6, 7.*

I have called upon You, for You will hear me, O God;  
Incline Your ear to me, *and* hear my speech.  
Show Your marvelous lovingkindness by Your right hand,  
O You who save those who trust *in You*  
From those who rise up *against them*.

*Read Isaiah 51.17-23.*

*Reflect.*

1. How severe was the discipline the people of God were going to endure?
2. How does God comfort His people in this passage?

*Meditate.*

God does not “soft peddle” the season of discipline that is about to befall His people. It will be a time of deprivation, loss, desolation, destruction, sorrow, and fainting. But the people have brought this on themselves. They refused to drink the cup of God’s salvation by keeping His Law and rejecting the idols of the nations. Now they would have to drink the cup of His fury for a time (v. 17).

God’s wrath would take their leaders (v. 18) and their dearest offspring (v. 20). Israel would languish aimlessly in Babylon, with no one to sympathize with or comfort them (v. 19). They would feel like a wild animal, snared and waiting to be slaughtered (v. 20). Thus God would rebuke His people for their failure to keep covenant with Him.

But they should take comfort in knowing that God would visit all this wrath on their enemies and captors (vv. 21-23). He will divert His wrath from His people to those who taunt and trouble them (vv. 22, 23), and this will signal the deliverance to come under Cyrus, the anointed of the Lord.

In the short term, Israel must suffer the discipline of the Lord. But not forever. When the judgment of Babylon begins, the people should realize that their freedom and restoration is near. Notice here how God begins to comfort His people with “Awake, awake!” (v. 17) He will use just the same call to announce the salvation and restoration of His people in the next chapter (cf. 52.1).

*Prepare.*

1. Meditate on Hebrews 12.3-11. Why would you ever expect to know the Lord’s discipline? What should you do at that time?
2. Jesus has overthrown the enemy of our soul (Col. 3.11-15). How should this encourage us in the promised salvation of the Lord?
3. How can Christians sustain and encourage one another during seasons of discipline?

*Anger, which is called “the cup in the hand of the Lord” and “the cup of falling that is drained,” is in proportion to transgressions, even though he abates to all some of what is their due and dilutes with compassion the unmixed draught of his wrath. For he inclines from severity to indulgence toward those who accept chastisement with fear, and who after a slight affliction conceive and are in pain with conversion and bring forth the perfect spirit of salvation. But he nevertheless reserves the dregs, the*

*last drop of his anger, that he may pour it out entire on those who, instead of being healed by his kindness, grow obdurate, like the hardhearted Pharaoh. Gregory of Nazianzus (329-389 AD), On His Father's Silence, Oration 16.4*

*Strengthen me, Lord, so that, whatever comes at me today, I may...*

*Pray Psalm 17.*

What temptations will you face today? How will the enemy of your soul try to distract and defeat you? Seek the Lord and His face and righteousness, that He might be present before you all day long.

*Sing to the Lord.*

**Psalm 17** (*Parke Street: All You that Fear Jehovah's Name*)

Hear a just cause, O God the Lord! Gladly receive my plaintive word.

I cry with lips of purity: Look on my case with equity!

Look on my case with equity!

Let judgment from Your throne proceed; You have discerned my every need.

Let naught of sin in me be found, and from my tongue let truth resound!

And from my tongue let truth resound!

As for the deeds of sinful men, I will not walk those paths again.

My feet hold firm from first to last: Help me pursue Your righteous path;

Help me pursue Your righteous path!

When I have called, You answered me, Lord; hear now my fervent, seeking word!

Let kindness flow by Your command. Keep and preserve me by Your right hand,

keep and preserve me by Your right hand.

Treasure me in Your holy eye; shelter me from a troubling sky.

Around me all my enemies eagerly would despoil me,

eagerly would despoil me.

They their unfeeling hearts have closed, while with their mouths they loudly boast.

They set their eyes to cast us down, roaring and lurking all around,

roaring and lurking all around.

Rise up, O Lord, and bring them low! Brandish Your sword, and save my soul!

With children they are satisfied; treasures fulfill their hope and pride,

treasures fulfill their hope and pride.

But as for me, Lord, save and bless! Let me behold Your righteousness.

Your face in glory I would see, and thus forever blessed be,

and thus forever blessed be.

## 5 They Shall Know

*Pray Psalm 96.1-3.*

Oh, sing to the LORD a new song!  
Sing to the LORD, all the earth.  
Sing to the LORD, bless His name;  
Proclaim the good news of His salvation from day to day.  
Declare His glory among the nations,  
His wonders among all peoples.

*Read Isaiah 52.1-6.*

*Reflect.*

1. The sense of this opening “Awake, awake!” is different from what we saw in 51.17. In what way?
2. What will be the outcome of God’s redeeming His people?

*Meditate.*

Now God rouses His people to prepare for salvation. They must put on strength and “beautiful garments” (v. 1). No longer will uncleanness be among the people of God, but they must shake off the dust of their sinful past, and prepare to go free from their captivity in Babylon (vv. 1, 2).

Israel’s captivity was their own fault; they will be able to take no credit for their redemption (v. 3). It will all be by the grace of their covenant-keeping God. He delivered them from Egypt and Assyria (v. 4), and now He will destroy those who have taken them to Babylon (v. 5).

The result will be that God’s people will know Him, truly know Him; and they will remember the Word He has spoken to them in the past and now, through the prophet Isaiah (v. 6). And this will be very important because of the words God has spoken – and will speak – to them about the greater salvation yet to come.

*Prepare.*

1. Redemption is all of grace, as God insists. Then why do the people have to strengthen themselves and put on beautiful garments? What does this say to us about the nature of salvation?
2. It is good to review the mighty works of God which He has accomplished for His people. This applies to us as well. What mighty works of redemption and deliverance has God accomplished for you?
3. Why is it so important that the people of God should know Him? What is involved in knowing the Lord?

*The name of God is in its nature holy, whether we say so or not; but since it is sometimes profaned among sinners, according to the words, “Through you my name is continually blasphemed among the Gentiles,” we pray that in us God’s name may be hallowed; not that it comes to be holy from our being holy but because it becomes holy in us, when we are made holy and do things worthy of holiness. Cyril of Jerusalem (315-386 AD), *Mystagogical Lectures* 5.12*

*Help me to know You better, Lord, so that every day I...*

*Pray Psalm 96.*

As you pray, ask the Lord to give you an opportunity to share His goodness and salvation with someone today.

*Sing to the Lord.*

**Psalm 96** (*Mit Freuden Zart: All Praise to God, Who Reigns Above*)

Sing to the Lord! O, bless His Name! All nations tell His glory!  
Salvation's tidings loud proclaim; let earth rehearse His story!  
For God is greatly to be praised; His throne above all gods is raised –  
Fear Him, and sing His glory!

All other gods are idols vain – the Lord created heaven.  
Splendor and strength with Him obtain; to Him be glory given!  
All fam'lies, praise this mighty Lord! Give strength and glory to His Word;  
exalt the Lord of heaven.

Bring off'rings sweet to Him, our Lord, in holy garments praise Him!  
Tremble before Him, all the earth; among the nations raise Him!  
The earth is fixed, it will not move; the peoples will His justice prove –  
exalt the Lord and praise Him.

Let heaven sing with lusty voice; let earth and sea sing sweetly!  
Let fields and trees in Him rejoice, for He is coming swiftly  
to judge the world in righteousness, the peoples in His faithfulness –  
He comes; exalt Him greatly!

## 6 Preach It!

*Pray Psalm 93.1.*

The LORD reigns, He is clothed with majesty;  
The LORD is clothed,  
He has girded Himself with strength.

*Read Isaiah 52.7-12.*

*Reflect.*

1. What is the good news, and what are its effects?
2. What does receiving the good news require?

*Meditate.*

We are approaching the “high water mark” of the book of Isaiah. Facing years of captivity in Babylon, the people of Jerusalem and Judah are called to “wake up” to their sin, and repent, and to “wake up” to the Good News that God is preparing for them “in that day.”

What is the Good News? It is that “Your God reigns!” Not Nebuchadnezzar. Not even Cyrus. The Lord God reigns and this is Good News of peace, salvation, and abundant good things (v. 7). The Good News is not just that we’re going to heaven when we die. It is that God reigns, that His rule is coming on earth as it is in heaven, to bring righteousness, peace, and joy to the world (Is. 9.6, 7; Rom. 14.17, 18).

Watch for it (v. 8). Sing in glorious anticipation of it. Strain with the eye of the heart to see it, and encourage one another by the promises of the LORD (v. 9). Bask in the comfort such a glorious prospect affords, and wait with eager anticipation and prayer to see the LORD bare His Arm and bring His salvation to the ends of the earth (v. 10). This word is as truly spoken to believers today as to the people of Isaiah’s time.

But remember: Leave your wickedness and all uncleanness behind in Babylon, in the realm of darkness. Repent of all your sin; be cleansed throughout your soul; go out from the darkness into the light, and know as you do that the LORD leads your way and guards you from behind (vv. 11, 12). The Good News toward which you are moving includes a call to touch not the unclean thing, that you might be holy, as your Redeemer is holy.

But how? How can this be possible? How will such glorious Good News ever be accomplished?

*Prepare.*

1. How would you explain the Good News to an unbelieving friend? What does that Good News accomplish in us?
2. Why are the feet of those who bring this Good News described as “beautiful”? Do you have such beautiful feet?
3. Where do you need to increase in bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God (2 Cor. 7.1)?

*Here [Isaiah] says very particularly that it is the feet of those who publish the good news of Christ that are beautiful. For how could they not be beautiful, which in so small, so short a time have run over the whole earth and filled every place with the holy teaching about the Savior of the world? Eusebius of Caesarea (260-340 AD), Proof of the Gospel 3.1*

*Lord, help me to have beautiful feet and a tongue ready with the Good News as I...*

*Pray Psalm 93.*

The Lord is reigning; His Kingdom has come. As you pray this psalm, meditate on the implications for us of the fact that “our God reigns!”

*Sing to the Lord.*

**Psalm 93** (*Trinity: Come, Thou Almighty King*)

The Lord in majesty reigns, girded and clothed in strength!  
Earth stands secure: Nor shall it e'er be moved;  
God on His throne above set it in place with love –  
His reign is sure!

What, though the floods arise, raising their voice to the skies?  
Strong though they be, God on His mighty throne,  
drowns out their fearsome drone, hasting to save His own,  
eternally.

Almighty God on high, Your Word can never lie!  
Your truth is sure – holy and just are they  
who tread Your holy way; Yours shall they ever stay,  
Lord, evermore.  
Rest in the Lord and be at peace, all who are mired in sore travail:  
Lift up our God, praise Jesus our Lord; proclaim to all the earth His Word!  
God is our stronghold, never to fail: thus may our hope and joy increase!

## 7 Awake! Awake!

*Pray Psalm 132.7-9.*

Let us go into His tabernacle;  
Let us worship at His footstool.  
Arise, O LORD, to Your resting place,  
You and the ark of Your strength.  
Let Your priests be clothed with righteousness,  
And let Your saints shout for joy.

*Review Isaiah chapters 51.1-52.12.*

*Reflect.*

1. How would you describe the overall mood of these chapters? Why?
2. To what does God want His people to “Awake!”?

*Meditate.*

This section of Isaiah (chapters 40-52) are fraught with urgency, and it comes to a climax in the section we have examined in this installment.

Judgment is coming. It’s coming because of sin, and it will be terrible. But it will have an end, and deliverance will come by the hand of the Lord’s anointed – first Cyrus, then the Servant. Israel must repent and believe the Word they are hearing from the Lord’s prophet. They must not despair, but get busy even now preparing themselves and their children for the coming salvation of the Lord.

Time in these chapters is like a spyglass. Look through it closed, and all you can see is judgment. Pull it out one length, though, and you can see Cyrus. Pull it again, and the Servant and salvation of the Lord begin to be in sight. Pull it one more time, and now you can see all the way to the new heavens and new earth.

In chapters 51 and 52 the urgency increases, moving from “Listen” (51.1, 4, 7) to “Awake.” God calls His people to “Awake, awake!” first to their sins and the imperative of repentance (51.17) and then to the vision of God’s coming salvation (52.1). This call to wake up is in response to God’s call to His Servant and Arm to “Awake, awake, put on strength” in 51.9. God is stirring to accomplish His salvation. His people must wake up and prepare themselves, too.

All this urgency and vision must have caused the people to wonder: “How? How is God going to save us?” Isaiah will begin to answer that question at the end of chapter 52 and in chapter 53.

*Prepare.*

1. Do we need to prepare for the Lord’s salvation each day? Explain.
2. In what sense are the commands to “Listen!” and “Awake!” still relevant to us today?
3. What’s your primary takeaway from Isaiah 51.1-52.12?

*According to the Hebrew, it is not Jerusalem but the arm of the Lord that has to put on strength. This relates to what we spoke about above [v. 5], about the nations hoping in “my arm.” For we have said that the divinity of the Word is signified here, since he urges the people not to fear the rebuke of human beings or to be affected by their filth, and in the same way here it is right to*

*see in the person of the people a prayer being sent to the “arm of the Lord” to rouse himself and overcome the enemies of his people. For we confess we are nothing unless you rise up and overcome on our behalf.* Eusebius of Caesarea (260-340 AD), *Commentary on Isaiah 2.39*

*Help me to listen, Lord, and wake me up to Your great salvation, so that I...*

*Pray Psalm 132.*

Travelers would have used this psalm as they were going up to Jerusalem to worship, perhaps at one of the great feasts. It is a psalm of remembrance and longing. Let it guide you in seeking a greater realization of the precious and very great promises and Presence of the Lord today.

*Sing to the Lord.*

**Psalm 132** (*Finlandia: Be Still My Soul*)

Remember, Lord, we pray, in David's favor,  
the hardships he endured, the oath he swore,  
the vow he made to Jacob's mighty Savior:  
“I shall not enter through my palace door;  
I shall not sleep, nor slumber my eyes favor,  
until I make a dwelling for the Lord!”

The word throughout the chosen nation spread,  
to Ephrata, and in the fields of Jaar:

“Now let us go,” the faithful people said,  
“and worship where our Savior's dwellings are!  
Around His footstool let our worship spread;  
come, gather to Him, all from near and far!”

Arise, O Lord, come to Your resting place;  
Your holy presence meet with us in might.  
Clothe us with righteousness in Jesus' grace,  
and we will shout to Your divine delight!  
For David's sake, turn not away Your face,  
but look upon us in Your holy light.

Remember, Lord, the oath You swore to David;  
do not turn back, do not deny Your Word:  
“One of your sons, with your throne I will favor,  
and He shall keep My cov'nant evermore,  
and walk within My testimonies ever,  
thus He shall ever rule as Israel's Lord.”

God dwells among us, and He will forever,  
to meet our needs and clothe us with His grace.  
He has to us sent Jesus Christ, our Savior,  
and made us His eternal resting-place.  
His foes are banished from His presence ever,  
but we shall reign with Him before His face.

*Questions for reflection or discussion*

1. How can you tell that these chapters intend to communicate a sense of urgency? About what?
2. How does God present Himself to His people in these chapters? Why does He want them to think of Him this way?
3. In what sense do these chapters call the people of God to look back? What about to look ahead? Why are both of these “looks” important?
4. How would you describe the deliverance and salvation God promises His people in these chapters?
5. What’s the most important lesson you’ve learned from Isaiah 51.1-52.12? How are you putting that lesson to work in your life?

*For prayer:*

## The Fellowship of Ailbe

The Fellowship of Ailbe is a spiritual fellowship in the Celtic Christian tradition. Our goal is to promote revival, renewal, and awakening, following the teaching of Scripture and the example and heritage of our forebears in the faith.

The Fellowship of Ailbe offers many opportunities for training, prayer, personal growth, and ministry. Visit our website at [www.ailbe.org](http://www.ailbe.org) to learn more.

We hope you found this study helpful. If so, please consider making a gift to The Fellowship. You can contribute to our ministry by using the donate button at the website, or by sending your gift to The Fellowship of Ailbe, 19 Tyler Dr., Essex Junction, VT 05452.

Thank you.