

## Isaiah 52

*Is. 52:1 Awake, awake, Clothe yourself in your strength, O Zion; Clothe yourself in your beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city. For the uncircumcised and the unclean Will no more come into you.*

The *Jerusalem* of the Messianic Kingdom is encouraged to *Awake* and *Clothe* herself in her *strength*. The *strength* addressed here is that of the *arm* of Isaiah 51:5, the *arm* being the second Person of the Trinity that we know to be Jesus Christ. In Isaiah 51:9, the *arm* is encouraged to *put on* the *strength* it once displayed while delivering Israel from Egypt. It is asked to do so for the purpose of bringing deliverance to the believing Jewish remnant at the Second Coming. In Isaiah 52:1, Millennial *Jerusalem* is encouraged to put on the *strength* of this same *arm* in

preparation for the blessings of the Messianic Kingdom. Therefore, Millennial *Jerusalem*, as well as its inhabitants, will take on the *strength* of the Messiah. We today, as part of the church, can live in the same manner—*by His very life* (Romans 5:10; 1Corinthians 15:10; Philippians 2:3; Colossians 3:4).

Millennial *Jerusalem* is also encouraged to *Clothe* herself *in her beautiful garments*. The term “*beautiful*” points to royalty, which lines up well with the fact that Jesus, along with the church and Tribulation saints, will rule over the Gentile nations from Millennial *Jerusalem*.

No *uncircumcised* person will be allowed to enter Millennial *Jerusalem*. Because every Jew will be circumcised, this may mean that all Gentile believers will undergo physical circumcision as well, at least those who desire to enter the *city*. Or it may be that spiritual circumcision of the heart is the issue here. Whatever the case, Millennial *Jerusalem* will be a wonderful place for all who enter.

*Is. 52:2 Shake yourself from the dust, rise up, O captive Jerusalem; Loose yourself from the chains around your neck, O captive daughter of Zion.*

What a sharp contrast Millennial *Jerusalem* will be to the *Jerusalem* of the past! She will be free of all the trappings that resulted from the disobedience of the Jewish people. Yes, the *truth* most definitely sets the believer *free* (John 8:32).

*Is. 52:3 For thus says the Lord, "You were sold for nothing and you will be redeemed without money."*

As we learned in Isaiah 50:1 (you may want to refer to those notes), the Hebrew people have never been *sold* to an oppressor due to Jehovah's need to reimburse a creditor. He has no creditors! Consequently, when Judah was *sold* to her captors, such as the Babylonian Empire in 586 BC (years after Isaiah's death), she was *sold for nothing*. Verses such as Psalm 44:12 also tie in well here.

Just as the Jews *were sold for nothing* to the Assyrians, Babylonians, in fact, all her captors, every Jew who desires to be saved *will be redeemed without money*. This points to the death of the *Servant* of Isaiah 42:1, 49:3-7, 50:10, 52:13, and 53:11, who alone paid the sin debt for their redemption. His death, burial, and resurrection, which are described in much detail in Isaiah 52:13-53:12, provide salvation for any Jew or Gentile who desires to know Him as Savior.

*Is. 52:4 For thus says the Lord God, "My people went down at the first into Egypt to reside there, then the Assyrian oppressed them without cause."*

The oppression that the Hebrew people experienced in *Egypt*, as well as through the onslaught of the *Assyrian* Empire, is addressed here. The phrase, “*oppressed them without cause*,” may point to the fact that Jehovah received no monetary compensation from Israel's captors, which lines up perfectly with what we discovered in Isaiah 52:3 and Isaiah 50:1.

*Is. 52:5 "Now therefore, what do I have here," declares the Lord, "seeing that My people have been taken away without cause?" Again the Lord declares, "Those who rule over them howl, and My name is continually blasphemed all day long."*

For input relating to the phrase, “*seeing that My people have been taken away without cause*,” refer to the notes associated with Isaiah 52:4.

From Isaiah 52:5, we understand that the nations which overthrew the Jews *continually blasphemed Jehovah's name*. Why? When two nations met in battle, the victor's god was viewed as superior to the god of the conquered nation. Therefore, when the Babylonians overthrew Judah and Jerusalem, the Babylonian gods were viewed by the Babylonians as superior to Jehovah, the God of the Jews. Do you really think that man-generated gods (idols) can defeat Jehovah? Of course not (the notes associated with Isaiah 40:18-20 tie in well here)! Why then would Jehovah allow the Babylonian captivity if it brought dishonor to His *name* among the nations? He, being the God of truth, must always judge sin, even at the expense of His reputation. However, by winning in the end, which He always does, He will be completely vindicated and viewed as the God who has been, is, and will always be the sovereign Champion of all. Is Jehovah not amazing?!

Paul quotes this same verse in Romans 2:24. As it was during the days of the Babylonian captivity, so it was in Paul's day. The behavior of the unredeemed Jews continued to dishonor God's name. Jehovah originally chose Israel as *a kingdom of priests* (Exodus 19:6) for the purpose of taking His truth to the world. After all, it was the priests of the nation who had the responsibility of teaching the people. Instead, they disobeyed and worshipped the gods of the nations whom they should have been evangelizing. Much the same is occurring today. Therefore, the only remedy is the spiritual regeneration of all Jews (on the earth) at the end of the Tribulation, after which the Gentiles will hear from the Jews what they should have been hearing since the days of Israel's exodus from Egypt (the notes associated with Isaiah 61:5-6 tie in well here).

*Is. 52:6 "Therefore My people shall know My name; therefore in that day I am the one who is speaking, 'Here I am.'"*

When every Jew (on earth) at the end of the Tribulation is spiritually regenerated, Israel will finally *know God's name*, His *name* being who He is in His Person. He will then speak to the nation for the purpose of revealing His heart; for Israel will finally be eager to receive instruction (Ezekiel 11:17-20 ties in well here). They will understand well that Jehovah not only predicted the redemption of Israel but was also the source that provided the means (the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus) through which it could come about. It is faith in the Messiah, Jesus Christ, that will allow the nation to be spiritually regenerated at the end of the Tribulation.

*Is. 52:7 ¶ How lovely on the mountains Are the feet of him who brings good news, Who announces peace And brings good news of happiness, Who announces salvation, And says to Zion, "Your God reigns!"*

The events of verses 7-10 will take place in association with the redemption and national regeneration of the remnant of Jews at the end of the Tribulation. Messengers who have accepted Jesus as Savior will come *to Zion* bringing the *good news* (the gospel) that *salvation* has been made available to Israel. These messengers will also bear witness to the fact that Israel's *God reigns*. The avenue through which this *salvation* can be offered to the nation is the suffering *Servant* of Isaiah 52:13-53:12.

*Is. 52:8 Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices, They shout joyfully together; For they will see with their own eyes When the Lord restores Zion.*

When the *watchmen* of *Zion* accept the *salvation* offered by the messengers of verse 7, they will *shout joyfully* along with the messengers through whom they received this good news. Why? *They will both see* (witness) *with their own eyes When the Lord restores Zion* (v.8). In other

words, they will have a front row seat as they observe Israel receiving the salvation provided by the suffering *Servant* of Isaiah 52:13-53:12.

*Is. 52:9 Break forth, shout joyfully together, You waste places of Jerusalem; For the Lord has comforted His people, He has redeemed Jerusalem.*

In conjunction with the national regeneration (salvation and redemption) of Israel, the *waste places of Jerusalem*, in other words, the *waste places* of the land of Canaan, will be refurbished in preparation for the Messianic Kingdom (the notes associated with Isaiah 51:3 and 65:17 tie in well here).

*Is. 52:10 The Lord has bared His holy arm In the sight of all the nations, That all the ends of the earth may see The salvation of our God.*

What an *arm* our God possesses! Jehovah's *arm* is the *Servant*, the second Person of the Trinity, Jesus Christ (for additional input, read the notes associated with Isaiah 51:9-11). The Lord will bare *His holy arm* (the *Servant*) in a very interesting environment—*In the sight of all the nations*. This occurred on a cross in 30 AD in order *That all the ends of the earth may see The salvation of our God*. It is interesting that the name "Jesus" is a transliteration of the Hebrew word "Joshua," meaning "Jehovah is salvation," or "is the Savior." Therefore, the *salvation* addressed in Isaiah 52:10 is the very *arm* of Jehovah, Jesus the *Servant*, who will bring the spiritual *salvation* promised to the Jewish nation. All of this ties in well with Isaiah 52:13-53:12, the section of Isaiah that addresses the *Servant's* death, burial, and resurrection for the purpose of offering spiritual *salvation* to all who believe.

Not only will Jesus (the *holy arm* of the Lord) provide spiritual *salvation* for all who accept Him as Savior; but He, at His Second Coming, will save the believing remnant (in the physical sense) from the wrath of the Antichrist. Verses such as Matthew 24:29-30 agree that *all the tribes of the earth* will see Jesus, the *holy arm* of Isaiah 52:10, when He returns to save (in the physical sense) the spiritually regenerated remnant of Jews at the end of the Tribulation.

*Is. 52:11 ¶ Depart, depart, go out from there, Touch nothing unclean; Go out of the midst of her, purify yourselves, You who carry the vessels of the Lord.*

Once all the Jews at the end of the Tribulation accept Jesus as Messiah, they are to *Depart* from where they are located and return to their homeland. As they *Depart*, they are to cleanse themselves for the purpose of carrying *the vessels of the Lord* once they return. These *vessels of the Lord* are evidently sacred *vessels* used in association with the worship within the Millennial temple as well as Millennial Jerusalem.

*Is. 52:12 But you will not go out in haste, Nor will you go as fugitives; For the Lord will go before you, And the God of Israel will be your rear guard.*

Unlike the Exodus from Egypt, the returning Jews *will not go out in haste*, nor will they *go as fugitives*. During the Exodus, the Jews both departed *in haste* (Exodus 12:11 and 33) and left as fugitives, narrowly escaping the approaching Egyptian armies (Exodus 14:1-31). The reason they escaped was due to the protection of the *angel of God* (the second Person of the Trinity that we know to be Jesus Christ) who went both *before* and *behind* them (Exodus 14:19). This same protection will be available when the Jews return to their homeland for the purpose of enjoying the Messianic Kingdom.

*Is. 52:13 ¶ Behold, My servant will prosper, He will be high and lifted up, and greatly exalted.*

In Isaiah 52:13-53:12, we discover how spiritual salvation (regeneration) is accomplished for all who choose to accept it. It comes through the suffering Messiah who, through dying on a cross, took on the sin of man—*He* actually became *sin* (2Corinthians 5:21). We will take a slight detour, however, and first discuss why a majority of the Jews today refuse to accept these verses as describing the suffering *Servant* (Messiah). You should find the following extremely interesting if you are a serious student of God’s word.

The man-generated “oral” laws, which existed during Jesus’ earthly ministry, were finally written down and assembled around 200 AD (read the notes associated with Isaiah 29:13 for more input). The book containing these man-generated laws is known as the Mishnah. A Jewish rabbi named Rashi (1040-1105 AD) wrote much commentary on the Mishnah, the most of which has been the bench mark for Jewish thought the past 900 years. The following quote from the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th Edition (1911) confirms my point. Keep in mind as you read this quote that the word “Talmud” makes reference to a commentary on, as well as an expansion of, the “Mishnah.” Also, be sure not to confuse the “Talmud” with the “Torah,” the “Torah” being a name attached to the first five books of the Old Testament. Note Rashi’s realm of influence:

**It is no exaggeration to assert that the modern world owes its power to understand the Talmud to Rashi. In this field the “Commentator” is supreme. He practically edited the text of the Talmud besides explaining it, and the Talmud is never printed without Rashi's commentary on the margin.**

Obviously, Rashi has greatly influenced the theology of the Jewish nation. But has his commentary been beneficial or detrimental to the Hebrew people? Let’s jump into his mind for a moment and ask one simple question. Did he, or did he not, allow the traditions of men to influence his thinking as he penned his thoughts cherished by so many? Consider the following concerning the suffering *Servant*.

When taken literally (and not allegorically or figuratively), Isaiah 52:13-53:12 points to a suffering *Servant* who would die for the *sin* of man. Take time to read these verses; and it will become obvious that, when taken literally, no other conclusion can be drawn. If you were to read Rashi’s commentary (which you can do by typing in “Isaiah 53 Rashi” online), you would see that he views Isaiah 53 from a totally different frame of reference. The following quote from his commentary confirms my point:

***Isaiah 53:3a—He was despised and forsaken of men, A man of sorrows...*  
Rashi’s commentary states: “So is the custom of this prophet: he mentions all Israel as one man...”**

Holding to the traditions of men (so he could continue to reject Jesus’ Messiahship), Rashi wrongfully allegorized the text by assuming the Jewish nation is the subject rather than the suffering *Servant* who is Messiah. The appalling thing is that he did so even though the Jewish rabbis before him viewed Isaiah 53 as pointing to the Messiah. In fact, he was the first Jewish rabbi to deny the obvious meaning of the text (he did so with much opposition from the other rabbis of his day, but eventually his faulty theology was accepted). While studying Isaiah 52:13-53:12, we will discuss why Rashi’s viewpoint must be invalid. For sure, the disciples would have disagreed had they been alive in his day (read Acts 3:26 and Philippians 2:5-9). However, mindsets such as Rashi’s will be the norm within the general Jewish populous until they realize

their error at the end of the Tribulation, adhere to a literal view of the Scriptures, and accept Jesus as the suffering *Servant* of Isaiah 53. Therefore, if the Jewish nation is the *first-born* of the Father (Exodus 4:22), and the *first-born* receives double the inheritance, the Hebrew nation is the only nation that receives *Double for all her sins* (Isaiah 40:2). This means that a major portion of Israel's sufferings can be traced to one core issue—improper teachers who placed greater value on the words of men than the words of God. Had the Jewish leaders after 30 AD correctly interpreted the Scriptures, they would have accepted Christ as Messiah as a result of viewing Isaiah 52:13-53:12 as pointing to His death, burial, and resurrection. But they opted out for the *tradition learned by rote* (Isaiah 29:13) that so handicapped the Jewish people even in Isaiah's day. This explains many of the events of the past and present, and yes, even the evening news. We should realize, however, that the section of Scripture used most to convert Jews to Christ has been Isaiah 53. Now back to our study of Isaiah 52:13-53:12.

Notice that Isaiah begins dealing with the suffering of the *Servant* in Isaiah 52:13 and continues his theme through Isaiah 53:12. This *Servant* is also the *arm of the Lord* (Isaiah 51:5, 9), who alone is capable of offering *salvation* to unregenerate man (Isaiah 52:10). It was His willingness to die in place of (as a substitute for) sinful man that helped qualify Him for the office of Messiah. Why would He choose to perform such a selfless act? He is *God* (Hebrews 1:8), who *is love* (1John 4:8, 16), and therefore died for the totality of mankind (John 3:16)—even those who choose to reject His free offer of forgiveness and redemption (1Timothy 2:4; 4:10). Therefore, all who accept this salvation *will be redeemed without money* (Isaiah 52:3). It is a free gift; therefore, it is by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8-9). By the way, to choose to receive this salvation is not a work on the believer's part, but merely an acceptance of the work generated and finalized through the *Servant*.

Verses 13-15 of this chapter deal with the suffering and exaltation of the *Servant*. Therefore, the *Servant* must suffer before He can be exalted. Keep this in mind as we continue.

The *Servant will prosper* (v.13) at His Second Coming. This lines up with a hoard of other verses, none better than Revelation 20:4 where John states that He will reign over the earth for the duration of the Millennium. He will also, according to verse 13, *be high*, evidently pointing to His resurrection, *and lifted up*, pointing to His ascension. Lastly, He will be *greatly exalted* (v.13), which makes reference to His present position as our *faithful high priest* (Hebrews 2:17) who sits *at the right hand of the Father* (Ephesians 1:20; Colossians 3:1; Hebrews 1:3, 13; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2; 1Peter 3:22f). The fact that Jesus was resurrected, that He ascended, and is now exalted at the right hand of the Father, is also addressed in Acts 2:22-33. From Acts 3:13, as well as Acts 3:26, it is obvious that it was the *Servant* who experienced this resurrection, ascension, and exaltation. Even Philippians 2:5-11 confirms the same, for the term "*bond-servant*" (v.7—NASB) is actually "servant" in the original Greek.

*Is. 52:14 Just as many were astonished at you, My people, So His appearance was marred more than any man, And His form more than the sons of men.*

The suffering and disgrace experienced by the *Servant* is addressed here. Jesus was so battered, *marred*, and disfigured that those who saw Him on the cross were *astonished at...His appearance*. In fact, He *was marred more than any man, And His form more than the sons of men*. The Hebrew allows us to conclude that Jesus no longer resembled a *man* but rather a mass of unidentifiable flesh.

Note: The words, "*My people,*" at the end of the first phrase of verse 14, are in italics, meaning that they are not included in the original Hebrew text. Therefore, the pronoun "*you*" preceding

“*My people*” does not point to the nation of Israel but rather to the Servant that we know to be Jesus Christ.

*Is. 52:15 Thus He will sprinkle many nations, Kings will shut their mouths on account of Him; For what had not been told them they will see, And what they had not heard they will understand.*

At His Second Coming, and subsequent exaltation during the Millennium, Jesus *will sprinkle many nations*. This means that the *nations* will be astonished (startled or amazed) at His highly exalted position of power. This is in stark contrast to His condition described in verse 14. The Gentile *Kings* of the earth *will shut their mouths* in the sense that they will be overcome with awe as they observe Him. In fact, they will be absolutely speechless. The reason they will respond as such is because they will finally *see* and *understand* what the Messiah’s suffering, as extreme as it was, meant, not only for Him, but for all who accept Him as Savior. Consequently, the Servant’s suffering prepared Him for His future exaltation, the very theme of the next chapter—Isaiah 53:1-9 addressing the Servant’s suffering; Isaiah 53:10-12 describing His future exaltation.