

Book of Isaiah



Chapter 52

Theme: Invitation to the redeemed remnant of Israel; institution of the Kingdom to Israel; introduction of the suffering Servant

Michael Fronczak
564 Schaeffer Dr.
Coldwater, Michigan 49036

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Chapter 52

THEME: Invitation to the redeemed remnant of Israel; institution of the Kingdom to Israel; introduction of the suffering Servant

As we have been moving through Isaiah, we have seen in the shadows or in the background the Servant of Jehovah. Now as we approach chapter 53 we will see very clearly that the Servant of Jehovah is none other than our Lord Jesus Christ.

In the preceding chapter, the "alarm clock" chapter, the alarm was going off -- "Awake, awake!" Now again in the chapter before us we have the alarm sounding.¹

God next called on His people to prepare to receive the salvation that He would provide for them. They would have to lay hold of it by faith for it to benefit them.

The third 'wake-up call' (Isa. 52:1-6) is also addressed to Jerusalem and is a command not only to wake up but to dress up! It is not enough for her to put off her stupor (51:17-23); she must also put on her glorious garments.²

¹Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean.

Last of three: "Awake, awake" (51:9; 51:17; 52:1).

[Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem] Zion and Jerusalem, the holy city, are the subjects here, not Samaria and the destroyed ten tribes. They are to put off their garments of sackcloth, the ashes, and all signs of slavery and captivity, and put on prosperity (Isa. 52:1-2).

[the holy city] Two holy cities in Scripture:

1. Earthly Jerusalem (Isa. 52:1; Dan. 9:24; Rev. 11:2)
2. Heavenly Jerusalem (Heb. 12:22; Rev. 21:2; 22:19)

[holy city] Earthly Jerusalem is called holy because of being chosen and set apart as the location of divine worship (Zech. 14:16-21) and the sacred capital of the Messiah for all eternity (Isa. 2:2-4; 62:7; 1Chr. 23:25; Ps. 102:21; Jer. 3:17; Ezek. 43:7; 48:35).

[no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean] This proves a future fulfillment beyond doubt (Isa. 35:8-10; Zech. 14:16-21).³

¹ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

² <http://soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/isaiah.pdf>

³ Dake's Annotated Reference Bible:

When God says, "O Zion," He doesn't mean Los Angeles, or Pocatello, Idaho, or Muleshoe, Texas. He means Zion, which is a geographical place in the land of Israel. It is actually the high point in the city of Jerusalem. It was David's favorite spot. Blessing is going to come upon Jerusalem, and it will no longer be an unattractive place. I was not impressed when I saw Jerusalem for the first time. I came up from Jericho and made that turn around the Mount of Olives by Bethany; then I was within sight of the temple area, the wall, and the east gate -- that was a thrill. It was late in the afternoon and a shadow was over the city. I could hardly wait until the next morning to enter the city and visit around. Well, the next day was a great disappointment to me. That city is not beautiful in my opinion. Yet the Word of God says it is beautiful for situation; so that's God's viewpoint. I will agree with Him that the situation of it is beautiful, but not the city. However, He makes it clear here that it will be beautiful some day -- because of our Lord's work of redemption. You see, Christ will redeem this physical universe, which now is groaning and travailing together in pain. All the world will become a beautiful spot because of redemption in Christ. He will redeem our bodies; we will get new bodies, and when this takes place, all creation will be redeemed. Redemption is not only of the person but of the property. This is the type of redemption that God permitted in the Mosaic Law, which serves as an illustration of it.⁴

The double call to the Lord to Awake, awake is also used in 51:9, 17. Holy city (48:2) contrasts with uncircumcised and unclean Babylon. Jerusalem (1:8; 40:1, 9) is commanded to awake because she is forever free of her despicable oppressors. Zion: The exiles are identified by their home city (40:1, 9). Zion's strength is like beautiful garments that adorn a queen mother (61:10). The Babylonian hordes would not only be expelled (49:17), but would no longer come to Zion (Nah. 1:15; Rev. 21:27; 22:14, 15).⁵

Awake, awake! Put on your strength, O Zion: The first Awake, awake! asked the LORD to put on strength (Isaiah 51:9). The second Awake, awake! asked Jerusalem to remember the LORD's judgments and promises. Now, the third Awake, awake! tells Zion to put on strength in light of the first to awakenings.

Put on your beautiful garments ... for the uncircumcised and the unclean shall no longer come to you: Jerusalem could put on clothes of beauty and glory, because the time of judgment was over. This shows that this passage has ultimate fulfillment in the very last days.⁶

1-6 Jerusalem was to awake not only because her exile was almost ended (v. 1) but also because she would be freshly adorned with new clothes, that is, she would be rebuilt. Jerusalem's pagan conquerors—the uncircumcised and defiled—would never again invade and pollute the holy city (cf. 48:2). This no doubt refers to the time when the Messiah will establish God's kingdom on earth, for only then will pagans never again trample the city. To shake off... dust means to stop mourning (dust on one's head was a sign of mourning, Job 2:12). Jerusalem will be freed from her chains, never again to be enslaved. She had been sold because of her sins (cf. Isa. 50:1) but now she would be redeemed (gā' al, "to purchase out of slavery"). However, God did not have to buy them. He will graciously bring them back to Him and they will pay nothing.⁷

⁴ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

⁵ The Nelson Study Bible

⁶ www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide2017-Isa/Isa-52.cfm?a=731001

⁷ The Bible Knowledge Commentary

God called on Israel to awake and to be strong (in the strength that God provides). The Israelites did not need to call on Him to awake and to be strong, as they had done (51:9). He was ready to save them. But were they ready to trust Him for their salvation (cf. 40:27-31; 42:23-25; 43:22-24; 45:9-13, 15, 18-19; 46:8-13; 48:1-22; 49:14—50:3)? The Lord instructed the people of Zion to put on the beautiful garments of salvation that God would provide for them. How He would provide salvation for them is the subject of the next Servant Song (52:13—53:12). God saw His people as comprising a holy city, and they needed to view themselves that way too, as holy people (cf. 4:2-6; 1 Cor. 1:2). References to Jerusalem as "the holy city" appear in Neh. 11:1, 18; Isa. 48:2; 52:1; Dan. 9:24; Matt. 4:5; 27:53; and Rev. 11:2. The Lord would forbid any uncommitted and unclean people from having a part in His future for them.

Notwithstanding the priestly house of Aaron and the royal house of David, the ideal of a royal, priestly people (Ex. 19:4-6) had never been realized, but while Zion slept (1a) a marvel occurred so that on waking she finds new garments laid out (1bc), expressive of a new status of holiness.⁸

²Shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion.

[bands of thy neck] The bands of the neck could only refer to the chains by which conquered people were led into captivity. They were chained together in long lines until they reached their destination where they were sent into slavery or otherwise disposed of.⁹

Today the Arab is there. All the sacred spots are covered with churches -- Russian Orthodox, Greek Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Lutheran, and the Church of All Nations -- they are all over the place! Jerusalem needs to be released from religion. It needs to be turned loose from the sin and the low degree of civilization that is there right now. Release is coming some day, and it will come during the Millennium. For twenty-five hundred years that city has been captive and trodden down of the Gentiles, but the day is coming when the shackles of slavery will be removed.¹⁰

Arise ... sit down evokes the image of a queen ascending her throne. Loose yourself: For similar images of freed captives, see 42:7; 48:20; 51:14.¹¹

Israel could not deliver herself, but she needed to rise up from her humiliated and bound condition and respond to the Lord's deliverance of her (cf. 47:1). Salvation is not by works of righteousness, but it does require faith. Humans cannot break the chains that bind them, but they must remove them, with His help, since God has promised that He will break them.¹²

⁸ <http://soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/isaiah.pdf>

⁹ Dake's Annotated Reference Bible:

¹⁰ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

¹¹ The Nelson Study Bible

¹² <http://soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/isaiah.pdf>

³For thus saith the LORD, Ye have sold yourselves for nought; and ye shall be redeemed without money.

Redeemed without money. Redemptive coin was always silver, silver speaks of blood (linked as symbols). Here, redeemed not with money but with blood. Predicted early in Torah when Adam and Eve made their cloths of fig leaves God replaced them with cloths of skin, teaching that it was by the shedding of innocent blood they would be covered. All prophetically pointing to the Cross.¹³

[sold yourselves for nought; and ye shall be redeemed without money] You became captives without a price being paid for you, so you will be liberated without money being paid for you (cp. 1Pet. 1:18).¹⁴

Since God received nothing from those who took His holy city captive, He will give nothing in return. He will take it from them and restore it again.¹⁵

You have sold yourselves for nothing, and you shall be redeemed without money: Tragically, Jerusalem went after other gods like someone selling themselves for nothing. Yet, they would be blessed by being redeemed without money. God's mercy answered to their tragic sin!

You shall be redeemed without money - but it doesn't mean that it doesn't cost anything. The end of Isaiah 52 begins to describe the great cost of redemption, but it is a cost paid by another.¹⁶

Yahweh announced that since no one forced God to sell Israel into slavery (cf. 45:13; 50:1), neither would anyone force Him to redeem her. He would free her of His own free will, just as He had sent her into captivity of His own free will (cf. 2 Cor. 5:19). There was, therefore, no impediment to His redeeming her.¹⁷

⁴For thus saith the Lord GOD, My people went down aforetime into Egypt to sojourn there; and the Assyrian oppressed them without cause.

Assyrian - Ex 1:8; Acts 7:18 (oppressed by Pharaoh who did not know Joseph).

Example- Stephen's speech in Acts 7. His point is that Israel always screws up the first time. He was implying that Israel screwed up the first time with Jesus, but they will recognize Him the second.

In Greek two ways to say "another": one of the same kind, or one of a different kind. Here (Acts 7:18) another means one of a different kind. Isa 52:4 notes that the Pharaoh was not Egyptian, but Assyrian!¹⁸

[aforetime into Egypt to sojourn there] Gen. 46:1-34.

¹³ Chuck Missler, Notes on Isaiah, k-house.org

¹⁴ Dake's Annotated Reference Bible:

¹⁵ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

¹⁶ www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide2017-Isa/Isa-52.cfm?a=731001

¹⁷ <http://soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/isaiah.pdf>

¹⁸ Chuck Missler, Notes on Isaiah, k-house.org

[the Assyrian oppressed them without cause] This is proof that the new king of Egypt who "knew not Joseph" (Ex. 1:8) was the king of Assyria who had conquered the land (Acts 7:18).¹⁹

Jacob went down to Egypt by invitation, but his children were made slaves. The Assyrians, and others likewise, have oppressed them. That will end when the Millennium begins.²⁰

to dwell there: The wording suggests that Israel was dependent on Egypt's hospitality; but the text assumes the Egyptians betrayed that trust. Without cause does not mean that Israel was without sin (42:23–25), but that Israel had not wronged either Egypt or Assyria.²¹

Sovereign Yahweh further declared that the Israelites had gone down to Egypt of their own volition in the days of Jacob. Later the Assyrians had taken them captive against their will. These earliest and most recent oppressions represented all of them that Israel had undergone. The implication is that since God can freely liberate (v. 3), He could redeem His people from enemy-imposed captivity as easily as He could redeem them from self-imposed captivity.²²

⁵Now therefore, what have I here, saith the LORD, that my people is taken away for nought? they that rule over them make them to howl, saith the LORD; and my name continually every day is blasphemed.

[my name continually every day is blasphemed] Quoted in Rom. 2:24.

God received no gain from the years of His people's rejection.²³

Then God briefly reviewed the history of the nation in slavery. They had been slaves in Egypt and more recently Assyria had conquered the Northern Kingdom and also exacted tribute from Judah (52:4). Now another power, Babylon, would take away Judah and mock them (v. 5) and blaspheme God. Through all this the Lord's power to bring them back each time should show the people that He is the only unique God. Eventually when they return in belief they will know Him.²⁴

Here refers to Babylon. God's justice demands that those who make Israel wail will be punished and that Israel will be delivered. My name is blasphemed: For a similar charge, see 37:23, 24.²⁵

Yahweh reflected on the present situation: What have we here? Israel was in captivity but not because God had to give her over to a superior person. Furthermore, Israel's leaders wailed

¹⁹ Dake's Annotated Reference Bible:

²⁰ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

²¹ The Nelson Study Bible

²² <http://soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/isaiah.pdf>

²³ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

²⁴ The Bible Knowledge Commentary

²⁵ The Nelson Study Bible

because of the shame of their defeat. Finally, the victors held Yahweh's name in contempt because they concluded He was weaker than their strongest gods.²⁶

“Therefore my people shall know my name: therefore *they shall know* in that day that I am he that doth speak: behold, *it is I*.

This is a lovely thought! When the Lord was here over nineteen hundred years ago, they did not know Him. If they had only known the day of His visitation! Well, they will know Him when He comes again, and He will say, "Behold, it is I." This expression is rendered freely by Lowth: "Here I am." The world has rejected Christ; it doesn't know Him. One day He will say to the Christ-rejecting world, "Here I am," and it will be too late then for the multitudes who have rejected Him to turn to Him.²⁷

Therefore My people shall know My name: Yet God will glorify Himself; first, He will do it among His own people. It is almost if God says, "I can abide with My name being blasphemed continually every day among the nations. Just let it be known and praised among My people."

It is bad enough that the world does not know or honor God; but it is far more tragic when His own people do not know or honor Him.

Therefore they shall know in that day that I am He who speaks: In Isaiah's day, they didn't know that the LORD had spoken through His Word. This is to be expected among the nations, but should never be so among God's people. But God promises there will come a day when they shall know in that day that I am He who speaks.²⁸

My people refers to the redeemed exiles. Know My name is an allusion to Ex. 3:13, 14; 6:2. The Lord glorifies His name by predicting and fulfilling the promise of redemption pledged in v. 3.²⁹

The Lord's conclusion to the situation was twofold. First, He would so deliver His people that there would be no question in their minds that He was the only true God (cf. Ezek. 36:21-32). Second, Yahweh would prove that He is who He claimed to be, by fulfilling what He had predicted He would do. "In that day" anticipates a time, yet future, in which God would act decisively for His people to vindicate His name.³⁰

²⁶ <http://soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/isaiah.pdf>

²⁷ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

²⁸ https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide2017-Isa/Isa-52.cfm?a=731001

²⁹ The Nelson Study Bible

³⁰ <http://soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/isaiah.pdf>

⁷How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!

[How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings] Quoted partially in Rom. 10:15 of ministers of the gospel; but the final and complete fulfillment awaits the Millennium when Jewish missionaries will go from Jerusalem to evangelize the world and tell all men that Christ is reigning in Zion (Isa. 2:2-4; 11:9; 66:19-21; Zech. 8:23; 14:16-21). **[bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth]** Four duties of Millennial evangelists:

1. To bring good tidings.
2. To publish peace.
3. To publish salvation.
4. To announce that God reigns in Zion.

[good tidings] Good tidings -- gospel (Rom. 14:15).

[peace] There will be universal peace when this is fulfilled -- the first time since Adam (Isa. 2:2-4).

[tidings of good] Tidings of good things -- meaning all phases of the gospel of the N.T. and the fulfillment of hundreds of prophecies regarding world changes in the Millennium.

[salvation] Salvation will be for all who will accept it, as now (Isa. 52:7,10; 49:6).

[that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth]

God Reigning in Zion

This last part of the verse about God reigning in Zion was not quoted by Paul in Rom. 10:15 for no gospel minister has ever made such an announcement. God has never yet reigned in Zion and will not until He sets up the kingdom and Christ reigns there in person (Isa. 2:2-3; 9:6-7; 24:23; 32:1; Zech. 14; Mt. 25:31-46; Lk. 1:32-33; Rev. 11:15; 20:1-10). When that happens all men will be free to go to Jerusalem to see Christ; and all nations will be required to send representatives from year to year to worship there and keep the feast of tabernacles (Zech. 14:16-21). After the 1,000-year reign of Christ to rid the earth of all rebellion (1Cor. 15:24-28), both God and Christ will dwell among men on earth (Rev. 21-22).³¹

God says that the feet of those who bring good news are "beautiful." It is a wonderful privilege to be able to share God's Good News with others, his news of redemption, salvation, and peace. To whom do you need to give the Good News?³²

7-8 These verses announce the release of Israel from Babylonian captivity. The deliverance of Jerusalem is a picture of the redemption of the world by Christ. While Israel was in captivity, God's earthly sovereignty was not recognized, but when the Jews returned to rebuild their city, His earthly rule was reestablished. However, the day is coming when His rule will be reestablished for all eternity.³³

³¹ Dake's Annotated Reference Bible:

³² Life Application Study Bible.

³³ Believers Study Bible

The vision is of the feet of the one who runs from the scene of battle across mountains to the city waiting for news (2 Sam. 18:26). The glorious message of this runner is salvation, meaning “victorious deliverance” (49:8). This is good news or glad tidings. The idea appears in the New Testament as “to tell the Good News.” The message Your God reigns stands behind all history; the Lord controls every power on earth.³⁴

No wonder those who bring good news have beautiful feet; they are out partnering with God for the salvation of men. The feet speak of activity, motion, and progress, and those who are active and moving in the work of preaching the gospel have beautiful ... feet!³⁵

This is one of the five verses in Isaiah where the name of Jesus which is "salvation" (yeshuah) in Hebrew, stands alone with out suffixes or prefixes. "How beautiful are the feet... of him who announces Jesus!" Isa. 49:6 and 8 is even more interesting in context. Other verses are 26:1 and 59:17; and 60:18. It is extraordinary that in 3 of these 5 verses the word Nazar or Nazarene is in the context of the verses where Jesus name (salvation) stands alone.³⁶

Isaiah exulted in the good news that the Lord had just revealed. The news had reached His people through a messenger whom the prophet pictured as running across mountains with his message (cf. 40:9; 41:27; Nah. 1:15). The messenger's feet were beautiful because they carried him and his message of peace, happiness, and salvation (cf. Matt. 10:1-7; Rom. 10:15). His message is that Yahweh is the only true God and that He reigns as the sovereign over the universe and all supposed gods. Watts believed the rejoicing was due to Darius seizing the reigns of power from the Babylonians.

What does God's rule entail? It entails a condition where all things are in their proper relation to each other, with nothing left hanging, incomplete, or unfulfilled (peace, shalom); it entails a condition where creation purposes are realized (good, tob; cf. Gen. 1:4, 10, etc.); it entails a condition of freedom from every bondage, but particularly the bondage resultant from sin (salvation, yeshu'a). Where God reigns, these follow. Of course, this is exactly congruent with what the Christian faith considers its good news (euangelion) to be.³⁷

7-10 The messenger who brings the news to the watchmen that God reigns on earth will be quite welcome. I believe that this messenger is Jesus Christ Himself. For, we are told by the prophet Zechariah that on the day He returns to earth to rule and reign,

Zech. 14:3-4 *Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle. In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south.*

At that moment, the nations of the world will be attacking Jerusalem, and the Jews still living inside will be convinced that they are moments away from extermination.

So, you can see why Jesus' return will be so welcome! It will come in the nick of time!³⁸

³⁴ The Nelson Study Bible

³⁵ https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide2017-Isa/Isa-52.cfm?a=731001

³⁶ ht <http://soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/isaiah.pdf><http://www.moellerhaus.com/isa50-52.htm>

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³⁸ <http://rondaniel.com/library/23-Isaiah/Isaiah5101.php>

⁸Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the LORD shall bring again Zion.

“Watches” - angels?

“Holy of Holies of the Old Testament Prophecy”

Isaiah 53 is so provocative that Ashkenazi Jews removed the chapter from their Bibles, however Sephardic Jews did not. The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in 1947, which included a copy of Isaiah with Chapter 53 included, created some controversy.

Written 700 B.C. Isaiah 53 is mentioned to in all four gospels (Mt 8:17; Mk 15:28; Lk 22:37; Jn 12:37,38) and in Acts (Philip and the Ethiopian, 8:32-35), Romans (10:16); and 1 Pet 2:21-25.

Background: Ps 22 - from the cross....the bones, thirst, piercing of the hands and feet, the humiliation, ridicule, casting of lots....first words and last words correspond with Jesus' first and last words on the cross. Zech 12:10 - “whom they have pierced.”

Isa 53 - (to/before) the Cross.... The Lamb slain in our stead. Starts at 52:13 (chapter divisions were instituted 14-15th century).³⁹

[watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing] Watchmen who look for the enemy will rejoice with all Judah, for instead of enemies they will see the remnant of Israel returning to Jerusalem to make the Millennial nation under the Messiah (Isa. 11:10-12; 66:19-21; Jer. 30-31; Ezek. 37; Mt. 24:29-31).

[see eye to eye] They shall see the Lord and all resurrected saints of all ages, as well as all men on earth, face to face in that day (Isa. 52:8-10). This has nothing to do with agreement of opinion; it refers to personal appearance (Isa. 2:2-4; Zech. 13:6; 14:9; Mt. 24:29-31; 25:31-46; Rev. 11:15; 20:1-10).⁴⁰

8-12 When the LORD shall restore Zion: Still the theme of the section beginning with chapter 50 to the end of 52.. The captives are urged to return to Zion which is spoken of as a completed fact and as a future event at the same time: not go out with haste, nor go by flight: The circumstances of the return are well known. The decree of Cyrus in 536 BC was not coerced but was a part of his policy to undo the forced evacuation of captured lands which had been the policy that the Babylonians had learned from the Assyrians. Cyrus inspected the prophecies about himself and concluded that YHWH wanted him to restore the Jewish nation and the Temple at Jerusalem. Thus the return to Zion of the second commonwealth was indeed led by YHWH. The abruptness of the change from the joy of the return to Zion to the immediate introduction of the suffering Messiah that follows in the next verse is commented on in the introduction to chapter 50 which should be read in conjunction with this and the next verses where it is explained that the "fragmentary" abruptness of speaking of first of the Babylonian return and then of the special nature of the Messiah is a part of Isaiah's style of writing.⁴¹

³⁹ Chuck Missler, Notes on Isaiah, k-house.org

⁴⁰ Dake's Annotated Reference Bible

⁴¹ <http://www.moellerhaus.com/isa50-52.htm>

⁹Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the LORD hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem.

One of the things you will note about the present-day Jerusalem is the lack of a joyful song. It is even true of the churches there. I listened for it but never heard a joyful song. Around the Mosque of Omar (which stands on the temple site) everything is in a minor key. If you go to the wailing wall, wailing is what you will hear, and the Jews are knocking their heads against it. But in the Millennium everybody is going to have fun -- they will "Break forth into joy" and they will "sing together." It will be a joyous time!

Even today I don't think God likes to see us saints walking around with long faces, complaining and criticizing. He wants us to have joy. The apostle John wrote, "And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full" (1John 1:4, italics mine) -- not just a little fun, but fun all the time!

The Millennium is the time when God answers the prayer which our Lord taught His disciples: "Thy kingdom come..." (Matt. 6:10). The tears and the sorrow will be gone; no longer will there be weeping on the earth. Instead there will be joy, and they will know that the millennial Kingdom has come.⁴²

Now all the people of Jerusalem, even the downtrodden, joined the chorus and praised God for coming to comfort and redeem His people. To give thanks in advance is the highest form of faith. The person praising God for what he or she does not yet possess is the person who truly believes the promises of God.⁴³

¹⁰The LORD hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

[bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations] An expression of manifesting His power to all nations. To bare the arm is a term meaning preparation for active work, especially war. Eastern custom allowed the arm to be made bare in an instant; the sleeve was so free that one hand passing up the arm would lay it bare at once (cp. Isa. 52:1; Ezek. 4:7).

[all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God] Only a small part of mankind has seen the reality of God's salvation. Multitudes have yet to hear of the gospel. In the Millennium, the earth will, for the first time, be filled with the knowledge of God as the waters cover the sea (Isa. 11:9).

Universal Salvation

All nations will see the salvation of God in that they will see the complete redemption of Israel and multitudes of the Gentiles. Knowledge of salvation will be as universal as the waters covering the sea (Isa. 11:9). The results of salvation will be evidenced by changes in the animal kingdom, all kinds of beasts living together without harm (Isa. 11:6-9; 65:20-25); deserts blossoming as a rose (Isa. 35:1-10); universal health (Isa. 33:24; 35:1-10); and so many other great changes throughout the earth that all nations will recognize that such deliverances are of God (Isa. 52:10).⁴⁴

⁴² Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

⁴³ <http://soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/isaiah.pdf>

⁴⁴ Dake's Annotated Reference Bible

God would display His power (roll up His sleeves) before all the nations by redeeming His people (cf. 18:3). It was customary for warriors to bare their right arms up to their shoulders so they could fight without the encumbrance of a sleeve. God's power is holy in that it is perfect and transcendent, and it is also for a holy purpose, namely, the salvation of His people (cf. Mark 1:24; Luke 4:34). His salvation would become visible to the whole world.⁴⁵

¹¹Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean *thing*; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the LORD.

Babylon in Latter Days

The reference here is no doubt to God's people going out of Babylon, as this subject has been mentioned in several of these last chapters in Isaiah (Isa. 43:14; 47:1; 48:14,20). This refers to a latter-day coming out as predicted in Jer. 51:5-8; Rev. 18:4. In their flight they are not to touch unclean things or make haste (Isa. 52:11-12). These are the only verses here that could have a partial fulfillment in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah when priests took the vessels of the Lord back and did not go out with haste (Ezra 1:1-11); but the final fulfillment remains to happen with the rest of this prophecy of Isa. 51:1 -- Isa. 52:12.⁴⁶

Depart! Depart: For another use of a double word, see 51:9, 17. Touch no unclean thing: For other passages concerning separation, see 2 Cor. 6:17; Heb. 12:14; 13:13; 1 Pet. 2:1-12; Rev. 18:4. In the first Exodus, Israel carried out silver and gold from Egypt; in the second Exodus, the priestly nation would bear the vessels made from those elements (2 Kin. 25:14, 15; Ezra 1:7-11; 5:14, 15).⁴⁷

In view of this salvation, the redeemed should depart from the unclean place where they had been, and purify themselves. The Babylonian exiles, who would be set free, should return to Jerusalem to reestablish their holy lives, in a holy city, in a holy land. The decision of many Israelites to remain in Babylon rather than returning with Zerubbabel, Ezra, or Nehemiah, was sinful rebellion against God's revealed will for them. Some of them, such as Daniel perhaps, may not have been able to return, however. The recipients of spiritual salvation, which these Babylonian exiles represent, should also respond to redemption by living lives separated from sin unto God (cf. Lam. 4:15; 2 Cor. 6:17). The vessels in view are those things needed to worship God as He prescribed (cf. Ezra 1:7).⁴⁸

11-12 Just like the Lord encouraged the captives in Babylon to make the trip back to the Promised Land, God will again open up highways in the wilderness and encourage the Jews to return to Jerusalem when the Millennial Kingdom is established on earth. The Lord will protect their journey, and many of them will receive first-class air travel!

Matt. 24:31 *And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.*⁴⁹

⁴⁵ <http://soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/isaiah.pdf>

⁴⁶ Dake's Annotated Reference Bible:

⁴⁷ The Nelson Study Bible

⁴⁸ <http://soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/isaiah.pdf>

⁴⁹ <http://rondaniel.com/library/23-Isaiah/Isaiah5101.php>

¹²For ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight: for the LORD will go before you; and the God of Israel will be your rereward.

The people did not have to leave in fearful haste because Cyrus, God's anointed (45:1), decreed that the Jewish exiles could return safely to Jerusalem (Ezra 1:1-4). They had the king's approval, his guaranteed protection. More important, the Lord would go ahead to point the way and be behind to protect them.⁵⁰

Before and rear guard are allusions to the pillar of cloud and fire that protected Israel in its flight from Egypt (42:16; 49:10; 58:8; Ex. 13:21, 22; 14:19, 20). the Lord ... the God of Israel: The pillar of cloud and fire actually stood for the Lord Himself (Ex. 33:9-11).⁵¹

The redeemed would not need to run away from their former captor as fast as they could, or to depart as fugitives, as they had to do when they left Egypt in the Exodus. They were completely free. Yahweh would go before to lead them and behind to protect them as they journeyed to their Promised Land (cf. Exod. 13:21-22; 14:19-20).⁵²

¹³Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high.

“Behold my servant.”

Extolled = “lifted up” (Jn 3:14; Num 21:5-9) made sin for us! (2 Cor 5:21).⁵³

Isa. 52:13 says, "Behold, My servant" -- Jehovah's servant, not the servant of Satan, man, or sin. This servant is not Israel, the church, or Isaiah himself, but the Messiah who was predicted in Isa. 7:14; 9:6-7; 42:1; 52:3; 53:11; 65:8. His exaltation is introduced first, as this is the eternal aspect of the Messiah (Isa. 52:13,15); then His humiliation is dealt with in detail, as this is the immediate step to His exaltation (Isa. 52:14; 53:1-12). The chapter should have started at Isa. 52:13, because it begins the detailed description of the Messiah in suffering and exaltation. This is the most important section of the O.T. and could be called the heart of the Bible. No other passage of like size gives the reasons for the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ. No other part of the Bible has created more controversy between the friends and foes of Christianity.

[prudently] Hebrew: sakal (HSN-<H7919>), to be circumspect and intelligent; considerate; expert; prosperous; to deal prudently; be skillful; have good success; have wisdom. It is translated behaved wisely (1Sam. 18:5; Ps. 101:2); prosper (Dt. 29:9; Josh. 1:7; 1Ki. 2:3); have good success (Josh. 1:8); deal prudently (Isa. 52:13); and understand (Dan. 9:25).

[exalted] Hebrew: ruwm (HSN-<H7311>), to rise to a high place; to be lifted up to a high position. In God's plan, this always follows humiliation, suffering, obedience, and conformity to the highest good of all (Mt. 23:12; Lk. 14:11; 18:14; Php. 2:5-11; Heb. 5:8-9).

[extolled] Hebrew: nasa' (HSN-<H5375>), to lift; be honored; magnify; be respected. Translated extolled (Isa. 52:13); lofty (Isa. 57:15); and lifted up (1Chr. 14:2; Jer. 51:9; Zech. 5:7).

⁵⁰ Life Application Study Bible.

⁵¹ The Nelson Study Bible

⁵² <http://soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/isaiah.pdf>

⁵³ Chuck Missler, Notes on Isaiah, k-house.org

[**very high**] Christ has been exalted higher than all powers (Eph. 1:20-23; Php. 2:9-11; Col. 1:15-18; Heb. 1:3; 1Pet. 3:22).⁵⁴

Several of the administrations in Washington over the past few years have used the word prudent to excess. They speak of being prudent in their conduct. There is some question about whether they were prudent or not. If you think the Democrats have been prudent, ask the Republicans. If you think the Republicans have been prudent, ask the Democrats. You will find out that nobody has been prudent. Man today has not dealt prudently; but, when the Lord Jesus Christ comes, He will deal prudently. That is the picture we have here.

"He shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high." Paul writing to the Philippian believers says, "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:9-11).⁵⁵

The servant, as the term is used here, is the Messiah, our Lord Jesus. He would be highly exalted because of his sacrifice, described in chapter 53.⁵⁶

"Behold, My Servant" marks a new section in the development of Isaiah's argument, but it also directs the reader to fix his or her attention carefully on the Servant (cf. 42:1; Zech. 3:8; 6:12; 9:9). The Servant would succeed in the sense of fulfilling the purpose to which God had called Him (cf. 42:1; 49:2-3; 50:7-9). Watts identified this servant as the Persian king Darius I (Hystaspes, 521-486 B.C.) in the whole passage (52:13—53:12).

He took this Servant Song as describing the unlikely Persian king whom God had raised up to bring His people back into their land following the exile.

The implication is that he would act with such intelligence as to succeed in his objectives. In view of this success, He would be high, lifted up, and greatly exalted. Some commentators see in these three verbs a hint of the stages in the exaltation of our Lord, His resurrection, ascension, and session at the right hand of the Father. Yet the prophet's purpose seems not so much to present the actual details of our Lord's life as to set forth a picture of the suffering servant as such.

The terms high, lifted up, and greatly exalted describe God elsewhere (cf. v. 17; 6:1; 33:10; 57:15). One writer noted several similarities between these two sections of the book and used them to argue for a single writer of the entire prophecy. Thus the Servant would take a place of equality with God (cf. Acts. 2:33; 3:13, 26; Phil. 2:9; Col. 3:1; Heb. 1:3; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2; 1 Pet. 3:22). This could in no way refer to Israel, the remnant in Israel, or any merely human person.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Dake's Annotated Reference Bible:

⁵⁵ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

⁵⁶ Life Application Study Bible.

⁵⁷ <http://soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/isaiah.pdf>

52:13–53:12 The fourth of the Servant Songs forms the central unit of chs. 40–66, predicting the Servant’s death for the sins of His people. The passage consists of three sections: (1) The Father praises the work of the Servant (52:13–15); (2) Israel confesses that it has despised Him (53:1–9); (3) the prophecy expands on the significance of the Servant’s death (53:10–12). This passage is cited many times in the New Testament, where the Servant is identified with Jesus Christ (see Luke 22:37; 24:27, 46; 1 Cor. 15:3; 1 Pet. 1:11).⁵⁸

Exalted and extolled and be very high may refer to three successive events, describing the Servant’s resurrection, ascension, and glorification (Rom. 4:24, 25). Or the three phrases might simply emphasize the great exaltation of the Lord’s servant (Phil. 2:9–11).⁵⁹

13-15 My Servant: The Messiah's paradoxical suffering which will startle kings for generations to come is again placed after the promise of a restoration of the nation and return from captivity. As explained previously. the two events, the return from Babylon and the coming of the Messiah both accomplish ingatherings into Zion. In chapter 11:11 these two events are called the first and the second recovery of the remnant.. Thus they are paired in a number of places in the book of Isaiah and here the switch back and forth from the return from Babylon to the messianic mission are paired in these chapters but beginning with verse 13 the short term, seemingly fragmentary, pairing will end, as the return from Babylon is held in abeyance until chapter 54, and this description of the sufferings of the Messiah described again here reaches its crescendo in the next chapter which is the crowing chapter of Isaiah's prophecies about the suffering Messiah.

Verse 13 should actually be the beginning of chapter 53 which continues the description of the characteristics of the suffering Messiah introduced here. An appraisal of all the verses dealing with the "coming one" will justify the conclusion of most pre-christian era Rabbis, that the Messiah was to be a person. Even after the time of Jesus Christ the rabbinical writings looked for a person, not the nation itself, to fulfill the messianic promises. This can be seen especially in the Isaiah Targum which is a rabbinical product of scholars both before and after the birth of Christ.⁶⁰

¹⁴As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men:

Should read: “so marred from the form of man was his aspect that his appearance was not that of a son of man” (Isa 50:6).⁶¹

[astonied] Hebrew: shamem (HSN-<H8074>), to stun; grow numb; stupify; be shocked; amaze; be astonished; wonder. Translated "astonied" (Isa. 52:14; Ezra 9:3-4; Job 17:8; 18:20; Ezek. 4:17); "astonishment" (2Chr. 7:21); "wondered" (Isa. 59:16; 63:5); "amazed" (Ezek. 32:10); and "astonished" (Lev. 26:32; 1Ki. 9:8; Job 1:5; Jer. 2:12; 4:9; 18:16; 19:8; 49:17; 50:13; Ezek. 3:15; 26:16; 27:35; 28:19; Dan. 8:27).

⁵⁸ The Nelson Study Bible

⁵⁹ The Nelson Study Bible

⁶⁰ <http://www.moellerhaus.com/isa50-52.htm>

⁶¹ Chuck Missler, Notes on Isaiah, k-house.org

[visage] Hebrew: mar'eh (HSN-<H4758>), view; appearance; shape; visage. Generally translated "appearance," referring to His outward form.

[marred] Hebrew: mishchath (HSN-<H4893>), to disfigure. Translated "marred" (Isa. 52:14), and "corruption" (Lev. 22:25). In His sufferings the Messiah was so bruised, beaten, and mutilated that His outward appearance was horrendous. He suffered so much that even wicked, hardhearted men were shocked at His treatment. He became so disfigured that men were disgusted at what they saw. The more perfect His body, the more marred He seemed in suffering.⁶²

This servant, Christ, would be "disfigured"; but through his suffering, he would cleanse the nations (Hebrews 10:14; 1 Peter 1:2).⁶³

This is a picture of the crucifixion of Christ, and this statement prepares the way for chapter 53. I want to be careful, because it is not always a sign of orthodoxy to dwell upon the sufferings of Christ upon the Cross; sometimes it is only being crude.

During that time of darkness when men could no longer do anything, the Son of God was working on the Cross. It was during those three hours in blackness that the Cross became an altar and the Son of Man, the Lamb of God, paid for the sins of the world. After the three hours of darkness, the crowd must have been startled when the light broke upon the Cross. He did not even look human -- just a bloody piece of quivering human flesh. It was unspeakable. We will see in the next chapter that there was "no beauty that we should desire him" (Isa. 53:2). That is the reason God put the mantle of darkness down on the Cross. There was nothing there to satisfy the morbid curiosity of man.

"His visage was so marred more than any man." When I was a pastor in Nashville, Tennessee, there was a wonderful elder on the church board who was a captain in the fire department. He always talked about the importance of having a first aid kit, and he taught classes in first aid. He asked me a dozen times if I had a first aid kit in my car, and because of his urging I finally got one. Early one morning there was a fire alarm and the firemen responded to the call. On the way to the fire, the hook and ladder truck on which he was riding was hit by a milk truck and flipped over. The men riding on it were dragged along the asphalt. I received a call about five o'clock in the morning and was told that he was in the hospital. He was still alive when I arrived, and his father was sitting beside his bed. When I looked at him I saw that his face was so marred that I didn't even recognize him. All I could see was a mouth and I could tell that he was breathing -- that was all. He didn't last very long. In an hour's time he was gone.

Many times since then I have thought of the fact that the Lord Jesus was marred more than any man, which means He had to be marred more than the captain of the fire company. He was just a piece of quivering human flesh. That is what my Lord went through on the Cross! I don't feel that we should move into the realm of being crude in describing Him, because the next verse says:⁶⁴

⁶² Dake's Annotated Reference Bible:

⁶³ Life Application Study Bible.

⁶⁴ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

The world was unprepared and astonished to see in its crucified Deliverer one who had no outward show of grandeur, no display of charisma, and one who was so cruelly disfigured during His experience on the cross.⁶⁵

So His visage was marred ... more than the sons of men: People would be horrified at the Servant's appearance; He would be so disfigured that He would no longer look human.

The Servant would experience the same humiliation and degradation that had marked the Israelites. Rather than appearing to be the strongest and most attractive representative of Yahweh, the Servant would appear extremely weak and unattractive to people. This description probably presents all aspects of His being: physical, mental, social, spiritual, etc. Jesus did not impress people as being the best looking, the most brilliant, the most socially engaging, or the most pious individual they had ever met, according to the Gospels. In His trials and crucifixion, Jesus' underwent beatings that marred His physical appearance, but far more than that is in view in this description of Him. By saying that His appearance was marred more than any man and His form more than the sons of men, Isaiah was saying in a very strong way that His sufferings would be very great.

Many is a theological term within the Song, referring to the whole company for whose benefit the Servant acts (15a, [53:]11c, [53:]12ae). It appears here for the first time and provides a telling contrast 'with the one, the solitary . . . servant'.⁶⁶

¹⁵So shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for *that* which had not been told them shall they see; and *that* which they had not heard shall they consider.

“Sprinkle” - (LXX- “marvel”) in Lev 14:7; 4:6; 8:11 same word is used for “ritual sprinkling” that is done by one who is pure and innocent.⁶⁷

[sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him] This refers to the custom of sprinkling guests at feasts with perfumed water from a silver sprinkler. It has nothing to do with sprinkling of water in baptism, but to the symbolic sprinkling of blood, as in Ex. 29:21; Lev. 4:6,17; 5:9; 14:7,16,27,51; 16:14-15,19; etc. It is used only once of the water of purification (Num. 8:7). Many nations will be blessed with salvation and their kings will be dumb with astonishment because of their admiration and veneration of Him. [that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider] Quoted in Rom. 15:21.⁶⁸

"So shall he sprinkle many nations" could be translated, "So shall He make with astonishment many nations." This carries the thought that His death will startle people when they properly understand it. The death of Christ should never become commonplace to anyone. His death was different. We have not explained it properly unless it startles people.

⁶⁵ Believers Study Bible

⁶⁶ <http://soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/isaiah.pdf>

⁶⁷ Chuck Missler, Notes on Isaiah, k-house.org

⁶⁸ Dake's Annotated Reference Bible:

This prepares us for the profound mystery of the next marvelous chapter.⁶⁹

The nations are represented by their kings. Shut their mouths is a token of stunned respect. For what had not been told ... they shall consider: Romans 15:21 refers to this passage. What they are told is the report of ch. 53.

InDepth—The Suffering Servant Amidst a declaration of the Lord’s coming salvation (see 52:7–12; 54:1–10), Isaiah places a portrait of the Suffering Servant (52:13–53:12). Despised and rejected (53:3), wounded and bruised (53:5), this unattractive Servant would know heartache and sorrow. What was the reason for His suffering? His life could not be the cause, for He was blameless, speaking only the truth (53:9). Yet the Servant would be led to prison and then to death for our sins (53:6–11). Three other passages in Isaiah focus on the Servant and are called the “Servant Songs” (42:1–4; 49:1–6; 50:4–9). The first song celebrates the Servant as the One who will establish justice for all (42:4). The second highlights the deliverance that the Servant will provide. He will restore Israel and become a “light to the Gentiles.” The third emphasizes the God-given wisdom of the Servant. All this culminates in the description of the suffering and death of the Servant in ch. 53, the final “Servant Song.” Although at times Isaiah refers to the nation Israel as a Servant (49:3), the preeminent Servant of the Lord was clearly a unique person, a suffering Messiah yet to come (53:6). New Testament authors such as Matthew understood Jesus’ teaching and preaching as a direct fulfillment of Isa. 42:1–4 (see Matt. 12:15–21). Philip used one of the Servant Songs as a starting point for evangelism (53:7, 8). The Ethiopian eunuch asked him to explain the passage “He was led as a sheep to the slaughter” (53:7, 8; Acts 8:31–34). Philip introduced him to Jesus, the One who was led to His death for the sins of all humanity.⁷⁰

The Suffering Servant	
Jesus understood His mission and work as the fulfillment of Isaiah’s Suffering Servant.	
The Prophecy	The Fulfillment
He will be exalted (52:13)	Philippians 2:9; Mark 15:17, 19 1 Peter 1:2 John 12:37, 38 Romans 4:25; 1 Peter 2:24, 25 2 Corinthians 5:21 John 10:11; 19:30 John 19:38-42 John 3:16; Acts 16:31 Mark 15:27, 28; Luke 22:37
He will be disfigured by suffering (52:14; 53:2)	
He will make a blood atonement (52:15)	
He will be widely rejected (53:1, 3)	
He will bear our sins and sorrows (53:4, 5)	
He will be our substitute (53:6, 8)	
He will voluntarily accept our guilt and punishment (53:7, 8)	
He will be buried in a rich man’s tomb (53:9)	
He will save us who believe in Him (53:10, 11)	
He will die on behalf of transgressors (53:12)	

⁶⁹ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

⁷⁰ The Nelson Study Bible