

Thursday Evening Bible Study
Series: The Book of Isaiah

Teaching Summary for Week 141

Isaiah Chapter 51:1 – 52:12

Verse-by-verse

Verses 9-16:

Let's read the passage – **Isaiah 51:9-16**.

In **verses 9-11**, Isaiah appeals to **the arm of the LORD** to take action on behalf of captive Israel.

In **verses 12-16**, the Lord answers Isaiah's prayer from **verses 9-11**.

Verses 12-13:

The Lord affirms that He is the One who redeemed His people from Egypt and who promises to redeem them again in the future.

Then the Lord chastises them for forgetting Him. He is their Maker, and He created the heavens and the earth (see also Psalm 104:1-5). If they would keep remembering this, they would not live in fear of any oppressor.

Isaiah speaks of an oppressor several times in this book, including in Isaiah 9:4 and Isaiah 14:12-16. These passages (as well as Psalm 72:4) suggest that the oppressor in **Isaiah 51:13** is the enemy that God will destroy right before the Lord establishes His Messianic kingdom.

Verse 14:

Soon after the oppressor is vanquished, the Lord will free the wandering exile.

But who is the exile in verse 14? Since the oppressor is the enemy that God destroys right before the kingdom begins, the exile here must refer to the people of Israel who are in exile at that time.

At that time, the Jews will be in exile in many nations of the earth.

So the freeing of the exile in verse 14 is the return of the Jews from every nation to Zion when the Messiah sets up His kingdom. See **Deuteronomy 30:1-5; Isaiah 11:10-12; Isaiah 43:5-7; Isaiah 49:11-13; Ezekiel 36:16-25.**

Verse 15:

The LORD will set the exile free because this is who He is. He is their God, and this is what the Lord does for His people. **See Isaiah 37:32-35 and Isaiah 48:11.** He keeps all of His promises. He has the authority and power to do so.

When He says that He stirs up the sea and its waves roar, He is talking about His sovereignty over nature. See also **Psalms 107:25** and **Jeremiah 31:35.**

“**The LORD of hosts**” is the Lord of the armies, both human and angelic. Isaiah and other prophets use this title, “the LORD of hosts”, over and over again – 217 times in 207 verses. For example: **Isaiah 6:3** [angelic]; **9:7** [fulfills Davidic covenant]; **13:4** [directs Persian armies to conquer Babylon]; **31:4-5** [defeats Assyria]; and **45:13** [raises up Cyrus].

Verse 16:

Once more, the Lord is assuring His people that He will fulfill His promises to them, thereby answering Isaiah’s prayer in verses 9-11.

The statements in Isaiah 51:16 a and b are very similar to **Isaiah 49:2** and **Isaiah 50:4**. In those two earlier passages, the Servant of the LORD was speaking.

Now, in Isaiah 51:16, the LORD God is speaking. He revisits the commissioning of the Servant in **Isaiah 49:1-13**. But now He speaks in terms of what He has done and will do.

What the LORD commissioned the Servant to perform, He will accomplish. See again **Isaiah 49:5-13**.

The LORD will restore the covenant status of His people.

He will proclaim the arrival of His people to Zion.

The LORD will create the new heaven and the new earth.

The Lord God says that He will establish the heavens and found the earth after the Servant accomplishes His mission. Since this will occur in the future, He cannot be referring to the original creation of heaven and earth in Genesis.

Rather, He is describing the establishment of the new heavens and the new earth. See **Isaiah 65:17-18; Isaiah 66:22; 2 Peter 3:13, and Revelation 21:1**.

What is the message to Isaiah's audience? **The arm of the LORD redeems His people, Israel.** His arm:

- Acted in the past (Abraham and Moses).
- is active for them now (deliverance from Assyria and Babylon).
- and will act again in the future (when He fulfills His promises to Abraham and David at the Second Coming of the LORD Jesus Christ).

This is His answer to Isaiah's prayer in **Isaiah 51:11**. The Lord will fulfill the promises He made in **Isaiah 51:3-6**.