

ISAIAH 52 | Beautiful Feet

Awake, Awake

1 Awake, awake, put on your strength, Zion. Put on your beautiful garments, Jerusalem, the holy city. For there shall no more come into you the uncircumcised and the unclean. 2 Shake yourself from the dust and arise. Be seated, O Jerusalem. Loose the bonds from your neck, O captive daughter of Zion.

Redeemed without Money

3 For thus says Yahweh: You were sold for nothing, and you shall be redeemed without money. 4 For thus says Lord Yahweh: My people went down at the first into Egypt to sojourn there, and the Assyrian oppressed them for nothing. 5 Now therefore what have I here, declares Yahweh, seeing that my people are taken away for nothing? Their rulers wail, declares Yahweh, and continually all the day my name is despised. 6 Therefore my people shall know my name. Therefore in that day they shall know that it is I who speak. Here I am.

Beautiful Feet

7 How beautiful (נאה) upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news (בשר), who publishes shalom (שְׁלוֹם), who brings good news (בשר) of happiness (טוב), who publishes salvation (יְשׁוּעָה), who says to Zion, Your God reigns. 8 The voice of your watchmen (צפיה)—they lift up their voice. Together they sing for joy, for eye to eye they see the return (שוב) of Yahweh to Zion. 9 Break forth together into singing, you waste places of Jerusalem, for Yahweh has comforted (נחם) his people. He has redeemed (גאל) Jerusalem. 10 Yahweh has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations (גויגם), and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation (יְשׁוּעָה) of our God.

Depart, Depart

11 Depart, depart, go out from there [Babylon]. Touch no unclean thing. Go out from the midst of her. Purify yourselves, you who bear the vessels (כְּלֵי) of Yahweh. 12 For you shall not go out in haste, and you shall not go in flight, for Yahweh will go before you, and the God of Israel will be your rear guard [as in the Exodus].

[See Isaiah 53 for Is 52:13-15.]

Commentary

1. Awake, Awake (Is 52:1-2).

- a. **Is 52:1-2** 1 Awake, awake, put on your strength, Zion. Put on your beautiful garments, Jerusalem, the holy city. For there shall no more come into you the uncircumcised and the unclean. 2 Shake yourself from the dust and arise. Be seated, O Jerusalem. Loose the bonds from your neck, O captive daughter of Zion.
- b. Zion is to awake, put on strength, and put on beautiful garments (v. 1a).
 - (1) In the previous chapter, it is Yahweh's arm that awakes. But here, it is Zion that awakes.
 - (a) **Is 51:9** 9 Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of Yahweh awake, as in days of old, the generations of long ago.
 - (2) Israel cannot save herself, but she can and must respond to Yahweh's salvation.
 - (a) "Although Zion's deliverance is wholly the work of God and not her own, she is not merely a passive recipient of God's work. Those whom God calls must exercise their own will and effort in response to what he has done on their behalf. This verse makes that plain. Jerusalem is not merely lifted from the dust, but is called to get up and shake off the dust. Likewise, she must remove the chains from her neck for herself. We cannot break the chains that bind us; only God can do that. But when the chains are broken, we must remove them, and only we can do that. This is a critical moment in any recovery: the moment when we cease thinking of ourselves as a *captive*, that is, as a victim, a helpless chip in the current, and begin to realize that God has placed an opportunity before us that we may seize, if we will."¹
 - (b) See *Phase One Faith*.
 - (2) **Re 21:27** 27 But nothing unclean will ever enter [New Jerusalem], nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.
- c. The uncircumcised and unclean will never enter Zion again (v. 1b).
 - (1) **Is 35:8** 8 And a highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Way of Holiness. The unclean shall not pass over it. It shall belong to those who walk on the way.
 - (a) This refers to the time when Messiah will establish God's kingdom on earth, for only then will unbelievers never again trample the city.² This verse is to be taken literally, not figuratively.
 - (2) **Re 21:27** 27 But nothing unclean will ever enter [New Jerusalem], nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.
- d. Zion is to shake herself from the dust, arise, be seated, and loose the bonds from her neck (v. 2).
 - (1) Babylon has to go down from her throne to sit in the dust, but Jerusalem will rise from the dust to sit on her throne.³

¹ John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40–66*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998), 361.

² John A. Martin, "Isaiah," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 1106.

³ John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40–66*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998), 361.

- (a) **Is 47:1** 1 Come down and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon. Sit on the ground without a throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans! For you shall no more be called tender and delicate.

2. Redeemed without Money (Is 52:3-6).

- a. **Is 52:3-6** 3 For thus says Yahweh: You were sold for nothing, and you shall be redeemed without money. 4 For thus says Lord Yahweh: My people went down at the first into Egypt to sojourn there, and the Assyrian oppressed them for nothing. 5 Now therefore what have I here, declares Yahweh, seeing that my people are taken away for nothing? Their rulers (משל) wail, declares Yahweh, and continually all the day my name is reviled (קרא). 6 Therefore my people shall know my name. Therefore in that day they shall know that it is I who speak. Here I am.
- b. Zion was sold for nothing, and she will be redeemed without money (v. 3).
- (1) We are redeemed without money, but not without cost.
- (a) **1 Co 6:20** 20 You were bought with a price, so glorify God in your body.
- (b) **Ga 3:13** 13 Messiah redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us.
- (c) **Tt 2:14** 14 [Jesus Messiah] gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness....
- (d) **1 Pe 1:18-19** 18 ...Knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, 19 but with the precious blood of Messiah, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.
- c. Israel sojourned in Egypt, was oppressed by Assyria (v. 4), and then was taken away by Babylon (v. 5a).
- (1) Yahweh's power to bring Israel back each time shows he is the true God.⁴
- (2) **Jn 8:33** 33 [The Jewish leaders] answered [Jesus], We are seed of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, You will become free?
- d. As a result of the Babylonian exile, Israel's rulers mourn, and Yahweh's name is slandered (v. 5b).
- (1) **Eze 36:19-20** 19 I [Yahweh] scattered [Israel] among the nations, and they were dispersed through the countries. In accordance with their ways and their deeds I judged them. 20 But when they came to the nations, wherever they came, they profaned my holy name, in that people said of them, These are the people of Yahweh, and yet they had to go out of his land.
- e. Israel will know Yahweh's name on the day when he acts on her behalf (v. 6).
- (1) **Eze 36:2-32** 21 But I [Yahweh] had concern for my holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations to which they came. 22 Therefore say to the house of Israel, Thus says Lord Yahweh: It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations to which you came. 23 And I will vindicate the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, and which you have profaned among them. And the nations will know that I am Yahweh, declares Lord Yahweh, when through you I vindicate my holiness before

⁴ John A. Martin, "[Isaiah](#)," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 1106.

their eyes. 24 I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the countries, and bring you into your own land. 25 I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. 26 And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. 27 And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules. 28 You shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers, and you shall be my people, and I will be your God. 29 And I will deliver you from all your uncleannesses. And I will summon the grain and make it abundant and lay no famine upon you. 30 I will make the fruit of the tree and the increase of the field abundant, that you may never again suffer the disgrace of famine among the nations. 31 Then you will remember your evil ways, and your deeds that were not good, and you will loathe yourselves for your iniquities and your abominations. 32 It is not for your sake that I will act, declares Lord Yahweh. Let that be known to you. Be ashamed and confounded for your ways, O house of Israel.

(2) Fulfilled prophecy.

(a) This has been the central argument since Is 41:21. Yahweh has spoken, revealing his plans long in advance. The actualisation of those plans evidence that Yahweh is who he says he is.⁵

(3) Special revelation.

(a) “Has God spoken? This is the most critical question in human thought. If he has we can know him and his ways; we can know ourselves and the meaning of life; we can find deliverance from all the enemies who bind us. If he has not, or worse, if the Israelite claims that he has are lies, then humanity’s condition is hopeless. But Isaiah insists that God has spoken and that Israel’s experience is the unshakable proof of that fact.”⁶ See *Special Revelation*.

3. Beautiful Feet (Is 52:7-10).

a. **Is 52:7-10** 7 How beautiful (נאה) upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news (בשר), who publishes shalom (שָׁלוֹם), who brings good news (בשר) of happiness (טוב), who publishes salvation (יְשׁוּעָה), who says to Zion, Your God reigns. 8 The voice of your watchmen (צִפּוֹת)—they lift up their voice. Together they sing for joy, for eye to eye (עֵין בְּעֵין) they see the return (שׁוּב) of Yahweh to Zion. 9 Break forth together into singing, you waste places of Jerusalem, for Yahweh has comforted (נָחַם) his people. He has redeemed (גָּאֵל) Jerusalem. 10 Yahweh has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations (גּוֹיִם), and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation (יְשׁוּעָה) of our God.

b. The feet of Israel’s herald of good news are pleasing (v. 7).

(1) Isaiah “pictures a besieged city breathlessly awaiting the news of the outcome of a decisive conflict. If the news is victory, they are delivered; if the news is defeat,

⁵ John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40–66*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998), 364.

⁶ John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40–66*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998), 364.

all is lost. Suddenly, on a distant hill a runner is seen. What is the news? As he comes nearer it can be seen that he is waving a victory palm and not so much running as dancing. The Lord has won! Let the singing begin! ...How is the glorious news reaching us? Through the feet of this runner! What beautiful feet!"⁷

- (a) **Nah 1:15** 15 Behold, upon the mountains, the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace! Keep your feasts, O Judah. Fulfill your vows, for never again shall the worthless pass through you. He is utterly cut off.
 - (b) **Is 40:9-10** 9 Go on up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good news. Lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good news. Lift it up, fear not. Say to the cities of Judah, Behold your God! 10 Behold, Lord Yahweh comes with might, and his arm rules for him. Behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him.
 - (c) **Is 41:27** 27 I was the first to say to Zion, Behold, here they are! and I give to Jerusalem a herald of good news.
- (2) Jesus was *the* herald of good news. His feet were beautiful, as the sinful woman understood.
- (a) **Lk 7:37-38** 37 And behold, a woman of the city, who was a sinner, when she learned that he was reclining at table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of ointment, 38 and standing behind him at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head and kissed his feet and anointed them with the ointment.
- (3) The apostles were heralds of good news to Israel, and later, to the nations.
- (a) **Mt 10:1-7** 1 And [Jesus] called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every affliction. ...5 These twelve Jesus sent out, instructing them, Go nowhere among the Gentiles and enter no town of the Samaritans, 6 but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. 7 And proclaim as you go, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.
 - (b) **Lk 9:1-6** 1 And he called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, 2 and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal. ...6 And they departed and went through the villages, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere.
- (4) All preachers of the gospel have beautiful feet. Are your feet beautiful?
- (a) **Ro 10:14-15** 14 How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? 15 And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!
- c. Israel's watchmen sing for joy as they see Yahweh return to Zion (v. 8).
- (1) The watchmen are the first persons to see the running herald and to deduce correctly what his coming means. The people in the city hear their celebration.

⁷ John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40–66*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998), 367.

The watchmen are lifting their joyous shouts because right before their eyes is the evidence that Yahweh is coming to Zion in victory.⁸

- (2) **Lk 10:23-24** 23 Then turning to the disciples [Jesus] said privately, Blessed are the eyes that see what you see! 24 For I tell you that many prophets and kings desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.
- d. Singing breaks forth because Yahweh has comforted Israel and redeemed Jerusalem (v. 9).
 - (1) Though Israel experienced great joy at the return from Babylon in 536 bc, the joy Isaiah writes about here will be when Yeshua returns to Zion to reign.⁹
 - (a) **Ezr 6:19-22** 19 On the fourteenth day of the first month, the returned exiles kept the Passover. 20 For the priests and the Levites had purified themselves together. All of them were clean. So they slaughtered the Passover lamb for all the returned exiles, for their fellow priests, and for themselves. 21 It was eaten by the people of Israel who had returned from exile, and also by every one who had joined them and separated himself from the uncleanness of the peoples of the land to worship Yahweh, the God of Israel. 22 And they kept the Feast of Unleavened Bread seven days with joy, for Yahweh had made them joyful and had turned the heart of the king of Assyria [Persia] to them, so that he aided them in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel.
 - (2) Contrary to some interpreters, the besieged city is literal Jerusalem. Zion will become a waste, but then she will participate in the joy of Yahweh's return.¹⁰
 - (3) Comfort and redemption continue to be heart of this segment in Isaiah.¹¹
- e. In rescuing Israel, Yahweh will have displayed his power to all the nations (v. 10a).
 - (1) Like the warrior preparing for battle, Yahweh shrugs off his cloak and bares his powerful arm for battle. For the nations opposed to him, this is cause for apprehension, but for those who submit to him, it is cause for hope.¹²
- f. The ends of the earth will see the salvation/Yeshua (יְשׁוּעָה) of Israel's God (v. 10b).
 - (1) **Ps 98:1-3** 1 Oh sing to Yahweh a new song, for he has done marvelous things! His right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him. 2 Yahweh has made known his salvation (יְשׁוּעָה). He has revealed his righteousness in the sight of the nations. 3 He has remembered his loyal love and his truth (חֶסֶד וְאֱמוּנָתוֹ) to the house of Israel. All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation (יְשׁוּעָה) of our God.

⁸ John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40–66*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998), 369.

⁹ John A. Martin, "Isaiah," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 1106.

¹⁰ See John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40–66*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998), 370.

¹¹ John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40–66*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998), 370.

¹² John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40–66*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998), 371.

- (2) **Is 49:6** 6 ...It is too light a thing that you should be my Servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved of Israel. I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation (יְשׁוּעָה) may reach to the end of the earth.
- (3) **Is 49:8** 8 ...In a time of favor I have answered you. In a day of salvation (יְשׁוּעָה) I have helped you. I will keep you and give you as a covenant to the people, to establish the land, to apportion the desolate heritages....
- (4) **Is 51:6** 6 Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look at the earth beneath, for the heavens vanish like smoke, the earth will wear out like a garment, and they who dwell in it will die in like manner. But my salvation (יְשׁוּעָה) will be forever, and my righteousness will never be dismayed.
- (5) **Is 51:8** 8 For the moth will eat them up like a garment, and the worm will eat them like wool, but my righteousness will be forever, and my salvation (יְשׁוּעָה) to all generations.
- (6) **Is 52:7** 7 How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness, who publishes salvation (יְשׁוּעָה), who says to Zion, Your God reigns.
- (7) **Is 56:1** 1 Thus says Yahweh: Keep justice and do righteousness, for soon my salvation (יְשׁוּעָה) will come, and my righteousness be revealed.

4. Depart, Depart (Is 52:11-12).

- a. **Is 52:11-12** 11 Depart, depart, go out from there [Babylon]. Touch no unclean thing. Go out from the midst of her. Purify yourselves, you who carry the vessels (כֵּלֵי) of Yahweh. 12 For you shall not go out in a hurry, and you shall not go in flight, for Yahweh will go before you, and the God of Israel will be your rear guard (רִמָּה).
- b. The remnant of Israel is to go out from Babylon, purifying themselves as they carry the vessels of Yahweh back to Jerusalem (v. 11).
 - (1) **Is 48:20** 20 Go out from Babylon, flee from Chaldea, declare this with a shout of joy, proclaim it, send it out to the end of the earth. Say, Yahweh has redeemed (גָּאָל) his servant Jacob!
 - (2) The Babylonians will take away the vessels of Yahweh, but that the remnant will bring them back.
 - (a) **Ezr 1:7** 7 Cyrus the king also brought out the vessels of the house of Yahweh that Nebuchadnezzar had carried away from Jerusalem and placed in the house of his gods. 8 Cyrus king of Persia brought these out in the charge of Mithredath the treasurer, who counted them out to Sheshbazzar the prince of Judah. 9 And this was the number of them: 30 basins of gold, 1,000 basins of silver, 29 censers, 10 30 bowls of gold, 410 bowls of silver, and 1,000 other vessels. 11 All the vessels of gold and of silver were 5,400. All these did Sheshbazzar bring up, when the exiles were brought up from Babylonia to Jerusalem.
- c. Israel will unhurriedly walk out Babylon, with Yahweh both guiding and guarding her (v. 12).
 - (1) **Ex 13:21-22** 21 And Yahweh went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them along the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night. 22 The pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night did not depart from before the people.

- (2) **Ex 14:19-20** 19 Then the angel of God [Jesus] who was going before the host of Israel moved and went behind them, and the pillar of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them, 20 coming between the host of Egypt and the host of Israel. And there was the cloud and the darkness. And it lit up the night without one coming near the other all night.
- (3) **Is 58:8** 8 Then shall your light break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up speedily. Your righteousness shall go before you. The glory of Yahweh shall be your rear guard.

5. Application.

- a. Put on strength (v. 1).
- b. Bring good news (v. 7).
- c. Thank God for his comfort and redemption (v. 9)
- d. Don't touch the unclean things of this world (v. 11).