

# (Through the Bible) Isaiah 51-52

by Chuck Smith

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*The sermon explores the themes of the suffering and rejection of God's provision, the call to heed God's word, and the restoration of Israel, highlighting the importance of living in harmony with the understanding and knowledge we have received from God.*

**Duration:** 38:53

**Scripture:** Isaiah 51:1

**Topics:** "Jesus Christ", "God's Restoration"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on Isaiah chapters 51 through 55 and how they prophesy the suffering and rejection of Jesus Christ. The prophet Isaiah accurately describes what would happen to Jesus, even though these prophecies were written 600 years before his birth. The preacher emphasizes the importance of following after righteousness and seeking the Lord. He also addresses the question of why God allows evil to persist and why He doesn't immediately punish evildoers. The sermon concludes with the promise of God's restoration of the earth and the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ bringing peace and salvation.

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## Transcript

Tonight we have a marvelous study, as we look at Isaiah chapters 51 through 55, in which the Prophet sees so clearly the suffering and the rejection of God's provision for man in sending His Son to die for our sins. In fact, these prophecies of Isaiah so clearly describe what did happen to Jesus Christ in His rejection, in His suffering, in His death. It is as though they were written after it happened rather than 600 years before it happened.

The Lord is calling unto the nation of Israel, unto His people, and God calls unto them to hearken to Him. Ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord. Two important things.

Following after righteousness, seeking the Lord. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness. Look to the rock from whence ye are hewn.

Actually, they're encouraged to look back to their roots, to look back to Abraham, to the heritage that they had, to the covenant that God had made with their fathers. And to the hole of the pit whence ye were digged. Look unto Abraham your father, to Sarah that bare you.

For I called him alone and blessed him and increased him. For the Lord shall comfort Zion. He will comfort all of her waste places.

He will make her wilderness like Eden and her desert like the garden of the Lord. Joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody. So God speaks of what is yet a future day of restoration.

As God will restore again the nation of Israel in full glory, in full beauty, in full blessings. And their wilderness areas will become like the garden of Eden and the desert like the garden of the Lord. It is interesting how that it would seem that already we can see the beginnings of the fulfillment of this prophecy.

As you see the areas that were once so barren and desert-y down around Beersheba and you see now the beautiful crops that are grown in that area. However, there are troublous times yet ahead for the nation of Israel. These people that have endured such tragedy through their history have yet another seven years in which they are to be tested to the limits.

Jeremiah calls these seven years the time of Jacob's trouble. They will be forced to flee the land once more. But not this time for a millennium or two.

But they will be out of the land for about three and a half years. As once more a world leader turns his wrath against these people. But at the end of that period is when God is going to restore the glory unto the nation.

For the Messiah shall come and He will establish God's kingdom and God's throne upon the earth. And He will rule from Zion. And at this time this prophecy of Isaiah shall be fulfilled as God just brings a whole new condition to the earth as He restores the earth to its glory, to its beauty before the fall of man in Genesis.

There are some very interesting things that Isaiah has prophesied concerning the future and concerning the earth from a purely physical standpoint. As he talks about the earth staggering to and fro and like a drunken man and being removed out of her place. Now back prior to the time of the flood that came as a result of God's judgment upon the earth.

Before the flood the earth had a canopy around it, a water canopy that actually reflected much of the cosmic radiation that is really has a detrimental effect upon life and upon life forms. Prior to the flood this heavy moisture shield in the atmosphere shielded the earth from much of this cosmic radiation. As a result man lived an average of around 900 years.

Thus man was able to develop during that period of time his mental capacities to a great extent. Think of being able to continue to learn for 900 years. They say that man only uses about 20% of his brain and his brain capacities.

Well that's because we're only here such a short time. What can you learn in a hundred years? But if you could go on learning, absorbing for 900 years you'd be using much more of your capacity, brain capacity and you'd be able to do many more interesting things. Now as we study some of the architecture and some of the buildings that these people created we find out that they had all kinds of sciences that are astounding.

As you look at ancient man, he wasn't some grunting half beast with a club dragging his wife by the hair into the cave. He was a highly intelligent being and he had marvelous capacities intellectually. In fact Adam was able to name all of the animals according to their characteristics.

Took tremendous genius for that. Now in that kind of earth you would never really have a dark night because all of this moisture would give you the diffused light of the sun all night long. And thus you would have much longer growing periods and everything would grow larger because of the fact that you wouldn't be bombarded by these cosmic rays which would begin the mutation of cells which would create the breaking down.

And so they have discovered how large many of the animals were before the flood. As they look at some of these animals that were caught in the flood and through the sediment were kept in place they have found cockroaches that were a foot long. Man you wouldn't go after them with your shoe you'd go after them with a shotgun you know.

Asparagus fern 60 feet tall. All kinds of tropical vegetation up in the North Pole area. And the whole earth was no doubt just a lush beautiful glorious place.

God's going to restore it to such a state. And he speaks about it here. As the waste places will be restored the wilderness like Eden the deserts like the garden of the Lord.

Joy and gladness will be found therein. Thanksgiving the voice of melody. Again God as he began in verse 1 cries to the people to hearken.

Hearken unto me my people. Give ear unto me O my nation. For a law shall proceed from me and I will make my judgment to rest for a light of the people.

The Lord is going to come. He will sit in judgment and the law will proceed from him. As Jesus Christ comes to reign in righteousness.

My righteousness is near. My salvation is gone forth. My arms shall judge the people.

The coast shall wait upon me and upon my arms shall they trust. So the universal trusting in the Lord. Lift up your eyes to the heavens.

Look upon the earth beneath. For the heavens shall vanish away like smoke and the earth shall wax old like a garment and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner. But my salvation shall be forever and my righteousness shall not be abolished.

So the heavens shall vanish away. Peter describes the vanishing away of the heavens in 2 Peter chapter 2. Jesus said heaven and earth shall pass away but my word shall never pass away. It is interesting that the earth is growing old.

The earth shall wax old like a garment. The universe, according to the great scientist Sir Herschel Jeans is like a giant clock that was wound up and is gradually slowing or winding down. The sun loses 1,200,000 tons of mass every second.

Fortunately it's large enough to continue to support life for the next 10 billion years. So you don't have to stay awake night worrying about the fact that the sun is gradually burning out. But that isn't so gradual.

1,200,000 tons of mass per second. And so the earth, growing old like a garment. The heavens will one day vanish away but the word of God shall endure forever.

And at that time God is going to create a new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. The old will not be remembered or brought into mind. A whole new order that God is going to create for us.

An order that knows no chaos. An order that knows no decay. An order that knows no sin or rebellion.

Just the glorious kingdom of God and everything in the universe subject unto that kingdom. Hearken unto me, the third cry of God for them to hearken. Ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law.

Fear ye not the reproach of men. Neither be afraid of their revilings. For the moth shall eat them up like a garment.

The worm shall eat them like wool. But my righteousness shall be forever and my salvation from generation to generation. And so for the righteous, enduring forever.

For the evil, that would reproach the righteous or revile them, they will be destroyed. The moth will eat them up like a garment. The worm shall eat them like wool.

Jesus in describing the conditions of Gehenna said, Where their worm dieth not, neither is the fire quenched. The wicked shall be cast into hell and all those that forsake God. But the righteous, they shall endure.

They shall be forever and ever. Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord. Now here's the response of the people to God.

God thrice called them to hearken to Him. And so they said, Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord. There are times when it would appear to us that God is asleep.

How can God be so patient with the blasphemies of man? How can God put up with evil as He does? Why does He allow evil people to go on for a period of prosperity? Why doesn't He smite them down immediately? This is a problem. It troubles me. If I were God, I'd just wipe them out so fast.

Their heads would be swimming. Just, you know, Take that, you little rat. You want to go that way? Alright, you know, smack.

But God is so patient. He lets people get by with so much. They blaspheme Him.

They mock Him. They ridicule Him. And it's like He doesn't even... It's like He's sleeping.

It's like He doesn't even know. And so the people cry, Awake up, God, wake up. Put on strength, O arm of the Lord.

Awake as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art thou not it that hath cut Rahab and wounded the dragon? Now, Rahab is a poetic reference to Egypt. He uses it also in the 30th chapter in the 7th verse.

It's just a poetic reference to Egypt. And so He is, Wake up, God, wake up. You are the God that was showing Yourself so powerful in our history.

And especially in the deliverance out of Egypt. Art thou not the one which hath dried the sea in the waters of the great deep that hath made the depths of the sea a way for the ransom to pass over? And so the reference to the drying of the Red Sea to make a path for the people of God to pass through. I have very little patience for those men that classify themselves higher critics, who try to talk about a sea of reeds that is usually only a foot or so deep.

That the children of Israel passed through. And that quite often, when a strong wind blows for a period of time, it sort of forces back the tide of that sea from this one area where they presume the children of Israel went across. But in reality they tell us that the sea is only about a foot deep at that area.

And thus it really wasn't much of a miracle that they did cross. Well, as far as the nation of Israel was concerned, it was a marvelous miracle. They looked upon it as a marvelous miracle.

And here the reference is to the depths of the sea. And even to the waters of the great deep. Now Isaiah was much closer to the time and he understood the language much better than these modern critics of the Bible who pass themselves off as biblical scholars.

And I will go along with Isaiah much quicker than I will these men today. For if indeed they've made the sea only a foot deep, they surely have not removed the miraculous from the story. Because it's a miracle how God could drown the whole Egyptian army in one foot of water.

You see, you might try to figure out one way, but you're only creating another problem. You've dried up the deep sea, the waters of the great deep. You've made the depths of the sea a path for the ransomed to pass over.

The ransomed, of course, were those who through the Lamb that was slain in Egypt were ransomed. Therefore, the redeemed of the Lord shall return. The future day, when God is going to gather again the people, when Christ returns in power and great glory, then shall He gather together the elect from the four corners of the earth.

As the Jews will be gathered back into the land, the redeemed of the Lord shall return and come with singing unto Zion. An everlasting joy shall be upon their head. They shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and mourning shall flee away.

What a glorious day that is going to be. The glorious day of the Lord when He comes to establish the kingdom of God upon the earth and He again takes Israel as His people, as His bride, and they recognize Him. And there is this glorious receiving and accepting each of the other.

I, even I, am He that comforteth you. Who art thou that you should be afraid of man that shall die? And the Son of Man which shall be made as grass. Jesus said, Don't be afraid of those that kill your body and after that have no power.

Rather, fear Him that after the body is killed has power to cast your soul into Gehenna. Yea, I say unto you, fear ye Him. The Bible says, The fear of man brings a snare, but whoso will put his trust in the Lord shall be safe.

And again, why should you fear man who is going to die himself? Son of Man whose life is as the grass of the field which today is and tomorrow is dried and cast into the oven. And you forget the Lord, your Maker that stretched forth the heavens and laid the foundation of the earth and has feared continually every day

because of the fury of the oppressor as if He were ready to destroy. Where is the fury of the oppressor? The captive exile hasteneth that he may be loosed and that he should die in the pit nor that his bread should fail.

But I am the Lord thy God that divided the sea whose waves roared. The Lord of hosts is His name. Now you see, for a moment they cried unto God, Wake up, wake up, put on strength, O arm of the Lord, awake.

And aren't you the God that, you know, brought our fathers through the sea and all? And in verse 11, God begins to speak again of the glorious future as the redeemed of the Lord return. And God declares, I am He that comforteth you. Why should you be afraid of man? I'm the one that is with you.

I'm the one that brought your fathers through the sea divided the sea whose waves roared. The Lord of hosts is His name. And I have put my words in thy mouth and I have covered thee in the shadow of my hand that I may plant the heavens and lay the foundation of the earth and say unto Zion, Thou art my people.

God declares, hey, Thou art my people. Oh, what a tragic thing it is that people misread the Bible and say that God is through with the nation Israel. He's cut her off forever.

God forbid. Now, as if to say, hey, I'm not the one that's sleeping. You're the ones that are sleeping.

God says to them, awake, awake. The same thing they said, and so many times we're saying to God, awake, God, awake. And He says, hey, I'm not sleeping.

And He calls, we're the ones that are sleeping. We're the ones that don't see what's really going on. Awake, awake, stand up, oh Jerusalem, which has drunk at the hand of the Lord the cup of His fury.

You have drunken the dregs of the cup of trembling and wrung them out. There is none to guide her among all the sons whom she hath brought forth. Neither is there any that taketh her by the hand of all of the sons that she has brought up.

They're lacking in real leadership. These two things are come unto thee. Who shall be sorry for thee? Desolation and destruction and famine and the sword.

By whom shall I comfort thee? So He speaks of the terrible time of tribulation that they will go through as they experience desolation, destruction, famine, the sword. And really no one seems to be concerned. It is interesting today how that the whole world seems to be willing to just dump these people.

And yet God declares that they are His people and He will receive them again. Thy sons have fainted. They lie at the head of all of the streets as a wild bull in a net.

They are full of the fury of the Lord, the rebuke of thy God. Therefore, hear now this, thou afflicted and drunken, but not with wine. Thus saith the Lord, the Lord thy God, that pleadeth the cause of His people.

Behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, even the dregs of the cup of my fury. Thou shalt no more drink it again. The day will be over.

No more tribulation for these people. There will be this glorious reuniting of them with their God and God with them. But I will put into the hand of them that afflict thee, which have said to thy soul, bow down, that we may go over and thou hast laid thy body as the ground and as the street to them that went over.

And so, God is going to put His hand against those that have afflicted them. When Jesus comes back, His first duty is going to be that of judging the earth. And the judgment of the nations will be relative to their treatment of the Jews.

As He says, Come, ye blessed of the Father, inherit the kingdom. I was hungry, and you fed me. Thirsty, and you gave me to drink.

Lord, when did we see you? Inasmuch as you did it unto the least of these, my brethren, speaking of the Jews, you did it unto me. Those that are on the left, depart from me, you workers of iniquity. I was hungry, you did not feed me.

Thirsty, you did not give me to drink. And so forth. Lord, when did we see you this way? Inasmuch as you did it not to the least of these, my brethren.

So, the Lord here affirms much as what Jesus declared there. As God will take up their cause once more. But, you say, why was God so severe with them? It seems that they have suffered more than any other race of people.

Well, that is not completely true. There are other races of people that have been totally obliterated. They no longer exist.

Many races of people that have been completely wiped out. However, the reason for the severity is this. The Lord said, unto whom much is given, much is required.

And that should be a warning to us who have received so much from God. So much of the understanding of God's purposes and God's plans. We who have come to an understanding of His truth and of His Word.

There comes with that understanding an incumbent responsibility to walk according to the understanding. To live in harmony with that which we know. This they failed to do.

God had given them much. What advantage then doth have the Jew? Paul said, much and in every way. Unto them were committed the oracles of God.

And the covenants and the promises and the fathers and the law and the statutes. God gave them so much. And the more God gives you, the greater is your responsibility unto God for those things that you have received.

They failed in their responsibility and that is why God has dealt so severely. Is because they turned against all of that background and knowledge and all that God had given to them. Unto whom much is given, much is required.

Now again God cries for them. Awake, awake. Put on strength, O Zion.

Thy strength, O Zion. Put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem. There's a day coming, you know.

Just put on your glorious garments and get ready for the big celebration. O Jerusalem, the holy city. For henceforth there shall no more come unto thee the uncircumcised and the unclean.

Jerusalem is going to be cleaned out of the filth that is presently a part of that whole city there. It is to me an extremely sad and tragic thing to see the city of Jerusalem today, though there is always sort of an awe

and a wonder about it. Yet, there is so much prostitution there in the old city.

Such a ready availability of drugs. You go by the shops and these guys all have the little hashish pipes or you know the hoses from the thing and all. And you get the smell and you think, Oh God, this is the holy city.

The city that you have chosen above all the cities of the earth. Place your name. And all the stuff that goes on there today.

The cursing, the anger, the bitterness, the strife, the evil. And you long for that day when Jerusalem shall again be the city of God, the city of righteousness, the light to the whole world. And so God says the time is coming.

Now awake, awake. Put on thy strength, O Zion. Put on your beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city.

For henceforth there shall no more come unto thee the uncircumcised, the unclean. This is the day when the Lord has returned and establishes His kingdom. Shake thyself from the dust.

Arise and sit down, O Jerusalem. Loose thyself from the bands of thine neck, O captive daughter of Zion. For thus saith the Lord, Ye have sold yourselves for nothing, but you will be redeemed without money.

We have been redeemed, Peter said, not with silver and gold, not with money, but with the precious blood of Jesus Christ. You sold yourself for nothing. And how true that is of people today.

They're selling their selves for nothing. Jesus said, what should a prophet, a man, if he gained the whole world and lost his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? Interesting question. What would you give in exchange for your soul? If Satan should come to you and say, hey, buddy, name your price.

I want to buy your soul. How much will you charge? What would you charge Satan for your soul tonight? What kind of a price would you put on it? Would you take a million bucks for your soul? How about five million? What would a man give in exchange for his soul? You know, when you look at it that way, you say, hey, man, there's nothing I would take for my soul. That's eternity.

I don't want eternity in the kingdom of darkness. There's nothing I would take for it. It's priceless.

That's the way God looks at it. He looks at your soul as priceless. But the unfortunate thing, the person may say, man, I wouldn't sell for a million or I wouldn't sell for five.

They're selling it for nothing. They're absolutely getting nothing from Satan but a bunch of dirt. Selling out their soul for nothing.

And how foolish it is that man would sell his soul for nothing. And God said, what happened? Hey, you've sold yourself for nothing. But I'm going to redeem you, but not with money.

And so as we get into chapters 52 and 53, we find the price of redemption that God was willing to give in order to redeem man unto Himself. For thus saith the Lord God, My people went down before into Egypt to sojourn there. That is the time of Jacob.

And the Assyrian oppressed them without a cause. Now therefore, what have I here, saith the Lord, that My people is taken away for nothing? They that rule over them make them to howl, saith the Lord. And My name is continually blasphemed every day.

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. Jesus came to His own.

His own received Him not. They did not recognize Him, but the day will come when they will. Oh, how beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of Him that bringeth good tidings.

And the word good tidings is the word gospel. That publisheth peace. That bringeth the gospel of good.

That publisheth salvation. That saith unto Zion, Your God reigns. Oh, how beautiful on the mountain the feet of those that bear good tidings.

The gospel of Jesus Christ. That publish forth the good news of peace that man can have with God. That saith to Zion, Your God reigns.

Thy watchman 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. When God brings again the captivity of Zion, we were as those who were in a dream, it said.

But then they will see eye to eye. Break forth into joy. Sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem, for the Lord hath comforted His people.

He hath redeemed Jerusalem. The 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.

Depart ye. Depart ye. Go out from there.

Touch no unclean thing. For you, go you out of the midst of her. Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord.

Jesus in the New Testament or the Spirit urges us through the writings of Paul. Come ye apart from her. And be ye separate, saith the Lord.

Touch not the unclean thing, and I will be a father unto you, and you shall be My sons and daughters. And here again, the call of separation from God. The separation of ourselves from the world and from the policies of the world.

Be not conformed to the world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds. Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. For he that hath the love of the world in his heart hath not the love of the Father.

And so God's call to His people to come out of the world. Depart. Depart from the world.

Touch no unclean thing. Go out of the midst of her. Be clean ye that bear the vessels of the Lord.

For 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 behind you. God will be in front of you and behind you.

So, God's glorious leading and protection from the rear.

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