

## **Isaiah 52**

### **Isaiah 52:1 Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments**

Thanks to Elias Higbee we have Joseph Smith's explanation of the meaning of this verse:

'Questions by Elias Higbee: What is meant by the command in Isaiah, 52d chapter, 1st verse, which saith: Put on thy strength, O Zion-and what people had Isaiah reference to?

He had reference to those whom God should call in the last days, who should hold the power of priesthood to bring again Zion, and the redemption of Israel; and to put on her strength is to put on the authority of the priesthood, which she, Zion, has a right to by lineage; also to return to that power which she had lost.  
(DC 113:7-8)

"It was a paraphrase of these verses that Moroni chose as a conclusion to the Book of Mormon. Speaking to scattered Israel of the last days, Moroni said, 'Awake, and arise from the dust, O Jerusalem; yea, and put on thy beautiful garments, O daughter of Zion; and strengthen thy stakes and enlarge thy borders for ever, that thou mayest no more be confounded, that the covenants of the Eternal Father which he hath made unto thee, o house of Israel, may be fulfilled' (Moroni 10:31)." (Joseph Fielding McConkie, *Gospel Symbolism*, pp. 141-2)

#### **Gordon B. Hinckley**

Put on thy beautiful garments, O daughters of Zion. Live up to the great and magnificent inheritance which the Lord God, your Father in Heaven, has provided for you. Rise above the dust of the world. Know that you are daughters of God, children with a divine birthright. Walk in the sun with your heads high, knowing that you are loved and honored, that you are a part of his kingdom, and that there is for you a great work to be done which cannot be left to others. (*Ensign*, November 1983, pp. 83-84)

#### **Franklin D. Richards**

Here is Israel gathering together, being taught of the Lord, to learn of His ways and walk in His paths, that they may receive the blessing and be clothed upon with power, as the Prophet said: "Awake, awake; put, on thy strength, O Zion, put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem." What are these beautiful garments? These beautiful garments are the clothing upon with the authority and power of the Holy Priesthood. It is that which makes people beautiful; it is that which makes people useful; it is that which causes the Saints to sing: "How 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." It is that excellence of the knowledge of God that makes men and women beautiful, and makes their acts delightful when they are performed in righteousness in the name of the Lord Jesus

Christ. I rejoice when I look around and contemplate this precious privilege-that there is scarcely an individual that has come to years of judgment and understanding but is a partaker of some measure of the Priesthood, if no more than the office of a Deacon that can administer blessing by attending to the door, wait upon the tables, and also by attending to other temporal duties from time to time as they may occur.

Here let me say, that every officer in the Church, from the Deacon up to the Apostle, should realize that it is his duty to endeavor to administer blessings by the virtue of the calling of God which is upon him; he ought to feel thus, and every sister that is the wife of such an husband should feel, if she has received with him her blessings in the house of the Lord, that it is her privilege and duty to administer blessings, comfort and happiness to her husband, to her children, to her family and household. Every one in all the Church should be filled with a spirit of blessing. The authority of the Priesthood should cause a gushing forth from the fountain of the heart, a bubbling forth of streams of blessing, of consolation, of comfort and of rejoicing, each should try to help and benefit the other in every possible way. (*Journal of Discourses*, 26:100)

### **Isaiah 52:1 henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean**

The millennial day will bring a worldwide paradigm shift. Zion will rule, Jerusalem will reign. Democracy will give way to theocracy, and the "VIP's" will finally be the pure and humble rather than the haughty and proud. The wicked won't get to go wherever they want; their backstage passes will be permanently revoked.

And it shall be said among the wicked: Let us not go up to battle against Zion, for the inhabitants of Zion are terrible; wherefore we cannot stand. (D&C 45:70)

### **Bruce R. McConkie**

Jerusalem-Jerusalem of the Jews-David's ancient city shall become holy; no more shall Gentile dogs defile its holy streets with their uncircumcised hearts. No longer will the Jews boast that salvation is theirs simply because of the Abrahamic token cut in their flesh, for then it will come to pass, as the apostle has written: "He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." (Rom. 2:25-29.) In that blessed day, those who walk the streets of the Holy City shall be clean, clean because they have "come forth out of the waters of Judah, or out of the waters of baptism." (1 Ne. 20:1.)

Jerusalem-Jerusalem of the Jews-she who sold herself for naught and went into captivity for her sins, she shall arise from the dust and sit down with the mighty. Her captive daughters will loose the bands of darkness with which they have been bound and return unto the Lord who will reveal himself to them. In that day they shall know their King, their Messiah, their Lord. (*The Mortal Messiah: From Bethlehem to Calvary*, 4 vols. [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1979-1981], 4: 342)

## **Isaiah 52:2 O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck**

What are we to understand by Zion loosing herself from the bands of her neck; 2d verse?

We are to understand that the scattered remnants are exhorted to return to the Lord from whence they have fallen; which if they do, the promise of the Lord is that he will speak to them, or give them revelation. See the 6th, 7th, and 8th verses. The bands of her neck are the curses of God upon her, or the remnants of Israel in their scattered condition among the Gentiles. (D&C 133:9-10)

"In a paper presented at BYU's Sidney B. Sperry Symposium in 1986, LaMar E. Garrard discussed the 'scattered remnants of Israel' who, until they get a chance to hear and accept the gospel of Jesus Christ are compared to the captives of the ancient kingdoms of Assyria and Babylonia.

"When the Israelites were taken captive, said Garrard, 'they had iron collars or bands fastened around their necks with chains attached to these collars so that they [were] chained to each other to prevent them from escaping. When the gospel is finally preached to them and they accept the confirming testimony of the Holy Ghost, they become free from the false traditions, precepts of men, and the bondage of sin.'" (*LDS Church News*, 1990, 09/29/90)

### **Gerald N. Lund**

Since things are hung around the neck, it is often associated with slavery or bondage. The "yoke" upon the neck (see Isa. 10:27; Jer. 27:2) and the "bands of thy neck" (Isa. 52:2) provide clear and powerful imagery of spiritual, and sometimes literal, bondage. On the other hand, when Isaiah says, "thy neck is an iron sinew" (Isa. 48:4) and when Jeremiah notes the people "made their neck stiff that they may not hear, nor receive instruction" (Jer. 17:23) the image is that of stubborn pride. The reason for this is linked to another function of the neck. It holds the head and turns it. Since the bowing of the head is a sign of humility, to be stiff-necked is the symbol of pride. ("Understanding Scriptural Symbols," *Ensign*, Oct. 1986, 25)

## **Isaiah 52:3 ye shall be redeemed without money**

Just because Isaiah says Israel is redeemed without money, we should not assume he is redeemed without price. The Prophet is drawing a parallel; the Israelites sold themselves but there was no exchange of money. Similarly, when the Lord buys them back, no money is exchanged, but there was a price paid-indeed a very high price. Instead of dollars, yen, or drachma, the price was paid drop by drop as the Savior suffered in Gethsemane and on Golgotha. Paul and Peter were clear on this point:

Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men.

Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God. (1 Cor. 7:23-24)

...ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold...

But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. (1 Pet. 1:18-19)

### **Joseph Fielding Smith**

That price was the blood of Jesus Christ, and we are not our own. Oh, if we could only understand that by the shedding of his blood, he bought us. We belong to him. He has a right to tell us what to do and what not to do, and to command us to keep his commandments. (*Conference Report, October 1947, Afternoon Meeting 147.*)

### **Isaiah 52:7 How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings**

Abinadi explained that this passage refers to the seed of Christ, particularly his prophets, and preeminently, the Savior himself:

...all the holy prophets ever since the world began? I say unto you that they are his seed.

And these are they who have published peace, who have brought good tidings of good, who have published salvation; and said unto Zion: Thy God reigneth!

And O how beautiful upon the mountains were their feet!

And again, how beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of those that are still publishing peace!

And again, how beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of those who shall hereafter publish peace, yea, from this time henceforth and forever!

And behold, I say unto you, this is not all. For O how beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that is the founder of peace, yea, even the Lord, who has redeemed his people; yea, him who has granted salvation unto his people;

For were it not for the redemption which he hath made for his people, which was prepared from the foundation of the world, I say unto you, were it not for this, all mankind must have perished. (Mosiah 15:13-19)

This scripture applies to the prophets and apostles of our day. How beautiful upon the Rocky Mountains are the feet of those great men whose lives have been dedicated to bringing good tidings and publishing peace! They continue to proclaim the same message that Abinadi did, that salvation comes through the sacrifice of the Only-Begotten, to break the bands of death and satisfy the demands of justice. When we raise our arm to the square to sustain the leaders of the Church, the words of Abinadi and Isaiah should come to mind, "how beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of those who shall hereafter publish peace!"

### **Mark E. Petersen**

Have you ever asked yourselves who these people are, who preach the gospel of peace and whose feet are so beautiful upon the mountains? Abinadi, in the Book of Mormon, gives us the explanation. These people are the prophets of God - they who

preach the gospel of the Prince of Peace, the Lord Jesus Christ. [Quoting Mosiah 15:13-18]

So spoke Abinadi. The prophets, then are the servants of Jesus Christ and have been from the beginning of time. . . .We honor them. We shall follow them, and through them we shall work out our salvation here on earth in the Lord's own way. (*LDS Church News, Deseret News*, Mar 30, 1996)

### **Jeffrey R. Holland**

These familiar passages, written first by Isaiah but spoken of and inspired by Jehovah himself, are often applied to anyone-especially missionaries-who bring the good tidings of the gospel and publish peace to the souls of men. There is nothing inappropriate about such an application, but it is important to realize-as the prophet Abinadi did-that in its purest form and original sense, this psalm of appreciation applies specifically to Christ. It is he and only he who ultimately brings the good tidings of salvation. Only through him is true, lasting peace published. To Zion, in both the old and new Jerusalems, it is Christ who declares, "Thy God reigneth!" It is his feet upon the mountain of redemption that are beautiful. (*Christ And The New Covenant*, p. 286 - 287)

### **Jeffrey R. Holland**

Peace and good tidings; good tidings and peace. These are among the ultimate blessings that the gospel of Jesus Christ brings a troubled world and the troubled people who live in it, solutions to personal struggles and human sinfulness, a source of strength for days of weariness and hours of genuine despair. This entire general conference and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints which convenes it declare that it is the Only Begotten Son of God Himself who gives us this help and this hope. Such assurance is as "firm as the mountains around us."

As the Book of Mormon prophet Abinadi made clear in a slight variation of Isaiah's exclamation:

O how beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that is the founder of peace, yea, even the Lord, who has redeemed his people; yea, him who has granted salvation unto his people.

Ultimately it is Christ who is beautiful upon the mountain. And it is His merciful promise of "peace in this world," His good tidings of "eternal life in the world to come" that make us fall at His feet and call His name blessed and give thanks for the restoration of His true and living Church. ("The Peaceable Things of the Kingdom," *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 82)

**Isaiah 52:8 they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion**

### **Erastus Snow**

[The millennial day will be] a day when the servants of God may bear the glad tidings to all people, nations, kindreds and tongues upon all the face of the earth, and there shall

be none to molest them, or make them afraid. The truth will abound and light and understanding come to the people. It will be a day of great light in every corner of the land-the day spoken of by the Prophet Isaiah, wherein he says the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea-the day when they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord; for they shall all know Him from the least of them to the greatest of them-a day when "every man shall see eye to eye." Prophets and Saints have looked for such a period, have longed for it, have prayed for it, have sung about it, have prophesied of it, and they have spoken of the work that should bring it about. Are all these prophecies fallacious? Are all these hopes vain? Will all these expectations come to naught? Or are they to be fulfilled? With the Latter-day Saints there is but one answer to this question. The Lord has opened their understanding, has touched their eyes, has pricked them in the ear, has comforted them, and has given to them the Holy Ghost. They have been enabled to see and to discern the signs of the times, and to understand in a measure the age in which we live. It is a source of unbounded joy unto those who possess this testimony, and are living for the blessings promised to the faithful. (*Journal of Discourses*, 25:69-70)

### **Brigham Young**

It is written, "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." Again, "Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations." Again, "For, behold, I say unto you that Zion shall flourish, and the glory of the Lord shall be upon her; And she shall be an ensign unto the people, and there shall come unto her out of every nation under heaven." And, again, "Zion shall flourish upon the hills and rejoice upon the mountains, and shall be assembled together unto the place which I have appointed," &c. We talk and read about Zion, we contemplate upon it, and in our imaginations we reach forth to grasp something that is transcendent in heavenly beauty, excellency, and glory. But while contemplating the future greatness of Zion, do we realize that we are the pioneers of that future greatness and glory? Do we realize that if we enjoy a Zion in time or in eternity, we must make it for ourselves? That all who have a Zion in the eternities of the gods organized, framed, consolidated, and perfected it themselves, and consequently are entitled to enjoy it. (*Journal of Discourses*, 9:282)

### **Charles W. Penrose**

I can see the standard of righteousness, of nobility, and purity before me, but, alas! I know I have not reached it; yet I want to keep on striving until I get up to that standard, and I believe these desires are in your hearts. God exercises patience towards us, and this is the spirit we must exercise one towards another, until we can be brought to see eye to eye. There will be a time when the watchmen upon Mount Zion will sing together with perfect harmony. "Thy watchmen shall lift up their voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion." But the Lord will never bring Zion from above until Zion from beneath is prepared to meet it. (*Journal of Discourses*, 20:125)

## **Isaiah 52:9 the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem**

If the Lord has begun gathering Israel, if the covenant has gone forth throughout the earth, if Jerusalem is already inhabited with the Lord's people, then certainly, the full redemption of Jerusalem and the millennial day cannot be far off.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, all these things shall surely come, even as the Father hath commanded me. Then shall this covenant which the Father hath covenanted with his people be fulfilled; and then shall Jerusalem be inhabited again with my people, and it shall be the land of their inheritance. (3 Ne. 20:46)

### **Orson Pratt**

When we get through warning the Gentiles, the proclamation which the Lord has given us, shall be delivered to Israel in the islands of the sea and among the various nations; and they shall gather home to the land of their inheritance. Then Jerusalem shall be redeemed and a temple established upon its former foundation in the holy land. Then the nations of the earth will see a fulfillment of our words. We have told them for the last forty-nine years that the Lord God had commenced a work to prepare the way before the face of his coming, to prepare a people to endure his presence, to gather his people from the four quarters of the earth into one, in order that they might be prepared against the day when the veil of eternity shall be rent, and the voice of the Lord shall be heard unto the ends of the earth. Then they shall behold a fulfillment of our words, they shall then know of a surety, if they do not before, that there is a God in this work, that he has commenced a proclamation and message for the last time, to prepare the way before the face of the coming of his Son from the heavens. (*Journal of Discourses*, 20:148)

## **Isaiah 52:10 The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations**

Nephi explained:

And I would, my brethren, that ye should know that all the kindreds of the earth cannot be blessed unless he shall make bare his arm in the eyes of the nations. Wherefore, the Lord God will proceed to make bare his arm in the eyes of all the nations, in bringing about his covenants and his gospel unto those who are of the house of Israel. (1 Ne. 22:10-11)

For I will make my people with whom the Father hath covenanted, yea, I will make thy horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass. And thou shalt beat in pieces many people; and I will consecrate their gain unto the Lord, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth. And behold, I am he who doeth it. And it shall come to pass, saith the Father, that the sword of my justice shall hang over them at that day; and except they repent it shall fall upon them, saith the Father, yea, even upon all the nations of the Gentiles. (3 Ne. 20:19-20)

### **Wilford Woodruff**

So far at least we have been sustained; the arm of Jehovah has been made bare in our behalf ever since we have been in these valleys, and all Israel whose eyes are open to see, and whose minds can comprehend the dealings of God with his people, know it. We have been sustained by the power of God from the beginning to this day, and nothing short of the power of God could have saved us and brought us through; and nothing but the power of God can preserve us, and nothing but his wisdom can pilot us safe to the high destiny which awaits us. (*Journal of Discourses*, 22:147)

### **Isaiah 52:11 be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord**

#### **Gordon B. Hinckley**

Be clean. Be clean in your thoughts. It is not easy in the environment in which you live. But if you work at it, you can do it. You can shut out those influences which destroy your soul, your spirituality, and can destroy your very life. The sleaze, the filth, the terrible pornography that is sweeping over the earth like a flood--stay away from it. Do not rent videos of a sleazy, filthy nature and sit around and look at them. They will destroy you. Do not go to shows which will tear down your principles. Do not read literature which will destroy your high ideals. You are a son or daughter of God, and He expects marvelous things of you. (Eugene Oregon Regional Conference, September 15, 1996 as taken from *Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley*, "Virtue")

#### **David O. McKay**

Bacon, the great philosopher, said, "Cleanliness of body was ever esteemed to proceed from a due reverence to God. The consciousness of clean linen is in and of itself a source of moral strength, second only to that of a clean conscience." (*Conference Report*, Oct. 1956, p. 90)

#### **Charles C. Penrose**

"Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord." The Lord expects the young men of Israel to be pure and virtuous in their conduct, just as much as he requires it of the daughters of Israel. Let that be understood...The Lord...has brought us into these mountains that we may raise up a holy generation, a peculiar people, a nation of priests, who will afterwards, some time in eternity, be kings as well as priests, ruling and reigning in the house of Israel forever. As I have said, the strength of this people is in their comparative purity, in their righteousness, in their sincerity. They are not a set of hypocrites. (*Conference Report*, Oct. 1904, p. 69)

### **Isaiah 52:12 the Lord will go before you; and the God of Israel will be your reward**

When treading through enemy territory, who wants to be the point man? For a small platoon on patrol, the two most dangerous positions must be the very front and the very rear. Either is vulnerable to ambush, land mine, or sniper attack. However, when the Lord fights the battles of his servants, the platoon may be small, but He provides protection in the front and in the rear. He is the point man and the reward. You are safe either way.



### **Isaiah 52:13-15 Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted**

While this passage has been applied to Joseph Smith, it would seem the most descriptive of the Savior. He was the one who was beaten down almost beyond recognition. He is the one who will take revenge upon the wicked at the end of the world. He is the one who is exalted to the highest place of his Father's kingdom.

These verses are a prelude to Isaiah 53, one of the most messianic of all Isaiah's chapters. In fact, these three verses almost belong more with the 53<sup>rd</sup> chapter than they do with the 52<sup>nd</sup>.

### **Isaiah 52:14 his visage was so marred, more than any man**

#### **Bruce R. McConkie**

In these words we see a triumphant millennial Christ -- one whose visage was marred and whose form was mangled when he dwelt among men -- we see him in glory and dominion, in whose presence kings remain silent and before whom their mouths are shut. We see his cleansing blood sprinkle all nations, with devout men everywhere turning to the saving truths that they have not before heard and to the words of truth that they have not theretofore considered. (*The Mortal Messiah*, p. 344)