

“Wake Up Calls” Isaiah 51:1-52:12

Context: The broader notion of salvation intimated by the very name of the prophet Isaiah is again described in terms of Israel’s deliverance from the Babylonian captivity and her return to the Promised Land. The immediate context recounts God’s call of the Remnant out of their stupor. It was a dullness which was partly due to their continual affliction at the hands of their captors and partly due to a false sense of utter rejection by their God. This chapter prepares the way for the appearance of God’s messenger, the Messiah, for His acts of sacrifice for humanity’s salvation, and for the impending climax of the book with the appearance of the new Creation. In today’s section, a remarkable number of imperatives serves as a wake up call for the reader to a careful recollection of our origin and future emancipation. Both are needed in order to discern the text’s application to the reader personally and to our faith community as a whole. **Life Principle:** Your existence as a pursuer of God and His presence is evidence that God kept His promise to Abraham (cf. Isaiah 51:1-2).

1. A call for recollection – Isaiah 51:1-3

In times of discouragement, pursuers of God and His likeness are directed to remember God’s blessing of Abraham for his faith. He, like us, did not see the fruition of God’s promise at the time of its making. Yet, our existence from Abraham’s loins was proof that God kept His promise to Abraham and that He will fulfill His promise of salvation to us.

2. A call to attentive obedience – Isaiah 51:4-8

God’s rules for enlightened behavior and His judgment based upon those rules necessitates the consideration and obedience of His revelation. Those who know and live the supernatural witness of God by His righteousness and law will be persecuted by natural man. Like the Babylonian captivity, this epoch of persecution will pass. Those who claim to be part of the Remnant will confidently wait for His coming salvation. For the Remnant, the disappearance of this epoch means enduring salvation. For the revilers of God, this epoch will fall apart like the worn-out earth they so treasured.

Study questions:

- Isaiah 51:1-2 uses a metaphor as a tool which causes the reader to pause and reflect on an important principle. As a **Bible study method**, determine the identity of the rock used by Isaiah in these passages. In what sense was Israel like a rock (i.e. Hebrews 11:11-13)? How are we considered hewn from the same rock as Israel was (cf. Genesis 17:15; 1 Peter 2:4-5)?
- Isaiah 51:6 calls upon the Remnant to look at the permanence of the heavens, the earth, and the earth’s inhabitants through the revelation of God. Where else does Isaiah speak of the transience of our cosmos and the coming new one (cp. Isaiah 34:4; 65:17; 66:22)? Are there New Testament texts that reveal the same idea (cf. Matthew 24:35; 2 Peter 3:10; Revelation 20:11; 21:1)? What endures in these passages? What consolation might this be to those who are afflicted, downtrodden, and numbed by the world?
- Our doctrinal statement concurs with Isaiah 5:8, saying that salvation endures forever (see footnote 10 ‘**On Last Things**’ in our **doctrinal statement** under **what we believe** at www.gracepointfellowship.org). What in the description of that salvation cultivates hope to endure the trials of this life?

Transformation exercise:

Consider Isaiah 51:4-5 each morning this week. Ask the Lord to bring someone across your path in order that you may proclaim the hope of His salvation to them.