

expecting the Lord at any moment, as travellers who are packed and ready for the last leg of their journey home. That is how it had been on the night the Israelites left Egypt: they ate the Passover with their cloaks tucked in their belts, their sandals on their feet, and their staffs in their hands. They were not delivered yet, but they were sure they would be – soon. The same air of keen expectancy permeates the present passage. A new exodus is about to take place” (Webb 1996: 207).

Israel will be saved! But why do we (who are not Israel) care?

1. This passage has never been fulfilled. Thus it remains as one of God’s promises for the future.
2. God loves his people Israel. We love God. Therefore we love what God loves.
3. We love to see God save unworthy people.
4. Israel’s salvation brings God’s kingdom on earth and we are longing and praying for that kingdom.
- 5.

### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

How is the second exodus similar to but also different from the first exodus?

What is Israel saved from? What is Israel saved to? We are we saved from? What are we saved to?

Are you obedient to Paul’s application of verse 11 in 2 Corinthians 6:14–7:1?

### SOURCES CITED

John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40–66*, NICOT, 1998.  
Gary V. Smith, *Isaiah 40–66*, New American Commentary, 2009.  
Barry G. Webb, *The Message of Isaiah*, The Bible Speaks Today, 1996.

## ISAIAH 52: THE GOOD NEWS OF ISRAEL’S REDEMPTION

### STRUCTURE OF ISAIAH 49-55

Servant song (#2)	49:1–13
Salvation for Zion	49:14–50:3
Servant song (#3)	50:4–11
<b>Salvation for Zion</b>	<b>51:1–52:12</b>
Servant song (#4)	52:13–53:12
Salvation for Zion	54:1–17
Conclusion	55:1–13 (adapted from Smith 2009: 337)

### OUTLINE OF ISAIAH 52

- I. Israel will be redeemed from captivity to know the Lord (52:1-6)
- II. The Lord and his people will come to Jerusalem (52:7-12)

### NOTES

“The final section of this unit dramatically announces the good news of the eschatological coming of God’s great salvation to the people of Zion. God’s holy people will no longer be despised and humiliated by the Egyptians or the Assyrians (52:4), and God’s name will no longer be blasphemed (52:5). This will be a time of peace and joyful singing of a song about God’s redemption and salvation. They will sing before all the nations (52:9–10) when God comes to reign as King in Zion (52:7–8). The paragraph ends with admonitions to be separate from impurity (52:11), plus assurances of God’s presence, guidance, and protection (52:12)” (Smith 2009: 416-17).

v1 “Here again it is evident that Israel’s problem, the problem from which the arm of the Lord will deliver them, is much more than Babylonian captivity. If they are to be the people of God, living in the holy city, something must happen to cure them of their rebellion and their uncleanness (Rev. 21:27)” (Oswalt 1998: 361).

v2 “Babylon will have to go down from the throne (47:1) to sit in the dust, but Jerusalem will rise from the dust to sit on the throne. This is the way it always is with human attempts to exalt ourselves in contrast to God’s plan to raise us up and share his glory with us” (Oswalt 1998: 361).

v3 “God’s right to his people was not forfeited because no one bought them from him. Israel was and has always remained God’s possession.” Thus, there is no external power that can prevent God from fulfilling his plan to redeem his people in the future” (Smith 2009: 419).

v5 “God’s name is held in contempt because it appears to the watching world that Israel’s belief in God was false. He had been forced by the superior power of the gods to surrender his people.... The seriousness of this contempt is underlined by its continual nature: *continually, all day long*. But in fact, the allegations were all untrue; God had not failed his people” (Oswalt 1998: 363).

vv7-12 “He 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, 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! The anticipation of salvation that began at 49:1 has now reached its climax. But these verses do not merely mark a climax from 49:1. Comparison with 40:9–11 shows a striking similarity with the tone and concepts there (imperatives to speak, messenger, the arm of the Lord, his coming, etc.). In a sense everything from 40:1 to 52:12 is about the anticipated return of God to his people. Now it is about to be realized” (Oswalt 1998: 367).

v7 “When God comes to dwell among his people, the messenger’s four proclamations announce that he will inaugurate a time of peace, goodness, salvation, and a period of Divine rule. “Peace” (*šālōm*) denotes an absence of hostility and conflict; the establishment of a period of unity, cooperation, and righteous relationships among mankind. A time of “goodness” (*tōb*) implies that the negative experiences of evil, hatred, sickness, and death will not be present any longer; instead, positive and helpful relationship will flourish for the benefit of all. “Salvation” (*yěšû‘ā*) indicates that God will deliver people from anything that might harm, oppress, or attempt to overpower them. This will all be possible because God himself will reign as King over his kingdom” (Smith 2009: 424).

v7 “Thus Paul’s quotation of the opening words of the verse in Rom. 10:15 is precisely in keeping with the sense of the verse. Christianity understood itself to be about what Isaiah was about, declaring the good news of the universal rule of God in the world with concomitant peace, good, and salvation” (Oswalt 1998: 368).

vv11-12 “In this context the commands to *go out from there* have to be seen as a summons to the people of God to respond to the work of the Servant and rise to their high and holy calling as priests of the living God. There is more to be left behind than Babylon; there is the whole ambience of worldliness and estrangement from God that it represents. The physical ‘leaving’ of 48:20 is here overlaid and transcended by a notion of setting out and pilgrimage which is essentially moral and spiritual. How appropriate, then, that the apostle Paul should allude to this very passage in summoning us to have done with darkness and uncleanness and step out resolutely into the light and holiness of our priestly vocation as the people of God” (Webb 1996: 208).

“The climax is reached in the staccato *Depart, depart* of verse 11, which echoes the *Awake, awake* of the two previous units and brings us to their logical outcome. The people of God are to keep alert because their salvation is near. They are to live as those who are