

2 Nephi 8 — Isaiah 51 — Look unto the Rock, the Cup of Trembling, Three Awakenings

Jacob reads Isa. 51 and the opening of Isa. 52 — the awake, awake doctrine, c. 559–545 BC.

Isaiah at his most exhortatively-energetic. The chapter calls Israel out of exilic stupor in three triple *awakes* — to the Lord's arm (vv. 9–11), to Jerusalem (v. 17), and to Zion (v. 24 = Isa. 52:1). Between the awakenings sit the loaded images of *looking unto the rock from whence ye are hewn* (Abraham) and *the cup of trembling* (the cup Christ asks to let pass in Gethsemane).

Ten Insights

- 1. Hewn from the rock (vv. 1–2).** *Look unto Abraham... for I called him alone, and blessed him.* Quarry-genealogy: the disciple is stone-cut from the Abrahamic rock. The covenant begins with one — Abraham, Joseph Smith, Christ. Small is sufficient.
- 2. Wilderness made Eden (v. 3).** Comfort-Zion grammar of Isa. 40 re-invoked. The new-world covenant land is itself Isaiah 51:3 enacted geographically — wilderness becoming Eden.
- 3. Law goes forth as light (v. 4).** Sinai-grammar universalized — the law for nations as light. New-covenant logic of Jer. 31 in seed.
- 4. Heavens vanish like smoke (v. 6).** Cosmic temporality — visible creation is garment-grade. Trust should be anchored on the eternal, not the temporary. 1 Pet. 1:24–25; 2 Pet. 3:10.
- 5. Heart-written law (v. 7).** *The people in whose heart I have written my law* — new-covenant grammar centuries before Jer. 31:31–34. The disciple's identity is internal.
- 6. AWAKE I — Lord's arm (vv. 9–10).** *Uri, uri.* Prayer-grammar of cosmic precedent: you dried the Red Sea, do it again now. Calling the arm to wake invokes prior demonstrated power.
- 7. Forgetting the Maker (v. 13).** *Shakhach*-amnesia is the cause of fearing grass-men. The cure for fear is remembrance. Sacrament, scripture, temple, prayer — all are remembrance-technology.
- 8. AWAKE II — Jerusalem with cup (v. 17).** *Kos ha-tar'elah* — the cup of staggering. The cup Christ asks to *let pass* in Gethsemane (Matt. 26:39) is *this* cup. The Atonement is cup-transfer.
- 9. Cup taken from the disciple (v. 22).** *I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling.* Christ takes the cup into His own hand. The Gospel in advance.
- 10. AWAKE III — Zion clothed (v. 24).** *Put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem.* Priestly garments (*bigdei tif'arah* — same as Aaron's). The Restoration's temple garments are Isa. 52:1 enacted; the disciple's daily putting-on is covenant-priestly practice.

Three Awakenings — The Restoration's Triple Structure

The chapter has three centers — unusual for a chiasmic Hebrew poem. The triple structure is itself the chapter's argument: covenant recovery happens in three places at once.

Awakening	Addressee	Restoration application
I (vv. 9–11)	Lord's arm (cosmic-redemptive)	The Lord's act of God in history — Joseph Smith called, gospel restored
II (v. 17)	Jerusalem (covenant-people)	Gathering of Israel — the people called out of cup-suffering
III (v. 24)	Zion (priestly-temple)	Temple endowment — the disciple clothed in priestly garments

All three happen *together* in the Restoration. The disciple participates in each — praying for the Lord's arm, gathering as covenant people, putting on the garments and shaking off the dust.

Cross-References

Gen. 12:1–3 (call of Abraham — *alone*); Gen. 17; Ex. 14 (Red Sea); Ex. 28:2 (priestly garments); Deut. 32:18 (Rock that begat thee); 1 Sam. 2:8 (raised from dust); Job 26:12 (Rahab); Pss. 74; 89:10 (dragon); Ps. 75:8 (cup of the Lord); Isa. 40:1 (comfort ye); Isa. 51 (full); Isa. 52:1–2 (cited); Isa. 53; Isa. 54:1; 60 (arise, shine); 61:10 (garments of salvation); Jer. 25:15–17 (cup of fury); 31:31–34 (new covenant); Lam. 3:29; Hab. 2:16; Matt. 24:14; 26:39 (Gethsemane cup); Mk. 14:36; Lk. 22:42; Acts 2; Rom. 12:19; 1 Cor. 10:21; Eph. 6:11 (armour); 1 Pet. 1:24–25; 2:5 (lively stones); 2 Pet. 3:10; Rev. 14:10; 18:6; 19:7–8 (clothed in fine linen); 21:1–2; 1 Ne. 18:9; 18:25; 20:20; 21; 2 Ne. 6; 2 Ne. 9 (Atonement exposition); 2 Ne. 10:20 (isle of the sea); Mosiah 1:5 (preserve records lest we forget); 26; Alma 7:11–13; 3 Ne. 11–18; D&C 6; 27:15–18 (whole armor); 109; 113; 124; 133; JS—H 1.

Apocryphal Correlations

Baruch 4:30–5:9. *Take courage, Jerusalem, for he who named thee will comfort thee.* Direct comfort-Zion echo of vv. 3, 12.

Wisdom of Solomon 11:23–12:2. *Thou hast mercy on all... because they should amend.* Lord-comforts-by-restraint grammar of vv. 22–23.

Sirach 36:1–17. *Have mercy upon us... gather all the tribes of Jacob.* Gathering prayer paralleling vv. 11, 24.

4 Ezra 9:38–10:54. Vision of Mother Zion as mourning woman comforted and transfigured — closest parallel to vv. 17–20 and vv. 24–25.

Psalms of Solomon 11. *Stand on a high place, O Jerusalem, and behold thy children gathered.* Gathering-of-the-redeemed echo of vv. 11, 22.

2 Baruch 10:6–19. *Tell ye, O Jerusalem, the things which have happened to thee.* Mother-Zion lament before the awakening.

1 Enoch 90:30–38. White-bull eschatology — new Jerusalem clothed in glory. Parallel to v. 24's beautiful garments.

Tobit 13:9–18. *O Jerusalem, the holy city... he will have mercy again on the sons of the righteous.*

1QH (Qumran Hodayot) 12. *Thou hast made my face shine by thy covenant.* Disciple's clothing in covenant glory.

Hebrew Word Studies

chutzavtem mi-tzur (חֲצֻצְתֶּם מִצֹּר, "hewn from the rock") — v. 1. Quarry-genealogy. Disciple is stone-cut from the Abrahamic rock. 1 Pet. 2:5; D&C 124.

uri uri (יְרוּעַ יְרוּעַ, "awake, awake") — vv. 9, 17, 24. The doubled imperative. Three awakenings — Lord's arm, Jerusalem, Zion.

kos ha-tar'elah (כּוֹס הַתַּרְעֵלָה, "cup of trembling") — v. 17. The Gethsemane cup. *Tar'elah* = staggering, reeling. Christ drinks the cup the disciple deserves.

bigdei tif'arah (בִּגְדֵי תִפְאֶרֶת, "garments of glory and beauty") — v. 24 / Isa. 52:1. Same lexical family as Aaron's priestly garments (Ex. 28:2). Restoration temple garments enact the verse.

shakhach (שָׁחַח, "forget") — v. 13. Covenant-amnesia — forgetting the Maker is the cause of fearing the oppressor. The cure is remembrance.

livshi uzzekeh (לִישָׁבֵל, "put on thy strength") — v. 24. Strength as garment-put-on. Eph. 6:11; D&C 27:15–18 — armor of God.

Personal Application

Three practices. First, look unto the rock when you feel small. The Lord called Abraham alone. Smallness is not insufficiency; smallness is the beginning the Lord prefers. The Restoration began with one fourteen-year-old in a grove. The covenant has always begun with one. Second, remember the Maker as the cure for fear of grass-men. Verse 13 names forgetting the Maker as the root of fearing the oppressor. Your modern fears — political, cultural, economic — are grass-man fears. Cure: daily remembrance. The disciple who daily remembers will not fear grass-men. The disciple who forgets will find oppressors enormous. Third, participate in all three awakenings. Pray for the Lord's arm to act (intercession for cosmic-historical action). Recover as covenant people from whatever cup you've drunk (Jerusalem awakening). Put on the priestly garments and shake off the dust of self-shame (Zion awakening). Pray. Recover. Clothe. All three. Daily.