

When the Redeemer becomes the Everlasting Light!

Isaiah 60:1-22 (vv.19-22)

Facilitator: Alfreda Chandler

I. Historical Background & Biblical Context

The Book Isaiah is known for powerful visions and messages from God, which often warned the people of Judah and Israel about the consequences of their sins and the coming judgment. Chapter 59 ends with God promise to His people, that His Spirit which is on them will not depart from them and His words will always be on their lips. Isaiah, in this chapter looks forward to the time of restoration and glory for Jerusalem. He speaks of the nations coming to the city to worship the Lord and of the city being filled with the light of God's presence. This chapter foreshadows the ultimate fulfillment of God's promises to His people, when the Messiah will come and establish His eternal kingdom. We see echoes of this passage in other parts of Scripture, such as the book of Revelation, where the New Jerusalem is described in similar terms. This reminds us of that God's plan **of Redemption for His people and the Gentiles, is the central theme throughout the entire Bible.**

Isaiah in this chapter is encouraging his people to leave the comfort of Babylon and return to their homeland. The vision is of a future city far greater than the one from which they have been kept captive in. The people are called to rise and shine, as a response to God's glory and their light arriving in their midst. The world is in darkness (Is.9:2). But God is doing something about it. God is calling a downtrodden nation, after successive foreign rule by the Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, and Romans, to arise and let their light shine. Other nations will be coming to bring their wealth, those that held them captive will be coming back to the homeland and most of all they will be attracted to the Light that is illuminating from them, which the Light of God (Jesus).

II. Lesson: When the Redeemer Becomes the Everlasting Light!

1. vv.1-3.

Looking forward to the conclusion of a long seventy years of captivity and looking all the way forward to the present age of spiritual darkness, the Lord commands Jerusalem, "Arise and shine". The city of God is commanded to become like the morning sun. They are to arise and shine with a brightness that is seen throughout the world. Their light has come and they have been enabled to obey the Lord's command. Here it depicts the converting and the redeeming work of the Holy Spirit. (2Co.4:6). When we read the promises,

we long for their fulfillment. But we must wait patiently for God's timing. He is in control of history, and he weaves all our lives together in his plans. We see in the first verse there is a call to action, awakening and a readiness. It is a message of hope and encouragement to the people of Israel. It was an assurance that their time of blessing and restoration had arrived! The imagery of light symbolizes the presence of God and his favor shining on them. This verse not only applies to the ancient Israelites but also resonates for us today as Believers. It reminds us also to rise and shine our light of Christ in a world that has grown dark. V.2 mention darkness covering the earth alludes to the state of the nations who are separated from God and are spiritual blind. But despite this darkness, the promise that the Lord's glory will rise on his people is powerful declaration of divine intervention and a revelation of His presence. These verses contrast between the darkness of the world and the light of God's glory that shines upon His chosen people. The theme of light penetrating darkness is prevalent throughout the Bible, symbolizing God's goodness, truth and salvation which overcome evil and despair. In verse 3, the prophecy that "Nations will come to your light and kings to the brightness of your dawn", speaks of the universal impact of God's work in the world through light bearer (His chosen people). It foretells of a future where all nations and people will be drawn to the light and the glory of God shining through the chosen ones. People from all nations will be called to salvation and redemption through faith in Jesus Christ (Is.42:6-7). These verses underscore the mission of the church is to be a beacon of light, to draw others to the truth and love of God. Even the in midst of darkness, uncertainty or chaos, believers are called to reflect God's glory and to draw others to the One who can save their soul and give them eternal life, through our words and actions.

2. vv.4-7.

These verses convey a powerful image of restoration and blessing for the people of Israel. It speaks of a time when the nations will come to Israel, bringing gifts and honoring the Lord. The mention of sons and daughters coming from afar symbolizes a gathering of the people of God from all corners of the earth. This can be seen a foreshadowing of the inclusion of the Gentiles into the family of God through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, as prophesied in the Old Testament and fulfilled in the New Testament. The imagery of camels, and gold being brought to Israel signifies wealth and abundance flowing into the land. This is not just about the material gain but about a prophetic fulfillment as nations seek to honor the Lord (Haggai 2:6-8). Also, we see the continuity and the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies of Jesus Christ, when the wise men

follow the light to seek out Christ and presented him with gold and incense (Matt.2:1-11). We see in these passages the people from all nations praising God, which demonstrate the universal nature of salvation and the call for all people to come to worship Him who created them. It encourages believers to lift their eyes in hope and anticipation of the abundant of blessings and glory that await those who put their trust in Jesus Christ. We see wrongs be made right with those who are returning to the homeland and those who were enemies, are now coming to make offerings to the God of Zion.

3. vv. 8-11.

This imagery of a group of people or entities that are moving fast like clouds, and doves are believed to be referring to a future event, where a group of people, possibly the righteous, are being transported swiftly to a place of safety or to their homeland. It could also be the gathering of believers moving together in unity toward a common goal. V.8 speaks of a grand gathering of people from distant lands, coming on ships from Tarshish, which was a prosperous and maritime power in ancient times. These verses encapsulate a message of the glory of God being recognized by other nations and many of them who were once enemies of Israel or of God. Revelation 21:24 describes the nations bringing their glory and honor to New Jerusalem. It conveys a vision of a future where people, regardless of their backgrounds, will acknowledge and worship the Lord, and will bring their best offerings. **Is.45:3 &Php.2:10-11. What is your best offering to the Lord?**

Verse 10 highlights the significance of foreigners coming to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. This is a picture of restoration of the city's strength and glory, which is an indication of a time of prosperity and security. With the Gentiles also being included, again is signifying universal restoration and not just for Israel. The gates will be open continually, which suggests a steady flow of people and resources. It also parallels to Rev.21:25 which also states that in the New Jerusalem its gates will not ever be shut... This should not be misunderstood as promoting dominance or oppression. Instead, it serves as a warning against pride, sin, and rebellion. It is a reminder to us to humbly submit to God and serve his purposes or else face the consequence for disobedience. God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble (Jas.4:6). Pride will be met by divine judgment.

4. vv.12-16.

Even the most majestic and renowned places will contribute to God's sanctuary. Those who oppose will not only lose their fortunes, but they will lose

their lives (souls). Jerusalem (Zion) is part of God's redemptive plan (Ps.87:3). Also, Jerm.30:17 where God declares: "I will restore you to health and heal your wounds" This a reminder that no matter how bad the circumstances may seem, God's sovereignty and his promises will prevail, in his own time.

5. vv17-18.

These verses speak of a transformation of the people and their land; they will be getting a significant upgrade. The image here of a divine exchange, where God is promising to replace the ordinary, common materials with precious ones. This symbolize God's blessings and prosperity being showered upon his people. It's not just a material upgrade, but a spiritual one as well, symbolizing God's abundance and His desire to bestow good things upon His children. Peace promised by rulers usually are short-lived or not sought at all, but peace and wellbeing under the leadership and the reign of God will build a flourishing society where justice, righteousness and harmony will prevail. We will have the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ (Is.9:6-7), who will bring true peace to all who believe in Him.

6. vv.19-20.

These verses speak of the everlasting nature of light and the end of darkness. The sun and the moon are sources of light and guidance, will be surpassed by the divine presence of the Lord as the ultimate source of light. This symbolizes a spiritual awakening, shifting from relying on the earthly provisions to the surpassing glory of God illumination. When God is the center of our lives, He adorns us with His glory, which will radiate from us. God, Himself, is our ultimate source of honor and splendor for His people (Ps.84:11). True glory and honor come from our relationship and connection with God. We encounter a promise of eternal light and the end of sorrows in verse 20. The vision of a time with no darkness indicates a state of eternal joy and peace in the presence of God. The idea of an unending day without night speaks of a reality where there be no room for sorrow or grief, but only everlasting joy in the divine presence. It serves as a promise and hope to believers assuring them of a future free from pain and suffering, where God's light will eternally shine upon them. Rev. 21:4: God will wipe away every tear..

Light usually represent our relationship with Christ. If we live for Christ we will glow like lights, showing others what Christ is like (Matt.5:15-16). It also represents our effect on others like a lamp (Mk.4:21)

7. vv.21-22.

Verse 21 sets the tone for a future time when righteousness will prevail among people of Zion (Jerusalem). Righteousness here points to a state of moral and spiritual uprightness, indicating a restored and redeemed community. This speaks of a transformation where people of God will live in accordance with His will and ways. They will possess the land forever, is the fulfillment of the promise God made to Abraham and his descendants, showing God will uphold his covenant. It not only meant a physical land, but it includes the ultimate inheritance of the eternal kingdom for the faithful ones of God.

In verse 22 it states, “The least of you will become a thousand, the smallest a mighty nation”. This is a picture of exponential growth and increase among the people of God. It shows that what may be insignificant to others, in His hand can be multiplied into something impactful. Through out the Bible we have seen God use the weak and humble to accomplish His purposes, demonstrating His power is above human logic and power and is no match to his. These verses remind us that God ways and thoughts are not like ours and his ability to transform and elevate is beyond our understanding. God is saying trust Me; I am going to restore you to myself.

III. Conclusion.

Our light reflects Christ’s presence. We like John the Baptist, are not the source of God’s light; we merely reflect the light. Jesus Christ is the true light; he helps us to see the way to God and shows us how to walk along the way. We are his witness or reflector to those in darkness.

The Redeemer becomes the Eternal Light, when individuals accept His atonement and allow His grace to dispel spiritual darkness and guide life choices and provide hope.

John 1:5: The light shines through the darkness and the darkness can never extinguish it.