

“Arise and Shine” **Isaiah 60:1-22**

Context: Isaiah transitions from an exhortation against sin, the oppression of the Remnant, redemption by the Lord, and preservation by the Holy Spirit to the eternal glorification of Jerusalem. He continues this crescendo using eleven chapters to conclude his theme of salvation. Historically, chapter 60 is situated during the post-exilic period during the leadership of Ezra and Nehemiah. Their rebuilding of a devastated Jerusalem is used with the colors of Isaiah’s time to paint the picture of the eternal New Jerusalem built by the hand of God. The struggles, hopes and deliverance of the returning Remnant all foreshadowed the experiences of a new Remnant during the Church age, a Remnant still living under the oppression of spiritual darkness. The current discussion flows into revelations of future glory and gladness that come from a release of the Remnant out of their oppression.

Life Principle: The brightness of dawning light in the presence of deep darkness holds a promise of comfort to those awaiting the fullness of “Sonrise.”

1. Jerusalem’s reflection of God’s glory – Isaiah 60:1-9

The deeper symbolism of the post-resurrection Remnant is hidden behind the metaphor of Jerusalem, portrayed as a mother. The command to “arise and shine” alludes to God’s radiant nature reflecting off His willing servants through the working of the power of the resurrected Spirit of Christ within them. The salvation disclosed here begins in Jerusalem and permeates the nations. The glorification of Jerusalem by the nations is really the glorification of God who governs her, preserves her, and whose nature is displayed by her.

2. A reason for and result of Jerusalem’s glory – Isaiah 60:10-17

A reason is given for God’s mercy and is partially disclosed in the anthropomorphism “good-pleasure.” Mercy follows discipline and results in a confession of faith by the worshipers proclaiming that the New Jerusalem reflects the character of God; hence its name, “Zion of the Holy One of Israel.” Jerusalem’s glory results in God’s “good pleasure.”

3. Nature of God’s glory – Isaiah 60:18-22

Eternal peace is promised to all who are grasped in the hands of God’s salvation. In God’s timing, He eternally vanquishes Jerusalem’s threat of destruction from Iraq to Iran and to the regions beyond. Greater still, God vanquishes the knowledge of good and evil and all sin which attends it. Better yet, He empowers the saints to live His higher life, symbolized in terms of illumination, sinlessness, prosperity, and blessed posterity.

Study questions:

- An accurate understanding of Isaiah 60 is broadly dependent upon identifying the subject of the imperatives “arise” and “shine.” As a **Bible study method**, study names that allude to the identity of the subject in Isaiah 60:14 and scriptural cross-references that identify the subject in Isaiah 60:19 (cp. Revelation 21:23). Why might the NLT’s identification of the subject as Jerusalem be warranted? What is the significance of God naming the city with His name? What is the relationship of the city of God to its inhabitants? How is the focus of the commerce and politic of the city of God different from that of the secular city? In view of these thoughts, what does the “arise and shine” of Isaiah 60:1 have to do with you (cf. 2 Corinthians 3:18-5:1)?

- Interpretation of Isaiah 60:10 reveals that God’s mercy for those He saved comes from His “good will.” Look up the term translated in Bible texts as “good will, favor, or grace.” Why does the term seem hard to understand? Our doctrinal statement professes the assurance of the believer’s eternal salvation (see Ephesians 1:7, 13-14; 3:14-21 in footnote 15 **‘On Salvation’** in our **doctrinal statement** under **what we believe** at www.gracepointfellowship.org). How would God’s unconditional favor or good will support our profession of faith? Do you find comfort in that belief?

- In Isaiah 60:18-20, the prophet paints a picture of eternity with the earthly colors of His time and culture. What would the walls, gates, and borders of Israel have looked like to those returning from the Babylonian exile (cp. Nehemiah 1:3ff; Revelation 21:4-12)? What comfort would God’s vanquishing of all violence bring (cp. Nehemiah 4:1; Revelation 21:22-27)? What relief from sin would ever-present righteousness bring (cp. Nehemiah 5:1; Revelation 22:15)? How would you bring comfort from promises of Isaiah 60:18-20 to someone in like need in your culture today?

Transformation exercise:

Meditate on Isaiah 60:1, 10. Ask the Lord to reveal to you circumstances in the coming week that might afford you an opportunity to share God’s offer of grace and mercy to someone in distress.