

Israel During the Millennium; A Prophetic Glimpse of the Messiah

Isaiah 60-61

Isaiah 60:1-9 - *“Arise, shine; for your light has come! And the glory of the Lord is risen upon you. ² For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and deep darkness the people, but the Lord will arise over you, and His glory will be seen upon you. ³ The Gentiles shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising. ⁴ “Lift up your eyes all around, and see: they all gather together, they come to you. Your sons shall come from afar, and your daughters shall be nursed at your side. ⁵ Then you shall see and become radiant, and your heart shall swell with joy, because the abundance of the sea shall be turned to you; the wealth of the Gentiles shall come to you.*

⁶ The multitude of camels shall cover your land; the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah. All those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and incense, and they shall proclaim the praises of the Lord. ⁷ All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together to you; the rams of Nebaioth shall minister to you. They shall ascend with acceptance on My altar, and I will glorify the house of My glory. ⁸ “Who are these who fly like a cloud, and like doves to their roosts? ⁹ Surely the coastlands shall wait for Me; and the ships of Tarshish will come first, to bring your sons from afar; their silver and their gold with them, to the name of the Lord your God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because He has glorified you.”

Background Notes

The final subdivision of the book of Isaiah began in chapter 58. This subdivision could be entitled “*Consolation*” or “*Comfort*” because of God’s future program. The good news was that in the End Times there will be a spiritual restoration of the nation of Israel - not only a literal return to their ancient homeland, but also a spiritual return to the Lord!

As we’ve seen, this predicted return to the Land and to the Lord was not fulfilled when the Jews returned from their seventy-year captivity in Babylon - and we believe that these promises should **not** be allegorized and applied to the present-day Church. No. These prophecies will be fulfilled **literally** in the future, when the Lord returns to this earth and establishes His worldwide kingdom. This kingdom is often called the “millennial kingdom” because it will last for 1000 years, according to Revelation 20.

Doctrinal Point (for Isaiah 60)

In the Millennium, Gentile nations will honor Israel.

Isaiah 60:10-18 - *“The sons of foreigners shall build up your walls, and their kings shall minister to you; for in My wrath I struck you, but in My favor I have had mercy on you. ¹¹ Therefore your gates shall be open continually. They shall not be*

shut day or night, that men may bring to you the wealth of the Gentiles, and their kings in procession. ¹² For the nation and kingdom that will not serve you shall perish, and those nations shall be utterly ruined.

¹³ "The glory of Lebanon shall come to you; the cypress, the pine, and the box tree together, to beautify the place of My sanctuary; and I will make the place of My feet glorious. ¹⁴ Also the sons of those who afflicted you shall come bowing to you, and all those who despised you shall fall prostrate at the soles of your feet. They shall call you The City of the Lord, Zion of the Holy One of Israel. ¹⁵ "Whereas you have been forsaken and hated so that no one went through you, I will make you an eternal excellence, a joy of many generations. ¹⁶ You shall drink the milk of the Gentiles, and milk the breast of kings. You will know that I, the Lord, am your Savior and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob. ¹⁷ "Instead of bronze I will bring gold; instead of iron I will bring silver; instead of wood, bronze; and instead of stones, iron. I will also make your officers peace, and your magistrates righteousness. ¹⁸ Violence shall no longer be heard in your land, neither wasting nor destruction within your borders; but you shall call your walls Salvation, and your gates Praise."

"The Tables Will be Turned" could easily be the title of Isaiah 60. In Luke 21:24 the Lord Jesus spoke of "*the times of the Gentiles.*" He said that during "the times of the Gentiles," Jerusalem and the Jewish people will be under the foot of Gentile nations. But this period will come to an end, and the nation of Israel will be restored to her God-given role of being a spiritual and moral light to the nations (v1-3).

Not only will the Jewish people return to their homeland from around the world (as they're doing today), but the wealth of the future Gentile nations will be directed towards the nation of Israel (v4-9). There's no doubt that the fulfillment of this prophecy is still in the future, because *in the context*, both Israel and the Gentile nations will be worshiping the Lord - and that is certainly not happening today! We believe that verse 7 refers to millennial Temple in Jerusalem, where sacrifices of thanksgiving will take place on the altar - thus flocks and rams were mentioned.

Verse 8 may refer to the many planeloads of believing Jews who will return to Israel in the last days! Also in the last days, foreign money will pour into Jerusalem to build up Israel (v10-14) and beautify the Temple (v13). It will be a great time of peace, so gates will be open (v11), and no violence will occur (v18). Why? Because the Gentile nations of the future will then be *believing* nations, and they will be thankful to Israel. Israel will be the means of their blessing - and any nation or kingdom that does not recognize and acknowledge this truth will be judged. "*For the nation and kingdom which will not serve you shall perish, and those nations shall be utterly ruined*" (v12). In the Millennium, Gentile nations will honor Israel.

Practical Application

Let's be willing to admit that we don't know all the details.

Isaiah 60:19-22 - "*The sun shall no longer be your light by day, nor for brightness shall the moon give light to you; but the Lord will be to you an everlasting light, and your God your glory. ²⁰ Your sun shall no longer go down, nor shall your moon withdraw itself; for the Lord will be your everlasting light, and the days of your mourning shall be ended. ²¹ Also your*

people shall all be righteous. They shall inherit the land forever: the branch of My planting, the work of My hands, that I may be glorified. ²² A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation. I, the Lord, will hasten it in its time.”

Some of the details here seem to fit a description of the Eternal State rather than the Millennium - such as, there will no longer be any need for the light of the sun and moon because the Lord is the Light - an *everlasting* Light (v19-20). And yet the possession of the Land and the propagation of people (v21-22) are more like a description of the earthly millennial kingdom. So how do we interpret these verses? We don't know for sure. So - let's be willing to admit that we don't know all the details!

Isaiah 61:1-9 - *“The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because the Lord has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor. He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound. ² To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; ³ to console those who mourn in Zion; to give them beauty for ashes; the oil of joy for mourning; the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified.” ⁴ And they shall rebuild the old ruins. They shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the ruined cities- the desolations of many generations.*

⁵ *Strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the foreigner shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers.*

⁶ *But you shall be named the priests of the Lord. They shall call you the servants of our God. You shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory you shall boast. ⁷ Instead of your shame you shall have double honor, and instead of confusion they shall rejoice in their portion. Therefore in their land they shall possess double; everlasting joy shall be theirs. ⁸ “For I, the Lord, love justice. I hate robbery for burnt offering. I will direct their work in truth, and will make with them an everlasting covenant ⁹ Their descendants shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people. All who see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the posterity whom the Lord has blessed.”*

Background Notes

As we read these prophetic verses, once again the obvious question is: Have these prophecies been fulfilled yet? Verse 4 said that the ancient ruins will be rebuilt and the ruined cities repaired. Was that prophecy fulfilled when the Jews returned from the Babylonian captivity? No. Is it being fulfilled now, with the growth of the modern state of Israel (including settlements at ancient biblical sites in the so-called “West Bank”)? Not entirely. Because of the **context**, we believe these prophecies are yet to be fulfilled when the Lord returns. The context is the second coming of the Messiah (v2ff).

Doctrinal Point (for Isaiah 61)

It's important to understand that in the Old Testament prophecies, the two advents of Christ were **not always predicted separately**. They may even be combined in the same verse. (Remember - verse numbers were not part of the original

texts!) Verse 1 referred to the first coming of Christ, because the Lord Jesus Himself quoted this Scripture in the synagogue at Nazareth, and He said that it was fulfilled *at that time* (Luke 4:16-22).

However, notice that the Lord stopped His quote of Isaiah 61 in the middle of verse 2, after *“To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.”* Why did the Lord stop there? Why did He not continue, *“and the day of vengeance of our God”*? Because up to that point the Isaiah 61 prophecy was fulfilled in His **first advent**. For indeed the Lord said, *“Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”* But the last part of Isaiah 61:2 - *“and the day of vengeance of our God”* - was not fulfilled at our Lord's *first* advent. The fulfillment of that prophecy awaits His **second coming**.

And we believe that the fulfillment of the rest of Isaiah 61 also awaits the return of the Lord. That's when comfort will come to those who mourn in Zion (v3). That's when the ruins will be rebuilt (v4). That's when double honor will come to Israel from the nations (v5-7). That's when Israel will be the kingdom of priests God meant her to be (v6). That's when the everlasting New Covenant made with Israel will be fulfilled (v8). That's when the Jewish people will truly be blessed and be a witness to the rest of the world (v9).

So **both advents of Christ were included in Isaiah 61**. The prophecy moves from the first coming to the second coming in the middle of verse 2. Remember – in the Old Testament prophecies, the two advents of Christ are not always predicted separately.

Practical Application

Let's dress properly for the coming celebration!

Isaiah 61:10-11 - *“I will greatly rejoice in the Lord! My soul shall be joyful in my God, for He has clothed me with the garments of salvation. He has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. ¹¹ For as the earth brings forth its bud, as the garden causes the things that are sown in it to spring forth, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.”*

In the context, these verses predicted the joy and blessing that will come to Israel during the Lord's millennial kingdom. It will be like a wedding feast when the bride, groom and guests are dressed in their finest - in this case, garments of salvation and righteousness. And the nations will praise the Lord, and rejoice in Israel's righteous prosperity.

These verses certainly have an application for us as well, because all believers will take part in the millennial celebration! But to be included in the wedding party, you must be dressed properly - in robes of righteousness. You can't buy “garments of salvation” or “robes of righteousness.” You must receive them as a gift from God Himself when you trust Jesus Christ as your personal Savior. Only then will you be clothed in **His** righteousness and fit for Heaven. Only then will you be part of the glorious millennial kingdom of Christ. So - let's be sure we're dressed properly for the coming celebration!