

Future Glory (Isaiah 60:1–22)
By Pastor Jeff Alexander (6/16/2019)

Introduction

1. The last message on Isaiah 59 closed with the rescue of the remnant by the Redeemer (vv. 15b–21).
 - a. As previously noted, Isaiah’s prophecies are double-barreled, applying to immediate circumstances but also pointing to the future fulfillment in the last days (from the first through the second coming of Christ).
 - b. The Redeemer is pictured as putting on the armor of God, “*the garments of vengeance,*” and acting like “*a rushing stream [a flood crashing through a narrow gorge] which the ruach [wind or Spirit] of the Lord drives*” (vv. 17, 19).
 - c. The immediate threat was the Babylonian captivity, which was judgment on Israel’s covenant breaking. Their response to the threat was fasting, a formal outward practice to appear repentant while they pleaded for the Lord to show mercy in deliverance (59:1). The mere outward and not sincere fast was wholly unacceptable because it did not reflect a broken and contrite heart in repentance and resolve to do right.
 - d. The rescue described is the return of Judah to Jerusalem in 538 B.C. The immediate fulfillment of this text is the redeemer, Cyrus the Mede, whom the Lord used to deliver His people from Babylon and return them to Zion (compare Zechariah 4:6 with 59:19).
2. Chapters 60 through 62 describe the future glory of Israel—the true Israel of God (Galatians 6:16).
 - a. While the revelation here speaks of God’s blessing upon Judah returned to Jerusalem under Cyrus, the language is so elevated that it must transcend the immediate fulfillment.
 - b. The final glory of Zion is the new earth as described in Revelation 21 and 22.

I. Coming to Zion

1. The captivity and rescue of Judah prefigures the greater purpose of the Lord to rescue His elect righteous remnant from sin and death and to resettle them in the new heavens and new earth. Three things support this conclusion:
 - a. The greater fulfillment of verses 15b–21, being the *second* coming of Christ, is evidenced in the *language* describing the Redeemer’s coming to Zion. However, when He comes again, it will be as Paul describes in (2 Thessalonians 1:6–10). The language Paul uses to describe Christ’s coming is the language used in Isaiah: the redeemer is clothed in *vengeance*, coming to *repay* wrath on His enemies.
 - b. The result of His glorious appearing will be that all “*shall fear the name of the Lord from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun*” (59:19; Revelation 1:7; 1 Peter 1:3–5).
 - c. The *covenant* that drives this rescue (v. 21) is clearly the new covenant established in Christ’s first coming, as shown in Jeremiah 36:31–34 and cited in Hebrews 8:8–13.
2. The Redeemer is coming to Zion.

- a. Zion is the dwelling place of God. In Isaiah's day Zion referred to the temple destroyed by the Babylonians but rebuilt by Zerubbabel in the return. In the greater fulfillment, Zion refers to the elect remnant redeemed by Christ Hebrews 12:22–25).
- b. The church is the new covenant temple, the dwelling place of God with His people (1 Corinthians 3:16, 17; 2 Corinthians 6:16).

II. Future Glory Revealed

1. The *splendor* of the city is the glory of its redeemed citizens (60:1–16).
 - a. Zion will be the light of the whole earth (60:1–3; Matthew 5:14–16).
 - b. Zion's citizens will be honored and sought out by all (60:4–16).
2. The *security* of the city is the Lord Himself (60:17–20).
 - a. The workers in the city will receive just wages and will be overseen by good supervisors (v. 17).
 - b. The safety of citizens against all harm is fully secured (v. 18).
 - c. Instead of the sun in its cycles of day and night, the Lord will be the constant illumination of the city (vv. 19, 20). Revelation supports Isaiah (60:11) in that the city gates are never shut, for there is no danger of invaders, thieves, or marauders. Thus, there is no danger, no death, and no mourning (Revelation 21:22–27).

“He who testifies to these things says, ‘Surely I am coming soon.’ Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!” (Revelation 22:20).

What Can We Take Away?

1. The Lord's work in this present age is to prepare His people for future glory.
2. The salvation we presently experience is secure but not complete. We will not be fully sin-free and truly righteous until Jesus comes again.
3. Nevertheless, the Spirit of God is working within His people to transform them into Christ-likeness, little by little.
4. Can you honestly identify with this sanctifying work as currently characterizing your walk?