

## ISAIAH 62

## HEPHZIBAH AND BEULAH

The bells of comfort seem to ring with quickening peals of blessing as we continue onward in this prophecy. Indeed, this chapter, in itself, forms a unique repository of consolation; it continues the great theme of the one which precedes it. In that last passage, we found the Messiah-King issuing a great manifesto, in which He unfolds His own character, as well as the nature and purposes of His mediatorial office and Kingdom. And at the end of that chapter, the Church responded with a song of joy to Him Who had clothed her with “the garments of salvation” and the “robe of righteousness.” Now, at the commencement of this present chapter, Jehovah Himself answers their ascription of praise with a renewed promise of blessing! For Zion’s sake, He says, He will not be silent. And for Jerusalem’s sake, He will not rest “until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness,” like the ruddy hues of a brilliant morning; “and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth” (verse 1).

The picture brought before our spiritual vision is a repetition of that with which we have become very familiar in many preceding portions of Isaiah’s prophecy, especially in chapter 60. We behold the city of Zion in ruins. The Queenly City is uncrowned; she is sitting as a mourning, forlorn widow who is shrouded in darkness. Her twin names are “Forsaken” and “Desolate” (verse 4). But suddenly, the darkness vanishes! And not only is the silent, deserted city now flooded with light; but by a new and rapid change of figure, it also becomes a stronghold, with sentinels upon its towers – sounding their watch-cries or watch-songs. God Himself makes a solemn pledge by His right hand, and by the arm of His strength, that a better and brighter future was in store for His Church. Then, following out the dramatic form in which the chapter is cast, a new chorus of voices is heard! (verses 10-12) They call upon the gates of the spiritual Zion to be flung open! They call for the obstructing stones to be gathered out, and for the highways to be repaired for the return of God’s ransomed captives. By universal acclaim, the once-despised people are now called “holy” and “the redeemed of the Lord”; and the once-despised city is now “sought out,” and “a city not forsaken.”

By peeling back the figurative language of these verses, we have here a new pledge and guarantee – given by Jehovah Himself – that He will fulfill His work of grace to His Church upon earth, until His grace is merged in the glory of the Church triumphant in heaven! But these verses also form a miniature Gospel of comfort. They bring before our attention the privileges of the believer, under a threefold form: royal honor, absolute security, and tender love.

Outline of the chapter:

- ❖ A description of the Lord’s care for His Church and people – verses 1-5
- ❖ The responsibility of Christ’s ministers to preach His Gospel – verses 6-9
- ❖ Every hindrance shall be removed from the way of salvation – verses 10-12



God promises royal honor to His people. “Thou shalt also be a crown of glory, and a royal diadem” (verse 3). The Church is both the Queenly Bride and also the King’s daughter (Ps. 45). When



Isaiah speaks of a “crown of glory,” the idea is something like a tiara – a lovely circlet studded with precious stones of varying beauty and luster. And by the “royal diadem,” he is referring to the diadem of royal authority over a kingdom. While the double-emblems reveal the beauty of the believer, as well as her queenly honors; they also present us with a wonderful picture of the various gifts and graces which are found in Christ’s Church. Some of His people are equipped for active labor, while others are better suited for passive service. Some are called to glorify God by bold effort and prowess; they are the Lord’s Elijahs and Pauls and Luthers – “sons of thunder.” But the Master also employs the services of others, who silently display patience and submission to Him. They sit, like Mary of Bethany, at the feet of the Savior – in the expressive silence of faith and love and un murmuring acquiescence. The Church is like a lovely garden of flowers, which are all of various sizes and hues and fragrances. She is like a crown of these beautiful flowers, all woven in a wreath of harmonious coloring!

Another privilege that God here promises to His Church is absolute security (verse 3): “Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.” The “hand of God” is used throughout the Bible as a symbol of strength. Therefore, to be “in His hand” is the emblematic pledge and assurance of His protection. This picture is even more forcible and emphatic in the original language; for it reads, “in the palm of his hand” – meaning the tenderest, safest, and securest part. Many are the adversaries that would love to be able to wrench the Church out of that hand of power! But He will never relax His hold or alter His purposes of faithfulness; and therefore, His people may have “strong consolation” indeed.

But God also makes a third promise to His Church, and that is a promise of tender love and favor. In the picture which is so often employed in both the Old and the New Testaments, the Church is here represented as the Bride of Jesus. Once, her name was “Forsaken,” or “Desolate.” But it is the same with the Church of the Redeemed as it was with Abraham, Jacob, and other illustrious saints; at some great crisis-hour in their lives, their names were changed. Thus we see the “forsaken” and “desolate” one now being called by the name Hephzibah, which means, “she in whom he delights.” Truly, that name is a beautiful one for the regal bride to whom the Heavenly King is united in marriage for endless life! Her land also – which was represented as a desert, under the name “Desolate” – is now to be called “Beulah,” meaning “married.”

*Lord Jesus, we acknowledge that by nature, we were indeed desolate and forsaken; but we now rejoice that the You have redeemed us from our spiritual poverty, and that You now call us “Hephzibah” and “Beulah!” Amen.*