

- as Isaiah did?
4. May we apply the Hebrew meaning of peace to the Christian experience?
  5. Is there any application of the believer's "marriage" to God to human marriage?
  6. What application for the N.T. age may be made concerning the lethargy of the religious leaders of Isaiah's day?
  7. May we apply the attitude expressed by the sinners of Isaiah's day of "weariness" with sin, to any attitudes of sinners today?
  8. Is the admonition of Isaiah against the hypocrisy in fasting and worshipping relevant for the church today? How may his admonition be applied?

## IX. ZION — THE ZENITH, CHAPTERS 60 - 66

### A. REWARD OF ZION, WEALTH OF THE NATIONS CHAPTER 60

#### 1. GLORY

TEXT: 60:1-7

- 1 Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of Jehovah is risen upon thee.
- 2 For, behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the peoples; but Jehovah will arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee.
- 3 And nations shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.
- 4 Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: they all gather themselves together, they come to thee; thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be carried in the arms.
- 5 Then thou shalt see and be radiant, and thy heart shall thrill and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be turned unto thee, the wealth of the nations shall come unto thee.

- 6 The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba shall come; they shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall proclaim the praises of Jehovah.
- 7 All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee; they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar; and I will glorify the house of my glory.

## QUERIES

- a. When does Zion's light come?
- b. How is the "abundance of the sea" turned to her?
- c. Where is Nebaioth?

## PARAPHRASE

Do not let the coming captivity prostrate you Zion. Stand up, be steadfast and faithful and begin to be a light to the dark world. The glorious light of God is shining on you—the grandeur, splendor and righteousness of Jehovah is being given to you. It is still night and darkness to the heathen nations around you, but you are going to be light for the whole world when Jehovah gives you His glory. You will become a reflection of God's truth and love that will be seen by people from all over the world. The Gentiles will be attracted to your glory and come to it; great and famous rulers will humbly come to bask in the splendor of your majesty. Look around you, Zion, from all directions people of every nation and tribe and tongue are coming to you; they are all bringing others to you with the tenderness and compassion a foster-parent shows its adopted child. You will see all this and it will make you radiate joy and gratitude. Your heart will be thrilled and swell with excitement toward the Gentiles coming to you. This will be your attitude because you will recognize that God is giving you, in

these who are coming, the true wealth of the islands and coastlands—believers! Multitudes of people will make their way to you, Zion; people from every direction will come bringing their most precious possessions as gifts and they will testify to the majesty and power of Jehovah. Even your inveterate enemies from Mesopotamia and Idumea will be accepted by Me and by you and they will join you in ministering and worshipping Me. The Lord will make His house more glorious than ever when He brings people from all over the world into it.

### COMMENTS

v. 1-5 LIGHT: It has been our purpose to show the student of Isaiah the logical progression of the prophet's message. In the first 35 chapters Isaiah has declared that Israel's salvation is not in any human programs; neither self-righteousness nor idolatry nor military alliance with the heathen will save her. In chapters 36-39 Isaiah inserts parenthetically a record of an historical event which demonstrates precisely what he is preaching; that Israel, God's covenant people, can only be saved and reach her messianic destiny through faith in Jehovah by keeping covenant with Him. Finally, in chapters 40-66, Isaiah will prophesy and typify the grand climax of God's program for the redemption of the whole world through the Servant and Covenant relationship to Him. The last section, with which we now begin to deal, predicts the glorious consequence of Zion's appropriation of the Servant's work by Covenant-communion. Zion will enjoy Reward, Regeneration and Rest, among other blessings. Zion is going to be made "whole" (see our discussion of the word *shalom/peace* on 59:8) because she will have given to her a covenant of peace or wholeness (cf. 54:10) when the Servant becomes peace/*shalom* for her (cf. 53:5).

In anticipation of this wholeness (peace) Zion is told to arise and shine. The future glory of Zion is so certain (although it

is centuries away from accomplishment by the Messiah) Isaiah speaks of it as if it had already come. The remnant of Judah will be prostrated in exile along with the unbelievers of the nation. It will be a temptation for the remnant to despair and give up hope that God will ever keep His promises made to their forefathers (Abraham, Jacob, Moses, David). But Isaiah says, "Stand up, stand fast in your witness as those who believe God will keep His covenant. Let your messianic light shine, for God has promised, and it will come to pass!"

The "light" which comes upon Zion is the "glory" of Jehovah. That cannot be anything less than the Messiah. Christ was the effulgence of the glory of God and bore the very image of His substance (cf. Heb. 1:3). Jesus was the Word become flesh and men beheld His glory, glory as the only begotten from the Father (cf. Jn. 1:14). The Word was the life and the light of men (Jn. 1:4). The Hebrew word *kevod* is translated *glory*. The fundamental root meaning is probably *weight* or *heaviness*, conveying the idea of some external, physical manifestation of dignity or preeminence of majesty. But the word as it is most widely used means, "the exhibition of the *excellence* of the subject to which it is ascribed." In other words, *character* is the chief element of glory. Concerning God it is the display of His divine attributes and perfections of righteousness, power, truthfulness, faithfulness, mercifulness, justice, compassion, love, etc. Some of the *glory* of God may be seen in a limited way in nature (cf. Rom. 1:18-23; Acts 14:15-18, etc.).

Zion is to have the excellence of the character of Jehovah "rise" upon her. The glory of God is to be imputed to Zion through the Servant and made available for appropriation through the New Covenant. Zion will not earn His glory. The Servant comes to earn God's glory for Zion. Zion simply receives it by exercising faith through covenant conditions.

She is to reflect His glory. Darkness covers the earth. All nations (including Israel) fall short of the glory of God (cf. Rom. 3:9-26; esp. 3:23). But the people who walk in darkness will see a great light (cf. our comments 9:1-7). The Light

of the World came to Zion and made her a kingdom of light (cf. Jn. 8:12-20; 12:46; Eph. 5:8; Col. 1:12-13; I Thess. 5:5; I Pet. 2:9; Rev. 2-3). The letters of the apostle Paul to churches predominantly Gentile confirm the prediction of Isaiah 60:3 that "nations shall come to thy (Zion's) light." Great and powerful rulers and men of reknown were attracted to Zion's glory (see comments 49:7).

The Hebrew word *'amanah* is translated *carried* but means more literally, a *foster-father* or *foster-nurse* who has a child in safe keeping. What it means in verse four is that the Gentiles shall bring children safely to Zion (cf. comments on 49:22-23). Zion is exhorted to look even now in faith down through the centuries from Isaiah's day to the messianic glory and behold Gentiles coming to her from all directions of the earth. This vision compares to the one given the seven churches of Asia Minor by the apostle John when he recorded the spectacle of the redeemed "which no man could number" from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and tongues standing before the throne (Rev. 7:9).

The Hebrew word *nahare* is translated *radiant* in verse five. It is from a root which means *to flow, to run*. Zion's reaction to the Gentiles coming to her for the glory of Jehovah which she has will be that of effervescent joy. She will *radiate* a bubbling excitement because she sees the promises of God being fulfilled that "in her seed shall all the nations be blessed." The word *phakhad* means *to tremble with joy* and is thus translated *thrill*. The picture Isaiah paints of Zion is of the messianic age when she has realized she has become the instrument of God for the salvation of the world and is one of excitement. Zion's heart trembles, swells, pumps and jumps with excitement as she realizes she is engaged in divine, eternal, cosmic redemptive history as a colaborer of Almighty God (cf. Acts 11:18; 15:3; 19:10, etc.). Zion is caused to tremble with joy because she sees that there are Gentiles who are precious in character and that there are Gentiles worthy of becoming jewels in the crown of a Jewish apostle (cf. Phil. 4:1; I Thess. 2:19). The "abundance of the sea" is the wealth of the islands and

coastlands (Gentile territories). What is the wealth of a nation? It is its people, especially regenerated, redeemed people. These are the people who produce goodness, truth and beauty in any nation or society. These are the people who serve humanity without selfish motives. Zion sees that she possesses that which is the wealth of the world after all—people being conformed to the image of Christ.

v. 6-7 LAUDATION: As Keil and Delitzsch point out: "The prophet, indeed cannot describe even what belongs to the New Testament in any other than Old Testament colors, because he is still within the Old Testament limits." In other words, Isaiah is depicting the spiritual prosperity of New Testament Zion (the church) in terminology of his own times. The picture Isaiah draws is that of multitudes of people from the farthest reaches of civilization uniting in praise and honor to Jehovah. Midian was a son of Abraham from Keturah (Gen. 25:1-6) and Ephah was a son of Midian. Midian and his descendants claimed the land east of the Jordan river and the Dead Sea, southward through the Akabah and including the southern and eastern parts of the peninsula of Sinai. Sheba was the oldest son of Jokshan (Jokshan was also a son of Abraham by Keturah). His descendants probably became what is called the kingdom of Sheba or the Sabeans. The Queen of Sheba who visited Solomon was from this people. These far distant peoples shall contribute their wealth to Zion and they shall come to Zion and proclaim the praises of Jehovah. Kedar was the second son of Ishmael (a son of Abraham by Hagar, the handmaiden of Sarah), (cf. Gen. 25:13), whose descendants lived in the desert between Syria and Mesopotamia. Nebaioth is mentioned always in connection with Kedar or the descendants of Ishmael (Gen. 25:13; 28:9; I Chron. 1:29) and is regarded by most as identical with the Nabataeans. It is interesting to note that all these are descendants of Abraham, but alien to the original covenant which was administered exclusively through the only son of Abraham by Sarah—Isaac. Yet, when the promise was given to Abraham, before Isaac's birth, it included blessedness to "all nations" through that "singular" seed (cf. Gal. 3:16).

These Gentiles are going to be acceptable! Their offerings (worship) will be acceptable and their ministry will be acceptable. As Young says, "The picture here given is that of Gentiles converted to Christ who bring all that they have and devote it to His service."

These desert nomads (Midian, Ephah, Sheba, Kedar, Nabataeans) were all enemies of the Jews for centuries. They are even today, racial, geographical and political enemies. The only way these people could ever become united in praising Jehovah and be accepted as worshippers and ministers of Jehovah is through the reconciliation that is in Christ Jesus (cf. Eph. 2:11-22; II Cor. 5:16-21, etc.).

These verses indicate that Jehovah is going to send His "Light" (the Messiah) to glorify Zion and make available to her the wealth of the world. In other words God is going to demonstrate, once and for all, that His redemptive people (the church) are the focal point of the cosmos. Everything in His creation is to glorify Zion. Sooner or later, ultimately, inevitably God will use everything He has created to serve for the glorification of the redeemed. The apostle Paul said as much in I Cor. 3:21-22: "... all things are yours . . . whether . . . the world or life or death or the present or the future . . . all are yours." Everything that is good and eternal and abiding of God's is the birthright of His Son, and Christians are joint heirs with Him. The "house" of God is going to be made more beautiful than it has ever been when He adorns it with the "wealth" of the nations (Gentiles beautiful in character) (see comments 56:7).

## QUIZ

1. Can you trace the logical progression of Isaiah's book and include this section?
2. Why does Isaiah see a necessity to exhort his people to "Arise" and "shine"?
3. What is the "light" or "glory" that is to come upon Zion?

4. What will be Zion's reaction to "nations" coming to her light?
5. What is the wealth of the nations?
6. What would be necessary for the nations listed in verse six-seven to unite with Zion in praising the Lord.

## 2. GAIN

TEXT: 60:8-14

- 8 Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?
- 9 Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, for the name of Jehovah thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee.
- 10 And foreigners shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee: for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favor have I had mercy on thee.
- 11 Thy gates also shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto thee the wealth of the nations, and their kings led captive.
- 12 For that nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted.
- 13 The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir-tree, 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 And the sons of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee The city of Jehovah, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel.



## QUERIES

- a. What are the "clouds" and "doves" of verse eight?
- b. How would it be possible for "foreigners" to build Zion's walls?
- c. How would the nation that did not serve Zion perish?

## PARAPHRASE

There are shadowy forms on the prophetic horizon drifting inexorably in our direction; they are like homing pigeons or doves going straight for their nests. Who are they: They are ships coming from all over the world bringing all those Gentile sons of Zion who have been waiting so long in darkness to find her. These ships of the prophetic future are bringing the real wealth of the world to Zion. They have been attracted to Zion because God has made her beautiful by giving her His redemptive glory and they want to be made a part of that beauty also. Yes, Gentiles are going to be participants in forming the future Zion; Gentiles will be co-laborers and fellow-citizens of that messianic city. Even some of the rulers of Gentile peoples will become citizens and serve the new Zion. I, Jehovah, am about to destroy the present city of Jerusalem, but I will in mercy also restore a remnant and through them eventually build the everlasting Zion. Access to the new Zion will be open as long as there are people deciding they want to take up citizenship. Nations from the ends of the earth will contribute their best and greatest resources to the new Zion; people great and small shall become willing captives of this glorious city. Those peoples and individuals who do not willingly surrender to Zion will perish. The attitude of many peoples toward you Zion, My dwelling place, will be reverence and a desire to give the best of their possessions to beautify you. Those who have been Zion's enemies will become willing citizens, humbling themselves and believing that what Jehovah has said about her belonging to Him is true. They shall willingly confess that you are Mine, that I dwell in You and that I am God.

## COMMENTS

v. 8-12 CITIZENS: Zion now "arisen" and awake to what God has been trying to communicate through the prophet begins to see "dimly" certain shadowy cloud-like forms of the prophetic ingathering of the world to herself. Isaiah has repeated and repeated the message. Like the inexorable movement of clouds and the magnet-like homing of doves the prophet's visions of masses of humanity coming to Zion has finally caught on in the mind of the remnant. So they ask, "Who are these . . .?" The answer comes back immediately, "They are the isles!" (see comments on 11:11; 20:6; 23:2, 6; 40:15; 41:2, 5; 42:4, 10, 12; 49:1; 51:5). *Tarshish* was the great-grandson of Noah (Gen. 10:4), and considered to be the progenitor of a people along the western coastlands and islands of the Mediterranean. *Tarshish* is also conjecturally believed to be a form of the name of Tartessus, an ancient city located on the southern or eastern coast of Spain (see comments, *Minor Prophets*, Jonah 1:3, pg. 225, Butler, College Press). *Tarshish* probably represents the farthest known reaches of traveled or commercialized civilization of that age. These people so long in darkness waited for Jehovah to manifest Himself and reveal a way back to His presence (cf. 42:4). The prophet has repeatedly predicted that some day their waiting will be over. When that day comes, they will fly inexorably and directly to God. The reason given for that flight is that Jehovah will have "glorified" Zion. That is, of course, the redemptive work of the Servant and the New Covenant available to all peoples.

Foreigners "building the walls" of Zion is definitely a messianic figure of speech (cf. Amos 9:11-12 with Acts 15:16-17; see also Jer. 31:4-6 and attendant context; Jer. 33:7-26; Micah 7:11-17; Isa. 19:16-25). Paul wrote to the Gentiles in Ephesus that they were a part of the New dwelling place of God (Eph. 2:11-22). In the New Zion all members will be "ministers"—even Gentiles. There will be no special priesthood—all members of the New Covenant will be a holy priesthood (cf. I Pet. 2:5, 9; Heb. 10:19ff). All who come to New Zion (Heb. 12:22-24) will

offer sacrifices as ministers and priests (cf. Heb. 13:15-16). God, in His wrath against the wickedness of Old Zion, destroyed it (not only in the Babylonian exile, but centuries later [forever] when Old Zion rejected its Messiah [70 A.D.]). But God is going to build a New Zion by grace (favor) because the Messiah came and earned God's grace for man. The Messiah's merited favor will be made available not only to the Jew but to the Gentile also. Gentiles will be included in the New "building."

Access to New Zion will be constant. Access to New Zion will be for everyone who wishes it. The Holy Spirit, through His Word, and the Bride (the church—New Zion) say "Come" to all who will (cf. Rev. 22:17). Of course, the invitation will not always be offered for men to become citizens of the New Zion. But those who will not willingly enter Zion in this life would not enter it in the next life either (cf. Lk. 16:29-31). This is really the point of Isaiah's statement that Zion's gates are open continually; the idea is ready access for all who wish. There shall be no danger to those in New Zion that the gates will have to be shut and barred. There will be continual freedom and peace in New Zion. The members of Zion will be continually "bringing in the sheaves" (the wealth of the nations).

One very forceful reason for concluding the Zion here is New Zion (the church) is that all who "will not serve" her shall "perish." As Young puts it, "It is obvious that this prophecy does not fit the time of the restoration from exile . . . What nations at that time perished because they did not serve the empirical Zion?" There have been nations through the centuries, and there are nations now, not only refusing to serve literal Zion but making her serve them and they have not perished. Literal Zion as Jehovah's dwelling place perished in 70 A.D. (cf. Mt. 24:37-39; Lk. 13:34-35; 19:41-44). The Hebrew word *kharav* is translated *wasted* and means basically *destroyed by drying up*. What tragic waste all the potential resources, and wealth of those nations and peoples who will not surrender to the New Zion!

v. 13-14 COMELINESS: The place of God's dwelling (New

Zion) will be exalted above all that is on the earth—both of nature and men. It is going to be made glorious and preeminent. Everything in creation will be made available to glorify her (art, music, learning, literature, thoughts, emotions). The greatest powers opposing her will be humbled (cf. Matt. 16:18; Col. 1:15-20; 2:14-15; Heb. 2:5-18). Many of the powerful forces and peoples opposing Zion will become converts to her. Formerly they ridiculed and scoffed at her—but they will penitently call her what she very evidently is: The (only) city of Jehovah, The Zion (Citadel or Sanctuary) of the Holy One of Israel. In Old Testament times it appeared Zion could be despoiled, humbled and obliterated by war, seige and death. But Zion's Eternal King came (the Messiah) in a space-time historical event and conquered death forever! This is the message of the book of Revelation. The Lamb has come and conquered death by resurrection and is now worthy to reveal (open the scroll) that New Zion (the church) is unconquerable! New Zion is the citadel of eternal safety.

### QUIZ

1. Why does Zion see "clouds" and "doves" (verse eight)?
2. How do the "isles" bring their sons to Zion?
3. Why do we say "foreigners building" Zion's walls is a messianic term?
4. What is the meaning of the continual "opening" of Zion's gates?
5. How does verse 12 help determine this is a messianic passage?
6. Why will Zion's enemies bow down to her?

### 3. GOODNESS

TEXT: 60:15-22

- 15 Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man passed through thee, I will make thee an eternal

excellency, a joy of many generations.

- 16 Thou shalt also suck the milk of the nations, and shalt suck the breast of kings; and thou shalt know that I, Jehovah, am thy Saviour, and thy Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.
- 17 For brass I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver, and for wood brass, and for stones iron. I will also make thy officers peace, and thine executors righteousness.
- 18 Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, desolation nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise.
- 19 The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but Jehovah will be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory,
- 20 Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for Jehovah will be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy morning shall be ended.
- 21 Thy people also shall be all righteous; they shall inherit the land forever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified.
- 22 The little one shall become a thousand, and the small one a strong nation: I, Jehovah, will hasten it in its time.

### QUERIES

- a. What does Isaiah mean by Zion sucking "the milk of the nations"?
- b. Why would Zion need only Jehovah for light?
- c. How does the "little one" become a "thousand"?

### PARAPHRASE

Zion, you have been laughed at and scoffed at by the world because it never believed what you proclaimed about your God. You have also been despised for your hypocrisy and profligacy. Although you have been mocked and shunned by the world,

I am going to make you so exalted and majestic for all eternity you will be an object of rejoicing for millions. You shall be fed and grow into beautiful maidenhood from the life and vitality that comes from the nations of the world. Kings and great leaders of these nations shall become part of that food that shall be given you. When this comes to pass you will compare the experience with the predictions I have made in My Word and you will know that I, the God of the Jews, am the only God there is! Only the best will be good enough for you Zion. You will be built with that which is superior and precious instead of that which is inferior. Failing, faltering human rulers will no longer be needed in Zion because I will put Peace and Righteousness upon her throne. There will be no more violence in her midst. Desolation and destruction will be banished from within Zion. My Salvation and My Praise will protect her like walls around a city. She will no longer be dependent upon mere reflections of My Glory for her light, but she shall have the ultimate origin and source of all Light, My Person, illuminating her forever. There will never again be sadness or grief with Zion. Her citizens will all be made righteous and they shall all be given the eternal inheritance I promised them and this will cause all the world to see My glory. From a small and insignificant remnant Zion shall grow into an innumerable multitude of people forming a universal kingdom. I, Jehovah, will accomplish this according to My time schedule of the world's history.

### COMMENTS

v. 15-17 RICHES: The time came when the "glorious land" (Palestine) and the "holy" city (Jerusalem) was an object of ridicule and mockery. After Assyrian invasion of Israel in 722 B.C. and the deportation of the ten northern tribes (and the immigration of foreigners into the unoccupied territory) came the Babylonian invasion of Judah (606-586 B.C.). Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the Temple, tore down most of Jerusalem's

walls and took the people back to Babylon as prisoners of war. The land of Palestine became inhabited by a nomadic people from the deserts and mostly pagan. The beautiful homes and luxuriant vineyards and productive farms of the Jews were allowed to deteriorate. The city of Jerusalem remained in a semi-ruined state until 70 years later when Nehemiah received word that it was in ruins (Neh. 1:1-4), and got permission to return and rebuild it. For two generations caravans, travelers and soldiers passed by Palestine and by the city of Jerusalem, wagging their heads and "hissing" (whistling) at the devastation. This was what God predicted (cf. Jer. 18:16; 19:8; 25:9, 18; 29:18; Lamentations 2:15-16; Micah 6:16). The world not only hissed at the land of Palestine, it also mocked the Jewish people. They had (until idolatry became so prevalent) claimed their God, Jehovah, was the only true God and that He was all-powerful. They also claimed He was righteous and holy. But they had become pagan themselves and were conquered by those they held in contempt as ignorant heathen. Suddenly they were mocked and shunned and despised. This was precisely predicted (Deut. 28:15-46, esp. 28:37).

From these despicable depths, however, God promises to rescue a remnant and form a New Zion which He will exalt and magnify eternally. The Hebrew word *ge'on* is translated *excellency*; it means *to grow up, to increase, to be lifted, exalted, majestic*. The Lord is going to make the New Zion majestic and an object of rejoicing for succeeding generations (millions of people).

The interesting phrase in verse 16, "Thou shalt also suck the milk of the nations," is a graphic figure of speech to portray the New Zion as a hungry nursing child feeding on the choicest products of the nations of the whole world. This has already been commented on in 60:11. There have been the Augustines, Justin Martyrs, Pascals, Gladstones, Lincolns, Agassizes, Miltons, Handels, *ad infinitum*, "the milk of the nations" which have sustained Zion. There have been the millions and millions of "little" people, the "salt of the earth" people, the real jewels of each generation and nationality which have also

come to Zion. The fact that great and small, rich and poor, literate and illiterate, weak and powerful may come together in a kingdom of peace redounds to the glory and praise of Jehovah who created Zion. The church itself is undeniable, empirical evidence of the existence of God. Verse 17 is a continuation of the idea that God is going to build New Zion from only the best of everything. There will be no inferior materials in building His New dwelling place (the church). There will be no more need for human rulers in New Zion (human rulers were oppressive and inferior) because she shall be ruled by Peace (see comments on 59:8 for "peace") and by Righteousness. In the church of Christ there are no positions of human rulership—only servanthood. Elders, deacons and evangelists are not rulers—they are slaves, ruled over by the Prince of Peace and the King of Righteousness. The Hebrew word *Jerusalem* means *righteousness-peace*.

v. 18-22 **RIGHTEOUSNESS:** As important to the goodness Zion is to have as riches, is righteousness. Citizens of New Zion are not belligerent; they do not retaliate (they leave justice to be done by the proper authority); they do not war and fight against one another (Mt. 5:7, 9; Mt. 5:21-26; 38-42; I Cor. 6:1-8; Eph. 5:25-28; James 4:1-12; I Pet. 2:13-25, etc.). Citizens of New Zion have conformed their thinking and acting to the image of God's Son, Jesus Christ, and there is no violence in Zion. The New Zion is the only Zion of which this can be said. It certainly cannot apply to any literal, physical Zion or Jerusalem! The reason there is no violence in New Zion is that she is walled about by Salvation and Praise. Jesus pointed out to some men in His day that the kingdom of God had suffered a history of violent men wanting to take God's kingdom from Him and use it for their own violent purposes (cf. Mt. 11:7-15), but (the inference is) His coming to establish His rule as King would stop all that.

Some commentators think verses 19-20 refer to the heavenly-consummation when heaven and earth shall have passed away and there is no more sun or moon (cf. Rev. 21:23; 22:5). Isaiah does not actually state here that the sun and moon will be



done away, but merely that it is no longer to give light to Zion by day. It is possible that this is merely a figure to predict that all light (mental and spiritual illumination) except Divine Light will be excluded from the New Zion. The *menorah* (lamp-stand) in the Tabernacle in which only that oil made according to Divine formula could be burned typified the fact that in the Lord's dwelling place only Divine Light was to shine. Instructions concerning the Tabernacle also prohibited the Jews from allowing sunlight, moonlight or any other light to shine inside the tent. Jesus was the Light (Jn. 1:4; 8:12; 9:5; 12:46). The gospel is the Light (Acts 26:23; II Cor. 4:4; Eph. 5:8; I Thess. 5:5; I Pet. 2:9; II Pet. 1:19; I Jn. 1:5, 7; 2:9, etc.). Malachi predicts the "sun of righteousness shall rise, with healing in its wings" (Mal. 4:2) which we believe to be a messianic prophecy. God's city will be changed from a physical, geographical Zion which has a physical sun to a spiritual, universal Zion which will have a spiritual Light.

Isaiah was directed to "comfort" Israel with the prediction that her "warfare is ended" (cf. Isa. 40:1ff, see comments there). Chapters 60-66 are amplifications of that prediction. When New Zion is created, the days of mourning for God's people will be over (cf. comments Isa. 25:6-9).

The crowning characteristic of New Zion will be the righteousness of her citizens. This is possible only because God has provided a satisfactory atonement and imputed His righteousness to Zion's citizenry (cf. comments 53:11). Zion's citizens, declared righteous, must by righteous living be faithful to their calling, however, or they will not remain citizens. In other words, there is an imputed righteousness and a lived righteousness. The one who is justified and saved will do righteousness (cf. I Jn. 3:4-10). Anyone born of God cannot go on sinning (deliberately). This is the correct understanding of the present tense Greek verb *poiei* in I John 3:9, and the present tense participle *poion* in I John 3:8. Present tense in Greek means *continuing action*. Citizens of Zion hunger and thirst after righteousness. As John says, ". . . let no one deceive you . . . the one continuing to do righteousness is righteous . . . the

one continuing to do sin is of the devil . . .” Ultimately, of course, we will be saved forever by God’s imputed righteousness for we sin even after accepting by faith the grace of God (I Jn. 1:8; 2:1-2 was written to Christians). But if we repent (change our minds) and determine not to continue in a particular sin but rather keep His commandments, we are faithful citizens of Zion and we shall receive our inheritance. We are the human offspring of our earthly parents by their grace, so to speak, and we remain in the grace of our mothers and fathers only so long as we choose to be faithful to them. We are joined to our earthly spouse by his or her grace, but we remain in the love of that grace only so long as we are faithful.

When God’s people are faithful and live righteously, God is glorified. And Zion’s population is increased when God is glorified. The phrase “The little one shall become a thousand . . .” apparently means that the Lord will take the foolish, weak, and despised and confound the wise and powerful (cf. I Cor. 1:18-31). God will take what the world says can never become anything and give it increase and glory (cf. Micah 5:2); even Bethlehem of Ephrathah small among the claims of Judah will produce the Messiah, Jehovah will not follow man’s timetable. He has His own seasons and times in His great redemptive work (cf. Daniel 9:20-27, see our comments there, College Press). The Lord fixes all times and seasons in His own authority (cf. Acts 1:6-7; Dan. 2:20-23). And the Lord will create New Zion “in its time.” Its time was, of course, in the days of the kings of the fourth kingdom (cf. Dan. 2:44); the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1ff). The creative work of Zion’s incarnate King began on a Sunday, as He mounted a colt, the foal of an ass, and rode toward physical Zion declaring Himself the prophesied King of Zechariah 9:1-10 coming to establish spiritual Zion.

### QUIZ

1. When was Jerusalem “hated”?
2. What does the term “excellency” mean?

3. What is the "milk of nations"?
4. Which Zion would experience the cessation of violence?
5. Are verses 19-20 speaking literally or figuratively?
6. What are the two aspects of righteousness the people of Zion shall have?
7. What was the time Jehovah chose to create New Zion?

## B. REJOICING OF ZION, CHAPTER 61

### 1. FREEDOM

TEXT: 61:1-4

- 1 The Spirit of the Lord Jehovah is upon me; because Jehovah hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;
- 2 to proclaim the year of Jehovah's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;
- 3 to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them a garland 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 Jehovah, that he may be glorified.
- 4 And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations.

### QUERIES

- a. Who is "me" in verse one?
- b. What is the "year of Jehovah's favor"?
- c. How shall the "desolations of many generations" be rebuilt?