

Liberty cannot survive in a vacuum. Jesus illustrated this with His parable of the unclean spirit who returns to his house to find it swept and put in order, but empty, and goes and gets seven other spirits more evil than himself and re-occupies the liberated, but empty, dwelling place!

CHRIST HAS LIBERATED US *for* SERVICE. HE HAS LIBERATED US TO LIBERATE OTHERS. LIBERTY IS NOT JUST TO ENJOY . . . IT IS TO USE! AND TO USE FOR HIS GLORY! LIBERTY IS NOT SELF-INDULGENCE, BUT SERVICE.

A famous poet once said, "I have on my table a violin string. It is free. I twist one end of it and it responds. It is free. But it is not free to do what a violin string is supposed to do—to produce beautiful music. So I take it, fix it in my violin and tighten it until it is taut. Only then is it *free* to be a violin string."

Each of us is free, if we choose, to be an untightened, unhampered piece of violin string and flop around or lie around and produce nothing. Or we are free, if we choose, to be tightened, constrained and tuned by the will of the Master and only then are we *free* to be what He can make us and produce what we were made to produce.

C. REGENERATION OF ZION, CHAPTER 62

1. NEW NAME

TEXT: 62:1-5

- 1 For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her righteousness go forth as brightness, and her salvation as a lamp that burneth.
- 2 And the nations shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory; and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of Jehovah shall name.
- 3 Thou shalt also be a crown of beauty in the hand of Jehovah

and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.

- 4 Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzi-bah, and thy land Beulah; for Jehovah delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married.
- 5 For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee; and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.

QUERIES

- a. How could Zion's salvation be like a burning lamp?
- b. How is Zion to be a "crown" in the hand of Jehovah?
- c. What is "Hephzi-bah"?

PARAPHRASE

For the sake of Zion, I dare not remain silent. For the sake of My holy city, I dare not remain inactive. It has come time for Me to act on her behalf again so that men may not think I have become powerless or defaulted on My promises toward her. I will act historically and supernaturally so that what I do toward her salvation will be as unmistakable as the bright sunshine and a burning lamp. What I am going to do in justification of My people will be so radically different from anything I have ever done before these people will have to be called by a new name, which comes directly from the mouth of God. When God totally remakes His people they will be so glorious they will sparkle and dazzle in God's hand like a jewel-covered diadem. My people will no longer be called Forsaken or Desolate; they shall be called God Is Pleased With Her and Happily Married, because Jehovah will be pleased with her and He will marry her. Just like a young man eagerly takes possession of a virgin when he marries her, so God's people will be eagerly possessed by Him. Just as a groom is delighted with his bride, so God will delight in His people.

COMMENTS

v. 1-3 APPEARANCE: Jehovah dare not remain *khashah* ("silent") or *shakat* ("inactive") any longer in relationship to Zion. Apparently this "inactivity" and "silence" toward Zion has to do with the long period between the O.T. and the N.T. when there was no God-sent prophet and no specific supernatural action from Him. Of course, God providentially sustained Israel during the intertestamental period. Daniel predicted that He would (Dan. ch. 10-12). But Jehovah dare not allow this period of Jewish "indignation" go on longer lest His enemies think He has no more concern for them.

So Jehovah will not rest again until He has made Zion so righteous her splendor and glory will be as blindingly evident as the sun in the heavens or a lamp shining in pitch darkness.

What God is going to do in glorifying Zion, the whole world shall see. And it shall be so totally different from what Zion has been before she shall have to be called by a new name. Everything about her will be new; old terminology will be inadequate. This wholly *new* Zion is predicted by other prophets (Jer. 3:15-17; 33:16; Ezek. 48:35). This prophecy was fulfilled when God's New Covenant people began to be called "Christians" (cf. Acts 11:26). It was fitting that those "married" to Christ should be called "Christians" (cf. Jn. 3:31-36; Eph. 5:21-33; Rev. 19:6-8; 21:2; 22:17, etc.). The Hebrew word *shem* is the word for *name*. It means literally, *a mark, fame, reputation, monument*. God was going to do something so radical to Zion she would henceforth be distinguished by a completely new *mark!* She would have a "new" commandment and live by a "new" love (Jn. 13:34-35). Of course, there were many *names* by which New Covenant believers were known; e.g., "the way" (Acts 24:14), "saints" (I Cor. 1:2), "brethren" (Gal. 1:2), "church of God" (I Cor. 1:1-2) and others.

Notice, the crown of beauty is not on the head of Jehovah, but in His hand. Zion, the church, is a work of His hands and He now beholds the work which contributes to the glory that is already His. The "woman" (Rev. 12:1-2) which we take to

represent the covenant people of God (in both Old and New Testaments) has a crown upon her head. The church is the "crowning" accomplishment of God through the redemption of the Son. Recreation glorifies God even more than creation!

v. 4-5 APPELLATION: The point of the name-change appears to be focused on the changed relationship of God toward His people. He will no longer call them *'ezuvah* (Forsaken) or *shemamah* (Desolate). God will eventually call His people *khephzi-bah* (My Delight is in Her) and *be'ulah* (Married). These name-changes may have initial application to God's redemption of Judah from Babylonian captivity. However, their ultimate goal is the changed relationship in the New Zion (the messianic kingdom-church). One is reminded here of Hosea's prophecy of changed relationships and changed names (Hos. 1:8—2:1; 2:14-23). Hosea's prediction definitely found its fulfillment in the New Covenant church (cf. Rom. 9:25-26; I Pet. 2:10). It may be of interest to know that the Hebrew word *be'ulah* (married) comes from the root word *ba'al* which means, *to have dominion, to be lord over, to possess*.

The emphasis on marriage as descriptive of the new relationship stresses the fact that God's concern for His people is not one of mere duty; it is deeper than that—it is love. Just as a young man eagerly possesses (marries) his bride, so Jehovah will join Himself intimately to His people. He makes a covenant of love with His bride (the church) to protect her, sustain her, live with her and give her the honor of His name. He will lavish upon her the best of everything He has—even His own Son to atone for her sins.

QUIZ

1. Why must Jehovah not remain silent any longer about Zion?
2. When was Jehovah silent toward Zion?
3. Why was it necessary to rename Zion?
4. What is the probable fulfillment of the "new name"?

5. How do we know the name-changing refers to the messianic kingdom?
6. Why illustrate God's relationship to New Zion as a marriage?

2. NEW NOURISHMENT

TEXT: 62:6-9

- 6 I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem; they shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that are Jehovah's remembrancers, take ye no rest.
- 7 and give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.
- 8 Jehovah hath sworn by his right hand, and by the arm of his strength, Surely I will no more give thy grain to be food for thine enemies; and foreigners shall not drink thy new wine, for which thou hast labored:
- 9 but they that have garnered it shall eat it, and praise Jehovah; and they that have gathered it shall drink it in the courts of my sanctuary.

QUERIES

- a. What is a "remembrancer"?
- b. Why bring up the subject of grain and wine?

PARAPHRASE

I will set sentries all around you, O City of Righteousness and Peace; they will be constantly vigilant crying out warnings and directions. I will also establish intercessors within you, Zion, and instruct them that they are to continually offer supplications and intercessions and prayers of thanksgiving for your establishment throughout the earth. Jehovah has sworn by His own Self, the most powerful oath there is, saying, I will not permit your enemies to plunder you and take away from you what is rightfully yours anymore. What is yours by right of inheritance you shall have and enjoy because you shall be forever in My presence.

COMMENTS

v. 6-7 PROTECTION: Watchmen were sentinels standing watch upon the tops of walls and in watch-towers of ancient cities to cry out warning at the approach of the enemy. The term is also used figuratively to denote men especially commissioned by God to preach and proclaim the Law of God to His people (cf. Ezek. 3:17; 33:1-9; Isa. 56:10, etc.). God promises that the "watchmen" in New Zion will be alert, constant and adept. They will not be like the watchmen of Isaiah's day, satiated, filled with wine, loving to lie down and slumber (56:10). The watchmen of New Zion will declare the whole counsel of God, night and day, with tears (cf. Acts 20:17-35). Shepherds of the flock will be always on guard protecting against "greivous wolves" (false teachers and false doctrines). Faithful ministers of the gospel and elders and teachers of the church are her watchmen. They can never afford the false luxury of holding their peace for Zion's enemy, like a roaring lion, seeks whom he may devour. Not only shall Zion have faithful watchmen, she shall also have persistent "remembrancers." The Hebrew word *hammazkirim* is literally, *those who remind*. The idea is that New Zion will have those who are constant in prayer, supplicating God on her behalf. Jesus taught constant, persistent prayer as a characteristic of the citizen of the messianic kingdom (cf. Lk. 11:5-14; 18:1-8). The point of Jesus' parables is not that we can wear God down until He gives in because we have prayed so long and so eloquently, but that if an exasperated friend or a grouchy old judge will answer the pleading of someone in need, *how much more* will our Father who is really *anxious to help*, answer us speedily?! The first century church was in constant prayer because its leaders (apostles, elders, evangelists) were men of constant prayer (I Thess. 5:16-18).

The main thing to be "remembered" and that which is to be kept constantly before God in prayer is the "establishment" of New Jerusalem as a praise in the earth—evangelism. Jesus instructed His disciples to pray for laborers for the harvest

(cf. Mt. 9:37-38; Lk. 10:21; Jn. 4:35, etc.). Going into all the world to make disciples was our Lord's parting words to the church (Mt. 28:18-20; Lk. 24:44-53; Acts 1:8). Prayer for the evangelization of the world must be constantly upon the heart and lips of New Zion.

v. 8-9 PROVISION: Jehovah has allowed Jerusalem's enemies to plunder the land. Specifically Assyria and Babylon invaded Palestine and looted harvest field and city shops. Even the Temple was ravaged by Babylon and its vessels carried off. Israel's inheritance was wrested from her. But it shall not be so with New Zion. Her inheritance is incorruptible and eternal—one that does not fade away (I Pet. 1:3-5). Nothing in the seen or unseen world can separate New Zion from her inheritance (Rom. 8:31-39). Ancient Zion's glory was transient but New Zion's is eternal (cf. II Cor. 4:16—5:5). Once again Isaiah puts New Zion's future glory in terminology comprehensible to ancient Zion (agricultural terms).

New Zion will enjoy the constant presence of the Lord. She "eats and drinks" at the Lord's Table. She has been invited to a feast (see Isa. 25:6-12 and Special Study, *RSVP, Come To the Feast*).

QUIZ

1. Who are the watchmen in New Zion?
2. What is their function?
3. What should New Zion be constantly in prayer for?
4. Why can New Zion's inheritance not be plundered?

3. NEW NATURE

TEXT: 62:10-12

10 Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones;

lift up an ensign for the peoples.

- 11 Behold, Jehovah hath proclaimed unto the end of the earth,
Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh;
behold his reward is with him, and his recompense before
him.
- 12 And they shall call them The holy people, The redeemed of
Jehovah: and thou shalt be called Sought out, A city not
forsaken.

QUERIES

- a. What is an "ensign"?
- b. When were they called "The holy people"?

PARAPHRASE

Zion you must get out of the middle of heathenism, separate yourself once and for all from such a life, and build your high-way toward the City of God as He is preparing it for you. Your mission is to become, as it were, a flag or signal toward which people from all over the earth may be drawn to find God. Listen, this is what Jehovah has announced to the whole world; Zion, your salvation is surely coming, and all the blessings and judgments promised in connection with that salvation are coming also. When this great salvation comes Zion's citizens will be acknowledged as holy, separated unto the Holy God, purchased by Jehovah. Zion will at last be what she was intended to be, Sought Out, A City Not Forsaken.

COMMENTS

v. 10-11 SEPARATED: The admonition to Judah here is that she prepare to separate herself from paganism in order that she may become the remnant through which Jehovah will build

New Zion (the redeemed messianic church). Judah will soon go into captivity. There she will be surrounded by the idolatry and carnality with which she is so enamored in her own land. It will be a great temptation to all of the Jews to compromise the truth of God's revelation and take up with paganism to the extent that when the time comes to return to Palestine and restore the Jewish commonwealth they will all decide to remain in Babylon (see our comments 48:20-22). These verses are similar to 40:3-4 and 57:14.

God had placed the Hebrew people in Palestine so they might be a sign and witness to all the heathen world around them of the Only Righteous, Omnipotent, True God (cf. Ex. 19:5-6; Ezek. 5:5ff). Israel was to be *masas* (*ensign*) or standard, flag, banner, sign, token, by which the world was to be attracted to her God. But she "showed pirate colors"—she demonstrated more paganism than the pagans (Ezek. 5:5ff; Jer. 18:13, etc.).

Now the Lord is calling her back to her divine mission and predicting that there will be a remnant who will choose to fulfill this mission and eventually form New Zion (the church) which will draw people from all nations to her.

Jehovah will accomplish Zion's redemption. He will pay the price. He will conquer her most powerful enemies, sin and death (in the Messiah). But Zion must exercise her will and accept that salvation by faith, repentance and obedience to the covenant terms. Repentance and faith requires an obedient turning away from sin, separating oneself deliberately and willingly from all that God prohibits and living deliberately and willingly what God commands. Covenant terms for New Zion involves obedience in baptism (immersion in water), Acts 2:38; 8:12-13; 8:38-39; 10:47; 16:15; 16:33; 18:8; 22:16; Rom. 6:1-6; Gal. 3:26-27; Col. 2:12; I Pet. 3:21, etc.). Zion is also to announce to the world the proclamation that God has accomplished salvation. With acceptance of God's proffered salvation comes the rewards of all spiritual blessings in the heavenly places (Eph. 1:3; 2:6). With rejection of God's proffered salvation comes the recompense of judgment (cf. II Thess. 1:8-9).

v. 12 SANCTIFIED: When Zion separates itself from paganism and accepts the Lord's salvation, she shall be acknowledged as *holy*. It will be apparent to the whole world that she is dedicated, set-apart, and belongs to the Lord of Glory, author of Life and Righteousness. This is what the church of Christ is for—a testimony of the Holy God. She is to fulfill what God intended for Israel (Ex. 19:6). The world is to acknowledge that members of New Zion consider themselves *purchased* (redeemed) by Almighty God; Zion is to testify that her citizenship is in heaven and that she has no abiding place here—she is a city of sojourners whose destiny is the Eternal Jerusalem where God dwells forever and ever.

QUIZ

1. Why is Zion admonished to "go through the gates"? What gates?
2. What must Zion do concerning the salvation offered by Jehovah?
3. What will the New Zion fulfill that Old Zion did not?

D. RESTLESSNESS OF ZION, CHAPTERS 63 - 64

1. PREDICTED VINDICATION

TEXT: 63:1-9

- 1 Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, marching in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.
- 2 Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winevat?
- 3 I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the peoples there was no man with me: yea, I trod them in mine anger, and