

God Assures His People of their Glorious Future

Let us read the chapter that we will consider today. The prophet wrote these words in the 8th century B.C. But the message had direct application to those returning Jewish people from the Babylonian Exile of the 6th century B.C. But because this is Holy Scripture, even Christian Scripture, this is also God's Word to us. Let us give our attention and reverence to God's Word to us.

The passage addresses God's purpose and commitment to glorify His people in their salvation.

- ¹For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,
and for Jerusalem's sake I will not be quiet,
until her righteousness goes forth as brightness,
and her salvation as a burning torch.
- ²The nations shall see your righteousness,
and all the kings your glory,
and you shall be called by a new name
that the mouth of the LORD will give.
- ³You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD,
and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.
- ⁴You shall no more be termed Forsaken,
and your land shall no more be termed Desolate,
but you shall be called My Delight Is in Her,
and your land Married;
for the LORD delights in you,
and your land shall be married.
- ⁵For as a young man marries a young woman,
so shall your sons marry you,
and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride,
so shall your God rejoice over you.
- ⁶On your walls, O Jerusalem,
I have set watchmen;
all the day and all the night
they shall never be silent.
You who put the LORD in remembrance,
take no rest,
- ⁷and give him no rest
until he establishes Jerusalem
and makes it a praise in the earth.
- ⁸The LORD has sworn by His right hand
and by His mighty arm:
"I will not again give your grain
to be food for your enemies,
and foreigners shall not drink your wine
for which you have labored;
- ⁹but those who garner it shall eat it
and praise the LORD,
and those who gather it shall drink it

in the courts of My sanctuary.”

¹⁰Go through, go through the gates;
prepare the way for the people;
build up, build up the highway;
clear it of stones;
lift up a signal over the peoples.

¹¹Behold, the LORD has proclaimed
to the end of the earth:
Say to the daughter of Zion,
“Behold, your salvation comes;
behold, His reward is with Him,
and His recompense before Him.”

¹²And they shall be called The Holy People,
The Redeemed of the LORD;
and you shall be called Sought Out,
A City Not Forsaken.

Here is an outline that may help us digest the meaning of this passage before us:

1. God’s resolve to bring glory to His people (vs. 1-5)
2. God is to be implored to fulfil His promises to His people (vs. 6-9)
3. God guarantees to accomplish what He has promised (vs. 10-12)

1. God’s resolve to bring glory to His people (vs. 1-5)

The chapter opens with God declaring His resolve to carry out His purpose in bringing salvation to His people. **Verse 1** reads,

*For Zion’s sake I will not keep silent,
and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not be quiet,
until her righteousness goes forth as brightness,
and her salvation as a burning torch.*

In the previous chapters we have read repeatedly of God’s resolve to bring salvation to His people. Let us rehearse the major themes of the chapters of Isaiah that are placed after Isaiah’s Book of Consolation, which were chapters 40 through 55.

Chapter 56 -- A prophecy of Salvation for the Gentiles

Chapter 57 -- A Warning against Corrupt Leaders, False Prophets, and Idolatry

Chapter 58 -- The Lord desires True Righteousness in His People

Chapter 59 -- The Means of God’s Salvation: The Word of God and the Spirit of God

Chapter 60 -- The Future Glory of Zion; the Glory of God in His Church through Jesus Christ

Chapter 61 -- The Messiah Declares His Mission

And now before us is Isaiah 62, in which “**God Assures His People of their Glorious Future.**”

We might initially ask, “Who is speaking in verse 1?” Some have argued it is the prophet Isaiah speaking. But it is best to understand God as addressing His people through His prophet Isaiah. For ultimately it is not the prophet committing to continue to prophecy until God’s promises are fulfilled. It is God Himself assuring His people of His resolve to glorify them in bringing them salvation. He declared:

***For Zion’s sake I will not keep silent,
and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not be quiet,***

God assures His people that He will “will not be quiet”, that is, He will continue to exercise His sovereign authority, executing any and all decrees to the end that He will glorify His people in bringing them salvation.

Here, the people of God are again identified by the emblem of “Zion.” We have before us Hebraic, poetic parallelism. The word, “Zion’s”, in the first line is repeated in the second line as “Jerusalem’s”; they are one and the same. The words, “not keep silent”, in the first line is repeated in the second line as “not be quiet.”

As we have seen before, here again, “Zion”, or “Jerusalem”, is not a physical city, but a spiritual “city of God’s people.” It is the city for which Abraham looked, for “he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God” (Heb. 11:10). And then in Hebrews 11:13ff we read of Abraham and Sarah, “But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.” And then we read later in Hebrews 11:13ff:

¹³These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. ¹⁴For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. ¹⁵And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. (Heb. 11:13-16)

Here God declared that He would not stop, He would not fail,

***until her righteousness goes forth as brightness,
and her salvation as a burning torch.***

Again, we have before us Hebraic poetic parallelism. The first line is a statement that is also expressed in other terms in the second line. Here, “righteousness” in the first line is parallel with “salvation” in the second line. And “brightness” in the first line is parallel with “a burning torch” in the second line. “Righteousness” = “salvation” and “a burning torch” = “a burning torch.”

“Righteousness” in this context speaks of His people as being in a right relationship with God. It speaks of their righteous standing, a righteousness that God grants to them freely by His sovereign grace, which is His salvation.

We had considered earlier that the salvation that God brings His people, Zion, was His bestowing of “glory” upon His people. In an earlier chapter, Isaiah 60, we read of “The Future Glory of Zion; The Glory of God in His Church through Jesus Christ.” Here we have the same idea expressed. God assures His people of their glorious future.

Here God assures His people, apparently in order to counter perhaps their doubts due to the passing of time in which God’s promises had not been experienced. This is always the need of the people of God, to have their faith stirred and rekindled as they wait for the realization of God’s promises.

From a human perspective, God delays His work, seeming to be slow to bring about His promises. His “slowness” may appear to be disinterest or lack of concern, but this is not the case. Here the Lord expressed His great concern for Zion, His chosen people. He will speak and make Himself and His plans

known to them. At the time He spoke she, Zion, was in darkness, in need of salvation. He would speak to her assuring her of His good designs until the light of the glory of salvation dawns upon her, or she shines forth as a bright burning torch in a dark world.

We next read in **verse 2** (as we have read in earlier chapters) of the Gentiles seeing the glory of God's people, Zion, resulting in multitudes of them coming to experience the same salvation.

***²The nations shall see your righteousness,
and all the kings your glory,
and you shall be called by a new name
that the mouth of the LORD will give.***

Then, Gentiles, too, would see the fact that she--Zion, was in right standing with God. She shine forth in her beauty, in the glory of her righteousness before God. The former time of disgrace will soon be over. She now has a reputation, a "new name" for faithfulness/righteousness; one which the Lord Himself would give her. The giving of a name by God indicates possession by Him and her endearment to Him.

God further describes the glory of His people in terms of a beautiful, princess bride. She had once been "forsaken" and "desolate", but now restored and before Him she stands as a beautiful and pure bride. Let us read **verses 3 and 4**:

***³You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD,
and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.
⁴You shall no more be termed Forsaken,
and your land shall no more be termed Desolate,
but you shall be called My Delight Is in Her,
and your land Married;
for the LORD delights in you,
and your land shall be married.***

The words *Forsaken* and *Desolate* describe Zion's condition when she was under God's curse for having transgressed His Law. God had forsaken her and He had destroyed her through the Babylonians in 586 BC. But upon her return where she would encounter the salvation that the Servant (Jesus Christ) brought, the former captivity and the former desolations would be forgotten as the restoration comes to realization. Her sins and the wrath upon her sins are gone and forgotten.

The English Standard Version (ESV) translates two Hebrew words into English that the King James Version (KJV) and the New King James Version (NKJV) transliterated. Below are these two translations, the KJV and the NKJV of Isaiah 62:4. First, the KJV:

Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken;
Neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate:
But thou shalt be called *Hephzibah*, and thy land *Beulah*:
For the LORD delighteth in thee,
And thy land shall be married.

And very similar is the NKJV:

You shall no longer be termed Forsaken,
Nor shall your land any more be termed Desolate;
But you shall be called *Hephzibah*, and your land *Beulah*;

For the LORD delights in you,
And your land shall be married.

The ESV properly translates the two Hebrew words, *Hephzibah* and *Beulah*, into English in the words, “Delight” and “Married.” But at the same time there is something “lost” from our church history heritage. The name “Beulah” was a common name or description of “heaven”, or the new heavens and new earth, that the people of God would one day inhabit. Here are some words of an old hymn that speaks of the heavenly Promised Land as “Beulah Land”:

I’ve reached the land of corn and wine,
And all its riches freely mine;
Here shines undimmed one blissful day,
For all my night has passed away.

(Refrain)

My Savior comes and walks with me,
And sweet communion here have we;
He gently leads me by His hand,
For this is Heaven’s border land.

(Refrain)

A sweet perfume upon the breeze,
Is borne from ever vernal trees,
And flow’rs, that never fading grow
Where streams of life forever flow.

(Refrain)

The zephyrs¹ seem to float to me,
Sweet sounds to Heaven’s melody,
As angels with the white robed throng
Join in the sweet redemption song.

Refrain:

O Beulah Land, sweet Beulah Land,
As on thy highest mount I stand,
I look away across the sea,
Where mansions are prepared for me,
And view the shining glory shore,
My Heav’n, my home forever more!

The point that God is making in verse 4 is that His people are rendered beautiful in their glory by His work of salvation wrought for them and upon them. “Zion” is portrayed as again beautiful and desirable. People are drawn to her and want to be aligned with her. God Himself will want to be associated with her as a bridegroom to His bride. The language of the wedding and newlyweds speak of a new relationship and also the prospect of future unending happiness.

¹ Zepher: a slight, pleasant breeze

Notice also in verse 4 that the “city” of Zion is also described as having possession of the “land.” Again, we read:

⁴You shall no more be termed Forsaken,
and your *land* shall no more be termed Desolate,
but you shall be called My Delight Is in Her,
and your land Married;
for the LORD delights in you,
and your *land* shall be married.

The city, “Zion”, is as an ancient city-state, ruling over an expansive “land.” Just as the city “Zion” came to be understood as an emblem for the redeemed people of God. The “Promised Land” became understood as an emblem for the “new earth” that God would create a new in which His people would dwell for eternity. This is not stated here directly, but later we will read it foretold in Isaiah 65:17-19, in which God declares:

“For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth;
And the former shall not be remembered or come to mind.
¹⁸But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create;
For behold, I create Jerusalem *as* a rejoicing,
And her people a joy.
¹⁹I will rejoice in Jerusalem,
And joy in My people;
The voice of weeping shall no longer be heard in her,
Nor the voice of crying.

Of course we read of this most clearly in the last book of the Bible, the Revelation. Here is John’s vision, which is the same as what we read of here in Isaiah:

Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. ²Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.”

⁵Then He who sat on the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new.” And He said to me, “Write, for these words are true and faithful.”

⁶And He said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. ⁷He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. ⁸But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

⁹Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, “Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb’s wife.” ¹⁰And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, ¹¹having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. ¹²Also she had a great and high wall with twelve gates, and twelve angels at the gates, and names written on them, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: ¹³three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, and three gates on the west.

¹⁴Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. (Rev. 21:1-13)

We return to Isaiah 62 in which we read of the Lord's protection and preservation of His people. In verses 6 through 9 we read that

2. God is to be implored to fulfil His promises to His people (vs. 6-9)

The image is the security of an ancient city with impenetrable walls from which God's watchmen are always alert in order to defend His people. We read in **verse 6**:

***⁶On your walls, O Jerusalem,
I have set watchmen;
all the day and all the night
they shall never be silent.
You who put the LORD in remembrance,
take no rest,***

Watchmen were normally placed on walls to be on constant lookout for danger from approaching enemies. Here, however, it would seem they are on the lookout for God's salvation that was to come to them. They do not remain silent on their watch, which may mean that they are watchmen, who are praying and waiting for the realization of the promises of God.

We then read Isaiah 62:7:

***⁷and give Him no rest
until He establishes Jerusalem
and makes it a praise in the earth.***

Here it becomes apparent that the watchmen are praying. They do not give God rest until He brings to pass the salvation He has promised.

The certainty of God's promises are not occasions for presumption, but rather encouragements to pray. There is no reason for silence and there is every reason for continual petition, for we read in **verse 8**:

***⁸The LORD has sworn by His right hand
and by His mighty arm:
"I will not again give your grain
to be food for your enemies,
and foreigners shall not drink your wine
for which you have labored;***

God swore that He will save His people everlastingly and that they would never again come under His wrath. This is only true for those who are truly in Christ Jesus. In this poetic way, and through the use of direct discourse, God swears their eternal security.

Here we read that He would secure for them their food provisions, secure from the threat of their enemies. One of the greatest causes of discouragement and despair in the ancient world was after having sown and labored all season over the crops, someone comes along just after the harvest and takes away the harvested produce. This was a sign of God's curse, as we read in **Deuteronomy 28:30-33**. If Israel had failed to keep its covenant with God, God would curse His people with this judgment:

³⁰You shall betroth a wife, but another man shall lie with her; you shall build a house, but you shall not dwell in it; you shall plant a vineyard, but shall not gather its grapes. ³¹Your ox shall be slaughtered before your eyes, but you shall not eat of it; your donkey shall be violently taken away from before you, and shall not be restored to you; your sheep shall be given to your enemies, and you shall have no one to rescue them. ³²Your sons and your daughters shall be given to another people, and your eyes shall look and fail with longing for them all day long; and there shall be no strength in your hand. ³³A nation whom you have not known shall eat the fruit of your land and the produce of your labor, and you shall be only oppressed and crushed continually. ³⁴So you shall be driven mad because of the sight which your eyes see.

But God would not allow this kind of judgment to fall upon His people, rather He promised them in **verse 9**:

***⁹but those who garner it shall eat it
and praise the LORD,
and those who gather it shall drink it
in the courts of My sanctuary.”***

In this New Jerusalem, His people are allowed to benefit that their labor has produced. And they will be able to eat and drink in the presence of God.

In **verse 10** we read that God would prepare a highway for the salvation of God to come to Zion and a great influx of people to journey to this glorified “city.” This salvation must come in the form of an arriving personage or king, whose arrival brings salvation.

***¹⁰Go through, go through the gates;
prepare the way for the people;
build up, build up the highway;
clear it of stones;
lift up a signal over the peoples.***

Of course this looked forward to the coming of Jesus Christ, the promised King, the promised Messiah who would come to rule over the Kingdom of God as the promised Son of David. John the Baptist announced the beginning of the realization of this prophecy in the coming of Jesus Christ. We read in Luke 3 of John’s ministry:

³And he went into all the region around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, ⁴as it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, saying:

“The voice of one crying in the wilderness:
‘Prepare the (high)way of the LORD;
Make His paths straight.
⁵Every valley shall be filled
And every mountain and hill brought low;
The crooked places shall be made straight
And the rough ways smooth;
⁶And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.”^[b]

We saw these words back in Isaiah 40:3ff, and here in Isaiah 62:10 the same idea is set before us.

In the last two verses of this passage we read that

3. God guarantees to accomplish what He has promised (vs. 10-12)

Verse 11 speaks of the arrival of the Messiah to His own.

*¹¹Behold, the LORD has proclaimed
to the end of the earth:
Say to the daughter of Zion,
“Behold, your salvation comes;
behold, His reward is with Him,
and His recompense before Him.”*

The announcement is proclaimed throughout the earth that God has brought salvation to His people. He has come to them and blessed them with His gifts and has rendered justice among them.

This idea was presented earlier before us in our study of Isaiah's prophecy. In **Isaiah 40** we read these words:

⁹O Zion,
You who bring good tidings,
Get up into the high mountain;
O Jerusalem,
You who bring good tidings,
Lift up your voice with strength,
Lift it up, be not afraid;
Say to the cities of Judah, “Behold your God!”

¹⁰Behold, the Lord GOD shall come with a strong hand,
And His arm shall rule for Him;
Behold, His reward is with Him,
And His work before Him.

¹¹He will feed His flock like a shepherd;
He will gather the lambs with His arm,
And carry them in His bosom,
And gently lead those who are with young.

In Isaiah 40:9 the prophet Isaiah spoke, directing his comments to “Zion” or “Jerusalem” (v. 9), which we saw then are metaphors for the surviving remnant, that is, the elect whom God purposed to save from their sins.

The people of God are entrusted with a message to proclaim to the people. They are ones who proclaim the “gospel”, the “good tidings.” They are to proclaim loudly and boldly, with great confidence, announcing that God is in their midst. He who had forsaken them, leaving them to encounter His judgment, is now in their midst. God Himself is with them, among them, ruling over them as their king. He is defending them and blessing them. He will care for His people as a shepherd cares for his flock. It is a serene scene of peace, security, and abundant provision.

The news of God's victory in saving His people is to be declared far and wide. The people of God are to climb on top of a high mountain so that the message of “good tidings” may be proclaimed widely. It is God alone and God Himself that achieves the state of peace for His people. He has no assistance from another. His own arm brought deliverance for His people. He accomplishes for His own what they could not do for themselves.

God Himself is present in their midst. It is a cause of great joy for all of His people. We had read earlier in Isaiah 40:3-5 that a highway was to be prepared so that the king could come to His land and

visit His people. Isaiah declared in verse 9 that the King had arrived and had brought salvation to His people. God is presented as

a conquering hero, or a “mighty one.” The same thought is expressed by the statement “his arm rules for him.” That is to say: His strength prevails and gains the victory. But the statement now following adds a very significant thought. The “reward” or “recompense” that this conquering hero brings with him is nothing other than his people, whom he has regained as his own and delivered from the power of the enemy.²

And then thirdly, we read of the presence of the Prince (40:11)

¹¹He will feed His flock like a shepherd;
He will gather the lambs with His arm,
And carry them in His bosom,
And gently lead those who are with young.

We see the Lord Jesus clearly portrayed here. In Isaiah 40 the prophet announced His coming to bring salvation to His people and to restore them unto Himself. And then here in Isaiah 62 the same truth is restated as God’s resolve to bring to pass what He has promised.

Our passage ends with a declaration of the nature and character of the people whom God brings salvation.

¹²*And they shall be called The Holy People,
The Redeemed of the LORD;
and you shall be called Sought Out,
A City Not Forsaken.*

There are four titles that are ascribed to the people of God. First, the people of Zion are known as “The Holy People.” This means that they are God’s people. They are set apart for Him and by Him. It also speaks of their godliness and holiness of life. Secondly the Lord’s people are “the Redeemed of the Lord.” God had purchased them from their slavery. The price of the blood of Jesus Christ was paid to “purchase” them from their slavery to sin. Formerly they had been enslaved, but they had been purchased out of bondage and now they experience the blessing of liberty. Third, they shall be called “Sought Out.” Salvation is wholly by God’s grace. This means that salvation originates and culminates in God’s working on behalf of His people. And last, fourth, the people of God are called “A City Not Forsaken.”

How then, should we respond?

1. The salvation that the Promised Messiah brings to His people, both Jews and Gentiles, is wholly a work of His sovereign grace. He must come to us and work His grace in our souls or else we will remain in our ignorance and the guilt of our sin. Let us humbly acknowledge and seek in faith that He would work for us and in us that which He requires of us, but that only He can work in us.

2. Let us have a very vivid understanding and a very intense desire for this heavenly country to which God has directed His people to aspire and journey towards in this life through faith. As Abraham and Sarah desired to see realized the promises of God, so let us live by faith as they, who, “not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them.”

² H. C. Leupold, *Isaiah*, vol. 2, chapters 40-66 (Baker Book House, 1971), p. 28.

3. Let us view ourselves as citizens of another kingdom, one different from and beyond the kingdoms of this world. Let us regard ourselves as those patriarchs who “confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.” Let us be as they were, who “desire a better, that is, a heavenly country.” For if and when we do, the outcome will be that God will own us and He will bestow upon us all that God has promised us in Jesus Christ. For of all those who think, believe, and live in this manner, “God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.”

4. Let us separate ourselves from the world and all of its allurements and false promises of peace and fulfilment. Let us not be caught up in the world system, embracing its values and its claims. As we read in Holy Scripture, “Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God” (James 4:4). Let us be as Abraham and Sarah, who, desiring a better, a heavenly country, obeyed God. We read again in Hebrews 11:

⁸By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. ⁹By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; ¹⁰for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. (Heb 11:8-10)

Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling,
And to present you faultless
Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy,
To God our Savior,
Who alone is wise,
Be glory and majesty,
Dominion and power,
Both now and forever. Amen. (Jude 24, 25)