

THE FUTURE GLORY OF JERUSALEM: A PICTURE OF THE HOLY CITY DURING THE MESSIAH'S KINGDOM ON EARTH; THE MILLENNIUM ISAIAH 60:01–10

Introduction

Among all the cities in the world, Jerusalem has one of the most interesting histories. Down through the centuries the city has been conquered time and again and left in utter ruin. No one living at the time of its destruction thought it would ever rise again. But it always has. It arose from the ashes of the Assyrian destruction, the Babylonian destruction, and the Roman destruction. Although it is the capital of only a small nation of people, the city seems to be indestructible. And its people have survived exiles, untold atrocities, and deliberate attempts to exterminate them from the face of the earth. Holocaust after holocaust has been launched against the Jewish people and their nation. For reasons sometimes unexplainable, certain nations and peoples down through history have despised and held the Jews in utter contempt. Nevertheless, these brave people have overcome and survived to raise Jerusalem and the nation from the ashes of total devastation. Interestingly, Jerusalem is considered to be the Holy City by three of the major religions of the world: Judaism (the Jews), Islam (the Muslims), and Christianity (the Christians).

The present Scripture is a prophecy concerning the future of Jerusalem. The day is coming when Jerusalem will be established as the capital of the world. At that time, the light and glory of God Himself will come to the Holy City and dwell there forever. All the nations of earth will be brought together in a worldwide government, and the seat of government will be in Jerusalem. The leaders will embark on a huge building project to make the city more spectacular than the world could ever imagine. And the LORD will govern the world from there. This is the prophecy concerning, *The Future Glory of Jerusalem: A Picture of the Holy City During the Messiah's Kingdom on Earth — the Millennium*, Isaiah 60:1-22.

- I. The Holy City will receive the light and the glory of God's presence (v. 14): in Jesus Christ, Jn. 8:12, (vv. 1-4).
 - II. The Holy City will be the centre of world trade and of worship (vv. 5-10).
 - III. The Holy City will open the gates of salvation to all: the gates will never be closed (vv. 11-14).
 - IV. The Holy City will be the capital of the world, the centre of the LORD's kingdom on earth (vv. 14b-22).
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I. Isaiah 60:01–04 Light and Glory of God's Presence in New Jerusalem

The Holy City is destined to receive the light and glory of God's presence. At the close of the previous chapter, God predicted the coming of the Redeemer, the Messiah, to Zion (59:20). Now God paints a picture of the world's future, looking to the time when the Messiah will have already come. Remember that Jesus Christ is the "light of the world" (Jn. 8:12). Here, Isaiah says that Christ Himself will be the very light of Jerusalem. The blazing glory of His presence and holiness will reflect so much light that Jerusalem will not need the light of the sun (Rev 21:23). Now note what the prophet is saying: "Your light [the Messiah and Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ] has come, and the glory of the LORD [in the person of Christ] is shining upon you" (v. 1). When the day arrives, nothing will stop His coming, for it is destined by God. The glorious return of the LORD to set up God's kingdom on earth will take place. Presently darkness covers the entire earth, holding it in the grip of...

- sin and evil
- immorality and violence
- bondage and enslavement
- sorrow and despair
- injustice and oppression
- war and destruction

A thick, black veil has wrapped itself around the world. But there is wonderful news. The Lord is going to return. Imagine the scene! The day will come when His blazing glory will suddenly appear over the Holy City (v. 2). He is coming as the Redeemer (59:20) to rescue His people from the darkness of the earth, from all wickedness, disease and death. God's kingdom will be established in the full glory and light of His Person, and His glory and light will bring perfection to earth. In God's kingdom there will be no sin, disease, accidents or death. There will no longer be tears of sorrow, not when the Lord Jesus Christ returns to set up God's kingdom on earth.

The LORD's glory and light will also draw all nations and kingdoms to Jerusalem (vv. 3-4). All Gentiles and all Jews will be attracted there. They will travel to see the LORD, the implication being for the purpose of worship. Note that the Gentile nations will bring the scattered sons and daughters of Jerusalem, the Jews, with them.

Note one other fact: true believers are instructed to "arise, shine, for your light has come" (v. 1). They are to be strong witnesses, reflecting the light of Christ's salvation. Even before He returns to earth, true believers should be taking the message of Jesus Christ to all the nations of the world. Citizens and rulers alike should be streaming to the salvation and light of the Lord Jesus Christ. All believers should "arise, shine."

Thought 1. Jesus Christ is the light of the world, the light that will bring salvation and glory to Jerusalem.

John 1:4 In him was life, and that life was the light of men.

John 8:12 When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

John 12:35 *Then Jesus told them, "You are going to have the light just a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, before darkness overtakes you. The man who walks in the dark does not know where he is going."*

2 Cor 4:6 *For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.*

Eph 5:14 *For it is light that makes everything visible. This is why it is said: "Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."*

Rev 21:23 *The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp.*

Isa 9:2 *The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.*

Thought 2. Believers are to reflect the light of the LORD through their lives. They are to let their *lights* shine, bearing strong witness to the Lord's salvation.

Mat 5:14-16 *"You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven."*

Acts 13:47 *For this is what the Lord has commanded us: "I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth."*

Eph 5:8-11 *For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light. For the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth. And find out what pleases the Lord. Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them.*

Phil 2:14-16 *Do everything without complaining or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe. As you hold firmly to the word of life. And then I will be able to boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labour in vain.*

1 Th 5:5-8 *You are all sons of the light and sons of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness. So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be alert and self-controlled. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be self-controlled, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet.*

II. Isaiah 60:05–10 The Centre of World Trade and of Worship

The Holy City will be the centre world trade and of worship. When the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, sets up God's kingdom on earth, Jerusalem will become the economic and financial capital of the world (v. 5). It will be the centre of all commerce shipped by sea from all parts of the world. In addition, the Holy City will be the centre of all trade

in products transported over land. The latest method of transportation will carry goods around the world, just as caravans of camels and other animals transported the products of ancient history (v. 6). The world's financial system will operate under the leadership of the LORD of glory, Christ Jesus Himself. The implication is that the world will know economic prosperity. No one will be homeless, unclothed or hungry. Everyone will prosper under the world leadership of the Messiah.

Equally important, Jerusalem will become the centre of worldwide worship (vv. 6-7). People of every nation will worship and praise the LORD together. All people will present their offerings to the LORD, and He will accept their gifts.

Using the gifts to adorn His temple, He will be honoured and glorified through their praise. Jesus Christ will be acknowledged as the true Messiah, the Saviour and Redeemer of the human race.

In that day, Jerusalem will become the focus of the entire world (vv. 8-10). Everyone, even the people in the islands, the distant parts of the world, will look to the LORD and the Holy City. The ships of Tarshish will travel to the nations of the world to secure their gifts to the LORD and to bring the Jews back to the promised land (v. 9). Through the gifts of wealth and the return of His people, the LORD will be honoured as the Holy One of Israel. Note also the wonderful promise to God's people: they will be endowed with the glory or splendour of the LORD (v. 9c).

One of the reasons so many foreigners will travel to Jerusalem will be to rebuild the capital (v. 10). When the city is established as the financial centre of the world, businesses from far and near will construct their headquarters or administrative offices there. The sheer number and enormity of building projects in Jerusalem, along with their subsidiary businesses and services needed worldwide, simply explode the imagination. Under the leadership of the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, the light and glory of God will come to Jerusalem. The ancient city will be the capital of the world, the centre of the world's economic and financial institutions, as well as the centre of worldwide worship.

Note how the LORD closes the prophecy of these verses. Due to the terrible sins of His people, God had executed His wrath, His judgment against them. But ultimately He would show them mercy and compassion.

Thought 1. Today is the day of God's mercy, the day in which He will have compassion on us, whether Jew or Gentile. In the future, God is going to restore Israel because of His mercy. He has not forsaken the entire nation, for there are some who truly trust and believe in the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. These believers, whether many or few, will be saved and restored to the favour of the LORD. In the end time, when Jesus Christ returns to set up God's kingdom on earth, many will at last recognize that Christ is the true Messiah. These people will then believe and turn to the LORD for salvation. Because God is merciful, He will accept them and allow them

to enter the promised land of His kingdom. But even now there is wonderful news: God longs to restore any of us who have gone astray, or have denied or rejected Him. If we will repent of our unbelief and denial, turn away from our sins, and trust the LORD, He will have compassion upon us. Listen to what God's Holy Word says about His abundant mercy and favour:

Luke 1:50 *His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation.*

Eph 2:4-8 *But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions — it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus. In order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God.*

Titus 3:5-7 *He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Saviour, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.*

Psa 106:1 *Praise the LORD. Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever.*

Psa 119:64 *The earth is filled with your love, LORD; teach me your decrees.*

Isa 57:18 *“I have seen their ways, but I will heal them; I will guide them and restore comfort to Israel's mourners, creating praise on their lips.”*

Jer 3:22 *“Return, faithless people; I will cure you of backsliding.” “Yes, we will come to you, for you are the LORD our God.”*

Jer 30:17 *‘But I will restore you to health and heal your wounds,’ declares the LORD, ‘because you are called an outcast, Zion for whom no one cares.’*

Lam 3:22-23 *Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.*

Hosea 14:4 *“I will heal their waywardness and love them freely, for my anger has turned away from them.”*

Joel 2:13 *Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity.*

Micah 7:18 *Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives the transgression of the remnant of his inheritance? You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy.*

Micah 7:19 *You will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea. ■*