

The Prophecy of Isaiah
Glory for God's People

As Christians we know that Jesus has taken our sin on Himself and that our past, present, and future is clear of the guilt of sin. We also know that our future is secure in Christ Jesus. The thing that causes us the most trouble is the remaining sin that we experience daily.

Are you conscious of sin? Are you in a state of repentance?
You have repented; but are you repenting?
How long does repentance last?
Until we sin again!

For the Jews returning from exile in Babylon the problems that lay ahead will be formidable. Isaiah closes this amazing book with a view of the future.

As I have said many times in this study, your eschatology will interpret the passage. Is Isaiah writing about the restoration of the Jews to Jerusalem from Babylon or is this about a future millennium where Christ reigns on earth for a literal one thousand years, or is this a view of heaven on a renewed earth?

The Glory that Awaits Israel

Isaiah 60:1-11

Isaiah prophesied both of the fall of Judah and the exile of the people into Babylon. Yet, he also foresaw the return of a remnant to Judah. But beyond that he foresaw much farther into the future; either a millennial kingdoms or heaven.

The Lord in His glory will come to His people. They are redeemed Jews and Gentiles from all over the world. [60:1-3]

They will bring all their wealth to honor and worship God. [60:4-9]

The miserable condition of Judah before the exile is contrasted with the glory of the future. Whatever your eschatological persuasion is, the Lord reigns in unending glory as the everlasting Light of the redeemed. [60:10-22]

Some OT passages are easy to interpret because the NT says that something that occurs is the fulfillment; e.g. Peter in Acts 2 says Pentecost is the fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel.

Jesus read this passage from Isaiah in the synagogue in Nazareth and said that what He is doing is its fulfillment. The hearers were amazed at Jesus' words. But, they became enraged when He illustrated the sovereignty of God in that God has mercy on the Gentiles as well as on the Jews.

Luke 4:16-30

¹⁶ And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read. ¹⁷ And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written,

¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives
and recovering of sight to the blind,
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,
¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

²⁰ And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. ²¹ And he began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." ²² And all spoke well of him and marveled at the gracious words that were coming from his mouth. And they said, "Is not this Joseph's son?" ²³ And he said to them, "Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, 'Physician, heal yourself.' What we have heard you did at Capernaum, do here in your hometown as well." ²⁴ And he said, "Truly, I say to you, no prophet is acceptable in his hometown. ²⁵ But in truth, I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heavens were shut up three years and six months, and a great famine came over all the land, ²⁶ and Elijah was sent to none of them but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. ²⁷ And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian." ²⁸ When they heard these things, all in the synagogue were filled with wrath. ²⁹ And they rose up and drove him out of the town and brought him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they could throw him down the cliff. ³⁰ But passing through their midst, he went away.

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After this immediate fulfillment, where Jesus claims to be Messiah, there is more to Isaiah 61 to be fulfilled; either in a millennial kingdom or heaven on earth.

The Assurance of Israel's Restoration

Isaiah 62:1-12

Isaiah 62 is like a chorus where he repeats the truth that the Lord will return and restore His people to their homeland.

In the past Judah was known as "Deserted" and "Desolate." In the future the people will be known as "Hephzibah," My Delight is in Her, and "Beulah," married. [3-4]

God's Righteous Judgment

Isaiah 63:1-65:16

In symbolic language, Isaiah asks who is this coming from Bozrah with crimson-stained garments and robed in splendor. [63:1]

Bozrah was the main city of Edom, which represented a world in rebellion against God. The image is of Christ's Second Coming and His triumph over His enemies.

The Messiah will return to judge the nations and avenge the cause of His people and deliver them from danger. [63:2-4]

The Savior alone is able to deliver the faithful remnant from their oppressors. [63:5]

At that time the rebellious will experience His holy wrath. [63:6]

Isaiah then described the context of God's wrath, remembering the kind deeds He had done for the people. [63:7]

Isaiah recalls the suffering in Egypt, the period of the Judges, and all the times that God displayed His mercy by rescuing them from danger. [63:8-9]

Even so, despite God's evident love, the people refused both His love and Him also. [63:10]

Since they made God their enemy, God allows foreign nations to oppress and conquer them. But God's love is unfailing. [63:11-14]

Isaiah pleads with God to once again show compassion towards them. [63:15-19]

The prophet, speaking on behalf of the faithful remnant, petitioned God to manifest His protection and favor on His people. He also prayed that God would punish the enemies of Israel, splitting the heavens and dealing forthrightly with the wicked oppressors. [64:1-7]

What does God think of our self-righteous acts? Even good deeds done with the wrong motive are sinful. [64:8-12]

Isaiah reports that God will punish the rebellious, but that there will be a remnant that will remain faithful. [65:1-16]

The New Creation

Isaiah 65:17-25

God will create a new heaven and a new earth. The new creation will be so glorious that the former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind. [65:17]

The Lord will create a New Jerusalem and it will be filled with joyous people. [65:18-19]

Premillennialists see verse 20-25 as a description of a millennial kingdom while Amillennialists view this as heaven on a newly created earth.

False Worshipers' End

Isaiah 66:1-6

Kings of the ancient world usually sat on an ornate throne equipped with a footstool. The Lord declares that the heaven is His throne and the earth is His footstool.

Could any man-made structure serve God? [66:1]

Stop thinking of God in limited terms; do not worship anything other than the Creator. [66:2]

False worship will receive harsh judgment from God. [66:3-6]

The Kingdom Reborn

Isaiah 66:7-13

This is a beautiful image of a mother giving birth to a long-awaited child and describes Zion being restored. Again eschatology interprets this passage.

Choice of Destinies

Isaiah 66:14-24

Those who trust in the Lord will rejoice and prosper, while those who reject God will face His wrath. [66:14-17]

God will finally gather all peoples and reveal His glory to them [66:18-21]

The results of Isaiah's prophesy will be everlasting. God is eternal and His people will worship Him forever. [66:22-23]

Likewise, the wicked will be punished forever. [66:24]

Eternal life for believers begins with their being born again, not when they die.

We are called on to worship God and to enjoy His mercies in the sure hope of eternity with Christ Jesus.