

Arise, Let Your Light Shine.
Isaiah 60:1-12
Sunday evening, December 14, 2008.

I. Who are they who are addressed?

- A. This is not a new prophecy; it is the continuation of the thoughts expressed in Ch. 59:20,21.
- B. As such we are dealing with Zion, and with those who turn away from transgression in Jacob.
We are dealing with those from whose mouths the Holy Spirit will not let God's words depart, nor from their descendants mouths, nor from their descendants' descendants, forevermore. 59:21.

II. How are we to understand the concept of Zion in NT light?

- A. It is Zion that is addressed here.
At the time of Isaiah this concept simply meant the nation of Israel with its capital of Jerusalem, built on mount Zion. As such we may also say that Zion is the people of God, or God's covenant people, which was Israel at that time.
- B. The NT puts a new twist on the concept.
In Romans Ch. 11, Zion, or the covenant people, are represented under the figure of an olive tree. We are told that God has broken off the natural branches because of unbelief, and that He has grafted in branches from the wild olive tree of the gentiles on the remaining stump.
- C.
 1. The resulting community is termed "The Israel of God" in Gal 6:16
 2. Eph. 2:11-13 and 19-22 shows this development : Once without Christ and aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, now the Gentiles have been brought near; the wall of separation is broken down, and believing Jews and Gentiles are fellow citizens (of Zion) with the saints and members of the house hold of God.
Together they are the new temple; a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.
 3. The worship of this covenant community is described in Hebr. 12:22-24 as a coming to Mount Zion; the city of the living God.
 4. Rev. 21:9-14 and 22-27 uses much of the imagery of Isa. 60.
 - The glory and the light of the Lord is to be found in her.
 - Her gates never close, indicating her security as well as the welcome she extends to the nations coming to her whether by day or by night. All are always welcome.
 - The wealth of the Gentiles is brought into her.
 - Unbelieving nations will not be allowed to enter, but they will come to ruin and perish.
 - In Rev. 21 the order of the foundations and the gates is reversed from the historic order as well as from the imagery of the olive tree in Rom. 11. Historically the Old covenant people come first, and the trunk of the olive tree comes first. Here the Apostles, not the Patriarchs, form the foundation; the Patriarchs form the gates in the walls standing on that foundation.
 - This speaks to us of Christ as proclaimed by the 12 Apostles being the true

foundation of the community of God's covenant people. Christ being the Chief Corner Stone.

- The 12 patriarchs standing on the foundation of the twelve apostles speaks to us as well of a future restoration of the Jewish people to the covenant community of God.
- The order is now reversed; The Old Covenant community is no longer the foundation; she is no longer the trunk on which the Gentile Church is grafted in. Rather, the NT Church as united to Christ is the foundation

and

trunk in which the offspring of the 12 patriarchs are grafted in once again as latecomer-branches. Rom 11:24-31.

III. Isaiah's far reaching vision and command.

A. Isaiah's vision shows the end of the covenant community; her ultimate glory. Yet something of that glory is always with the covenant community of God; the Zion of God.

Are we not the partakers of "great and precious promises?" Do we not rejoice in these "with joy unspeakable and full of glory?"

B. Isaiah's command than is for the covenant people of any generation.

It is equivalent to Eph. 5:14 "Awake you that sleep and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light."

C. Christians do not have this light in themselves, for Isaiah says: "Your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you." The covenant people of God are asked to take their stand in the light, and become reflectors of that light.

D. That light is the light of God's truth; His value system.

The whole world is steeped in the darkness of idolatry; the worship of a temporal

value system. Materialism; Serving Mammon.

E. In the midst of this darkness God has shined His light; His value system, in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. He ministered to their needs; invested Himself in them, and laid down his life for them. He revealed to us the value of the souls of men. They were His treasure; they are still His treasure.

F. As His covenant people, walking by his side and in His light, His value system becomes our own. This means the death of our old value system, which is our union with Christ's cross. It is our sharing in the death of Christ.

G. Here comes the rub. We would try to have it both ways. We would serve the Lord, but we want to hold on to this world as well. We are double minded; were it not for the Lord having joined Himself to us and pursuing His agenda in our lives, we would lose the favor of God and the world would win the battle..

H. In the midst of this struggle caused by double mindedness the Lord comes to our side with His word; He has joined Himself in Christ to you. He has joined the battle for your soul and He says to you: "Arise and shine!" Be resolute! If the Lord be God then serve Him! In humble faith take your stand in the value system of the Lord's kingdom! Let the world go by and invest your time and money in the needy souls of men and so shine forth the glory of the Lord.