

The Glory Of Zion In The Abundant Access Of The Gentiles.

Isaiah 60:1-22.

Sunday evening, December 21, 2008.

I. Zion's significance.

Last week we saw that Zion stands for the community of God's covenant people.

- A. In OT times this meant the nation of Israel, often represented by their capital city of Jerusalem.
- B. In NT times the Gentiles are grafted in on the trunk of the OT covenant people, while the branches of the OT covenant people are broken off because of unbelief. Romans 11, and Ephesians 2.
- C. In Revelation 21 the community of the covenant people of God are represented under the figure of New Jerusalem. The order has been reversed from Romans 11. The 12 Patriarchs of the 12 tribes of Israel dwell their together with the 12 Apostles, showing the unity of Old and New covenant times and their peoples, but the Patriarchs are not the foundation; rather the Apostles are. This shows us that ultimately the significance of the OT economy rests on the foundation of the finished work of Christ as proclaimed by the Apostles.

II. Arise and shine.

- A. This covenant community is told to arise and shine.
NT equivalent is in Eph. 5:14 "Arise you that sleep and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light."
- B. She is to arise and shine for her light has come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon her.
- C. This speaks of the fullness of grace and truth as it is given to us in Christ.
- D. Zion is told to take her stand in the fullness of this light and glory, so that it may be seen in her and upon her.

III. The nature of this light and glory; grace and truth.

It is in summary contained in the words "Goodwill toward men" which the angel spoke to the shepherds at the birth of Christ.

- A. God has been reconciled with sinful man by the cross of Christ and new creation
has broken into the dark scene of sinful man.
- B. God has invested sinful man with a whole new value by the cross of Christ. He has purchased them out of the slave market of sin and brought them home to Himself by the blood of His Son. This is why we do missions and evangelism.
- C. There is new hope here for the hopeless; a whole new outlook on life, and a whole new identity for life.
- D. There is a whole new purpose where there was none before. Life and history and the universe suddenly have meaning. Labor and learning have meaning. None of it are in vain in the Lord.
- E. Not even death and the grave have the final word. Although still an enemy, it is a toothless tiger. It is left with neither sting nor victory.

IV. Zion's glory: The abundant access of the Gentiles.

"Gentiles shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising." Vs. 3.

A. These Gentiles are called sons and daughters because they are no longer strangers but fellow heirs and fellow citizens of the saints. Vs. 4.

B. Not only the Gentiles, but their wealth is brought into Zion. They present themselves as living sacrifices to the Lord in Zion.

1. They come across the desert from the East and from the South.

They come on the "ships of the desert," the camel and the dromedary.

The dromedary is the camel with only one hump on his back. It is faster than the two humped camel. Vs. 5,6.

2. The peoples of the coastlands (of the Mediterranean) come by ships together with their riches. Vs. 8,9.

C. They come with their flocks to ascend up to Zion to sacrifice to the Lord in Zion's

temple. They do so with acceptance for the middle wall of separation has been broken down. Ephesians 2:14.

D. These sons of the foreigners become fellow laborers to build up Zion from the ruins of the remnant of the covenant community. This was James' understanding at the council at Jerusalem regarding the status of the Gentiles in the Christian community. Acts 15:13-17.

E. Zion's gates are always open; all are welcome by day or by night. Vs. 11.

F. Those unwilling to serve will be ruined and perish. Vs. 12.

G. Zion's enemies and persecutors are converted and become her fellow servants. Vs. 14. She is more than a conqueror Rom 8:37.

H. Zion will drink the milk of Gentiles and nurse at the breast of kings. Figurative language for showing how the riches of the gentiles are brought into Zion as

these

Gentiles themselves enter Zion. Vs. 16,17.

I. Peace itself and Righteousness itself will function as the officers and magistrates of Zion. Vs. 17.

Instead of walls she will be surrounded with salvation, and for gates providing entry into the city there is praise, or the joyful embracing of salvation in Christ. Vs. 18.

J. Violence, wasting, destruction and mourning will all belong to the past. Vs. 18,20

K. The presence of the Lord's grace and glory; His light and truth will be such that they outshine the sun. "The earth will be filled with the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the bottom of the sea." Isaiah 11:9 and "No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother saying Know the Lord, for they all shall know Me, from the least unto the greatest." Jer. 31:34.

L. The Lord will hasten it in its day. There will be a speeding up of history toward the unfolding of these things.

Zion does not look like this as yet. Still it is the same Zion, and it is our privilege to go to her and be a part of her; to arise and shine, holding forth with our words and lives the truths and values revealed to us by the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. In an

increasingly hopeless and truthless and meaningless society Zion alone has the light of truth; the comfort of hope and the joy of meaning. Let us arise and let our light shine!