

They will be Called the Redeemed of the LORD
Isaiah 62:1-12

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I. Historical Background & Biblical Context

A. Historical Background

Isaiah 62 was written in anticipation of a return from exile or refers to events after the Judeans returned to their homeland to rebuild their community. Cyrus of Persia had defeated the Babylonians and instituted a new policy. Instead of subjugating Jewish exiles, Cyrus allowed them to return to Jerusalem and even provided funds to finance the rebuilding of the temple. However, upon their return, the exiles experienced opposition from the local people. Just as the earlier Israelites who fled Egypt met obstacles in their wilderness journey that caused them to grumble, the returning Jews faced opponents at every turn.

B. Biblical Context

The reality the people returned to was far from glorious. The land seemed to them like a desert. It was true that the land was not empty; people had remained in Judah during the years of the exile, and others had moved into the area, making a life for themselves in Jerusalem and surrounding areas. But none were unable to do the damage done by the invading army. Times were difficult. Nevertheless, the Prophet Isaiah predicted newness, transformation and new names for Jerusalem. He can only make these promises because God had promised them. God assured the people that He will not rest until Jerusalem was restored by a shining righteousness.

II. The Lesson: “They will be called the Redeemed of the LORD”

1. vv. 1-3. God will Finish what He Started.

God will not give up on what He had started. He planted a seed for a faithful nation in Abraham, and He will see it through until Israel

shines with faith, obedience and righteousness. He goes through extraordinary lengths to accomplish His will. The history of the Jewish nation demonstrates how God will work with someone or something, shaping it towards His vision of what it should be. The exile had a purpose, and now that that purpose had been accomplished, God will vindicate His people publicly. The nations (Gentiles) will see the righteousness of God's people. Kings will observe the glory of God's people, and He will give His people a new name. The work God did in Judah was intended to have an effect on more than just Jerusalem but would extend to the Gentiles and to all kings, and they, too, would trust in the LORD themselves.

The new name was "Hephzibah" (my delight is in her) for the old name "Forsaken" shall be put away. Jerusalem would be so transformed that it would be called by a new name. Since the LORD was the Author of the transformation, He was also the Author of the new name (which the mouth of the LORD will name, V. 2). The idea of a new name also extends to Christians in passages like Rev. 2:17 and 3:12. In heaven, when our transformation is complete, we will receive a new name that matches our completely transformed nature. Jerusalem shall be so special to God that He will regard it as a crown of glory. We often do not comprehend how precious we are to God.

2. vv.4-5.

Jerusalem knew the experience of war and defeat and desolation. God's people knew what it felt like to feel forsaken and desolate. The day of "forsaken and desolate" will one day pass. There will come a day when Zion and God's people will know that God delights in them. There will come a day when Zion and God's people will know the unbroken presence and love of God as a wife should know the presence and love of her husband ("Beulah" means "married"). "And as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you": Zion and God's people will know how much the LORD loves them. His feeling towards them is more than an obligation-type love; instead, He will rejoice over you. The same idea is beautifully communicated in Zeph. 3:17: "The LORD your God in your midst, the Mighty One, will save; He will rejoice over you with

gladness, He will quiet you with His love, He will rejoice over you with singing”.

3. vv. 6-9.

In ancient times, official lookouts stood on city walls. Their duty was vital. It was to warn the inhabitants when danger approached. In this Scripture, lookout is picture language for people who sent urgent messages to God by prayer. They are prayer warriors, who constantly pray, giving God no rest until God’s people and His city are restored. Because God loves and rejoices over Zion, He will protect them. They wanted Him to fulfill His promises for Jerusalem’s wonderful future. Though they were conquered before, the day will come when “He will make Jerusalem a praise in the earth”. No more will Jerusalem be plundered by those who would steal her grain or new wine. Instead, “those who have gathered it shall eat it, and praise the LORD”.

4. v. 10.

Isaiah 6:10 is a call for God’s people to prepare for the return of the exiles and the arrival of salvation. It speaks of preparing a path for God’s people and emphasizes God’s desire for restoration, unity and His glory to be revealed to all nations. The people were to pass through the gates of Babylon, return home and restore Zion to its rightful glory. Some of them were to clear away obstacles; others were to bring materials to construct highways along which the immigrants may walk , while a third group was to remove stones that might cause stumbling, and a fourth was to lift a standard (banner) to direct those who were arriving. All difficulties were to be removed; the road to Jerusalem (about 900 miles long) was to be made safe, and the temple, the city walls and the rest of the city were to be rebuilt. God’s people have a role to play in His plan of salvation.

5. v. 11.

Isaiah described the Messiah as coming soon. He will bring with Him His reward of salvation, and He will give redemption to anyone. By the phrase, “His work is before Him”, Isaiah was making clear that the arrival of the Messiah is for a specific purpose; He is aware of what is before Him. He was coming to die, to make His life an

offering for sin. God has ordained that all sin must be atoned for. Sin can not be simply ignored. It can not be forgiven unless the debt that it has acquired is paid. Sin can only be paid by a work of atonement. Jesus came as the Messiah to reveal clearly what God requires for eternal life. Jesus was fully aware of the purpose for His life. He was born to pay the great debt that is owed by every person for his sins. He came to make atonement for your sins and mine, according to the law of God.

6. v. 12.

Isaiah 62:12 is a profound declaration of God's faithfulness and love for His people. It speaks to the themes of redemption, restoration, and divine favor that convey the special status and security of God's chosen ones. As believers reflect on this verse, they are reminded of God's unwavering commitment to His people and are encouraged to trust in His promises for our lives. Throughout Isaiah, judgment was pronounced on the people of Israel for their disobedience and unfaithfulness, but it also offered them the hope of restoration and redemption. The designation of God's people as "The holy people" and "The redeemed of the LORD" symbolizes their special status and relationship with God. It conveys the idea that they are set apart for God's purpose and are the object of His redemptive love. The imagery of being "sought out" and "a city not forsaken" further emphasizes God's commitment to His people, portraying them as precious in His sight. A city that is sought out and not forsaken is secure and flourishing, conveying also the idea that God's people are under His care and are safe from harm as He watches over them and fulfills His promises to them.

III. Conclusion: Prayer

LORD, thank you for how you have met your people where they are since the beginning of time. We are especially grateful for how You are working in our lives, shaping us into servant leaders. Thank You for awakening in us the desire to learn more about You. We long for that day of Your return in glory. In Jesus' name we pray. AMEN.