



# Highlights From the Book of Isaiah

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# The LORD Takes Delight in Zion (62:1-12)

- Chapter 62 continues addressing many of the ideas that we saw in chapters 60 and 61.
- The themes of light, revelation of Zion's righteousness and salvation to the nations, marital joy, relief from oppression, and restoration of the land are all prominent in this chapter.
- The chapter seems to be *particularly* concerned with the question raised in 61:11 – How *sure* can we be that these glorious promises will actually come true?

# The LORD Takes Delight in Zion (62:1-12)

- For example, Chapter 60 presents the new Jerusalem as an accomplished fact.
- But that was yet future from the original hearers' point of view.
- Will it really happen?
- This chapter reiterates and amplifies the affirmation of 61:11 that indeed it will:
  - *For just as the ground produces its crops and a garden yields its produce, so the sovereign LORD will cause deliverance to grow, and give his people reason to praise him in the sight of all the nations.*

# The LORD Takes Delight in Zion (62:1-12)

- I will be covering today's text in three parts:
  - Zion's New Name (62:1–5)
  - Interceding for Zion (62:6–9)
  - Zion's Salvation (62:10–12)

# Zion's New Name (62:1–5)

62:1 *For the sake of Zion I will not be silent; for the sake of Jerusalem I will not be quiet, until her [righteousness] shines brightly and her [salvation] burns like a torch.* <sup>2</sup> *Nations will see your [righteousness], and all kings your splendor. You will be called by a new name that the LORD himself will give you.* <sup>3</sup> *You will be a majestic crown in the hand of the LORD, a royal turban in the hand of your God.* <sup>4</sup> *You will no longer be called, “Abandoned,” and your land will no longer be called “Desolate.” Indeed, you will be called “My Delight is in Her” and your land “Married.” For the LORD will take delight in you, and your land will be married to him.* <sup>5</sup> *As a young man marries a young woman, so your sons will marry you. As a bridegroom rejoices over a bride, so your God will rejoice over you.*

# Zion's New Name (62:1–5)

- As in the previous chapter, there is a difference of opinion among scholars as to who is speaking here.
- Since the chapter is mostly addressed to Zion, the “*I*” found in verses 1 and 6 might be:
  - the LORD
  - Isaiah
  - the Messiah.
- There is no way to know for sure because the text doesn't specifically tell us who is speaking.
- But in my opinion it makes the *most* sense to understand these words as being spoken by the Messiah (or the Anointed One, as he is described in the previous chapter)
- This fits well with the note of authority that seems to be present in these words and it also fits with the third-person description of the LORD that we see in verses 2 and 6.

## Zion's New Name (62:1–5)

- In verse 1 the Messiah states that he will not “*be silent*” until the LORD brings “*salvation*” to Zion.
- When the scriptures talk about **God** being “*silent*” (cf. 42:14; 57:11; 64:12; 65:6) it usually means the absence of divine action.
- When the LORD is *not* “*silent*”, he effectively intervenes to implement change.
- This verse portrays the intercessory ministry of the Messiah on behalf of “*Zion*” and “*Jerusalem*” as he continually pleads with the LORD to advance her cause.

## Zion's New Name (62:1–5)

- In this way the people were shown that, contrary to appearances, in which nothing seemed to be happening to expedite the fulfilment of the LORD's covenant commitments to them, the matter was under constant review in the courts of heaven.
- The Messiah would not passively "*be silent*" while the existing situation prevailed.
- He would plead with *intense zeal* on Zion's behalf, since it would take action by the LORD to achieve the transformation in view.
- Messiah will continue praying "*until [Zion's] [righteousness] shines brightly and her [salvation] burns like a torch*", thus becoming a beacon in the darkness of this world.



## Zion's New Name (62:1–5)

- In verse 2 the Messiah promises that Zion's "*righteousness*" will be a light to the nations that will bring glory to God: the "*nations will see your righteousness*"
- Then in verse 3 he tells them that Zion will be honored as a "*majestic crown*" and a "*royal turban*".
- He goes on to say that the LORD will hold Zion in his "*hand*" – an image that signifies the LORD's protection, guidance and care for Zion (notice that the LORD is not wearing this crown on his *head*).

## Zion's New Name (62:1–5)

- The LORD will even give Jerusalem a “*new name*” that will signify her new nature (see verses 2 and 4).
- Once she was “*Abandoned*”, because of her sin and her land was “*Desolate*” after being devastated by her enemies.
- But *New* Jerusalem will be given a more *appropriate* designation.
- In fact there will be *two* new names, one for the *city* and one for the *land*, indicating the *completeness* of the restoration that is to take place.

# Zion's New Name (62:1–5)

- The name “*My Delight is in Her*” points to the LORD’s pleasure in his restored relationship with Zion.<sup>1</sup>
- The name “*Married*” (Hebrew: *Beulah*) conveys the thought that the land will be “owned”, or “possessed”, and will not lie unwanted and uncared for (cf. 62:5).<sup>1</sup>
- In the Old Testament a new name often signified a radical change of fortune or status.<sup>2</sup>
- For example, Abram (‘Exalted Father’) was changed to Abraham (‘Father of a Multitude’, Gen. 17:5) following God’s covenant with him.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mackay, John L. – A Study Commentary on Isaiah Volume 2: Chapters 40-66 – pp. 533–534.

<sup>2</sup> Wegner, Paul D. – Isaiah An Introduction and Commentary – Tyndale OT Commentaries

## Zion's New Name (62:1–5)

- The LORD will express his delight in his new bride, a relationship confirmed by his covenant with her (cf. 54:5):
- Verse 5 reads, “*As a young man marries a young woman*”, so your Builder [lit. “*your sons*”] “*will marry you*”.
- At first, the literal reading “*your sons*” seems a little *odd* in this context.
- It would mean that Zion’s sons marry Zion!
- For this reason, some scholars suggest changing the Hebrew vowel pointing (but not the consonants) to read *bōnayik*, which would then be translated “*your builder*”, a designation also used of the LORD in Psalm 147:2.

# “Sons” = “Builder”?

בְּנֵי יָדַי = “sons” (Isa 62:5)

בֹּנֵה = “builds” (Psalm 147:2)

An example in English: CDR

Should this be “CIDER” and “CEDAR”

# Zion's New Name (62:1–5)

- But a more straightforward (and more likely) way to resolve the difficulty is to understand that one of the connotations of the Hebrew word for “*marry*” is “to *own* or *possess*”.
- If we go with this understanding then we could paraphrase the verse 5a something like this:
  - *As a young man marries a virgin, so the sons of Zion, through God's grace, will occupy and **possess** her. She will then no longer be desolate and forsaken but filled with her spiritual sons.*
- Verse 5 then concludes with this idea: “*As a bridegroom rejoices over a bride, so your God will rejoice over you.*”
- The figure is designed to express the utmost of rejoicing.

# Interceding for Zion (62:6–9)

*62:6 I post watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem; they should keep praying all day and all night. You who pray to the LORD, don't be silent! <sup>7</sup> Don't allow him to rest until he reestablishes Jerusalem, until he makes Jerusalem the pride of the earth. <sup>8</sup> The LORD swears an oath by his right hand, by his strong arm: "I will never again give your grain to your enemies as food, and foreigners will not drink your wine, which you worked hard to produce. <sup>9</sup> "But those who harvest the grain will eat it, and will praise the LORD. Those who pick the grapes will drink the wine in the courts of my holy sanctuary."*

# Interceding for Zion (62:6–9)

- The Messiah continues to address “*Jerusalem*”, the symbolic representation of his people as they collectively experience difficulties and struggles on earth.
- Running parallel to the Messiah’s own intercessory ministry, there is another group who have been “*posted*” who will not “*be silent*” (cf. 62:1).
- They are described as “*watchmen*”, those who have been officially appointed to be alert for anything liable to affect the well-being of the city.
- Stationed at a prominent location, they could see for a considerable distance (cf. 21:11).



## Interceding for Zion (62:6–9)

- The “*praying*” here is directed towards the LORD by those who are situated on earth.
- This group consists of all those to whom God has given a concern for the well-being of the people of God and who therefore engage in importunate prayer interceding with the LORD that he would restore the fortunes of Zion.
- This unceasing ministry is a source of encouragement to all because it is modelled on the example of the Messiah himself and specifically appointed by him.

## Interceding for Zion (62:6–9)

- God *honors* believing prayer and *heeds* the intercession of his children.
- The objective of the prayer in this case is twofold:
  - To “*reestablish Jerusalem*” i.e., to give her inner strength and stability
  - To “*make Jerusalem the pride of the earth.*” i.e., to give her rank and standing in the world, that is in keeping with her spiritual importance.
- The watchmen are not to rest till both are achieved.

# Interceding for Zion (62:6–9)

- The LORD's commitment to Jerusalem is confirmed by an oath in verses 8-9: *"The LORD swears an oath by his right hand, by his strong arm..."*
- In the Ancient Near East an oath was one of the strongest means of confirming the truthfulness of a statement.
- Here God swears by his *omnipotence* in order to substantiate his claim that there *will be* an end to Israel's punishment.
- God swears that they *"will never again"* give their *"grain"*, *"food"*, or *"wine"* to their *"enemies... and foreigners"* which they *worked hard to produce"*

## Interceding for Zion (62:6–9)

- In the past, enemies such as Midian, Syria, Assyria, Babylon (and others) had plundered them in accordance with the covenant curses of Deuteronomy 28:30-33.
- Now they will be able to harvest their crops and “*praise the LORD*” for their food and drink in the courts of the LORD’s “*holy sanctuary*”.
- The fact that the covenant curses will no longer be carried out suggests that the new covenant will never be broken on the part of God’s people who are a part of it.

# Interceding for Zion (62:6–9)

- Here we see the *blessings* of God results in the *worship* of God (“*those who harvest the grain will eat it, and will praise the LORD.*”).
- As Paul puts it in Romans 1, the great tragedy of the human race is our desire to arrogate the blessings of God to *ourselves* as though we were the creators of those blessings, while refusing to give thanks to God who makes them all possible.
- That will not be the case in the new Jerusalem.
- There the enjoyment of God’s blessings will be not lessened but heightened by the glad awareness of God’s goodness in giving them.

# Interceding for Zion (62:6–9)

- Whenever we begin to believe that the only reason we are blessed is because of our superior ability or industry or foresight, the seeds of destruction are sown.
- Our joy is limited by our need to keep the edge over others whom we now see as rivals for what is rightfully ours; we begin to devalue the less fortunate; and we begin to hoard what we now see as ours and ours alone.
- Joy cannot long survive in such an atmosphere.
- But let us always remember that all that we have is a gift, including what measure of ability, industry, and foresight we have, a gift from the hand of a Father who delights in the delight of his children, and we will know true joy, the joy of freedom.

## Zion's Salvation (62:10–12)

*62:10 Come through! Come through the gates! Prepare the way for the people! Build it – build the roadway! Remove the stones. Lift a signal flag for the nations. <sup>11</sup> Look, the LORD announces to the entire earth: “Say to Daughter Zion, ‘Look, your deliverer comes! Look, his reward is with him, and his reward goes before him!’” <sup>12</sup> They will be called, “The Holy People, the Ones [Redeemed] by the LORD.” You will be called, “Sought After, City Not Abandoned.”*

# Zion's Salvation (62:10–12)

- With emphatic repetition the Messiah exhorts both the LORD and the remnant to take the first steps towards this deliverance.
- He tells the remnant to “*come through the gates*”, and urges the LORD to “*build the roadway*” and “*remove the stones*”
- During the return from Babylon God’s “*reward*” was the Israelites, but now the author applies these phrases to the remnant returning from “*the nations*”.
- Like the double imperatives we saw in 52:11 when the exiles were told to “*Leave! Leave! Get out of there!*”, the repeated imperatives here serve to confirm what will soon happen.



## Zion's Salvation (62:10–12)

- The LORD is about to keep his promise; therefore those in Jerusalem are to prepare for the remnant's return.
- The “*signal flag*” is a sign to the “*nations*” to return to the God of Israel.
- The LORD addresses his child, “*Daughter Zion*”: “*Look, your deliverer comes!*” / “*Look, his reward is with him, and his reward goes before him!*”.

# Zion's Salvation (62:10–12)

- All the nations that saw Israel's defeat will now see its restoration.
- The returning exiles will be called "*The Holy People, the Ones [Redeemed] by the LORD*" (v. 12a).
- Zion will also be referred to as "*Sought After, City Not Abandoned*", both much more favorable than her former names "*Abandoned*" and "*Desolate*" (v. 4).
- Again, the change of name brings into focus the change of circumstances for the remnant.

# Next Time

- I plan to cover *The Wrath of the Divine Warrior* (63:1-6)

# Class Discussion Time

- Our passage today tells us that Messiah will continue praying “until Zion’s righteousness shines brightly and her salvation burns like a torch”, thus becoming a beacon in the darkness of this world.
- Who does Zion represent here?
- Are ***you*** a part of “Zion”?
- If so, what does this tell you that Jesus is doing on ***your*** behalf?
- What would it mean for ***your*** “righteousness to shine brightly and your salvation to burn like a torch, thus becoming a beacon in the darkness of this world”? What would that look like?

# Class Discussion Time

- In our passage today we saw that when the true people of God are **blessed** by God they are **thankful** – **unlike** the unbelievers that the Apostle Paul talks about in Romans 1 who take those blessings for granted or (worse yet) take credit for those blessings.
- What did you think of Oswald's application of this idea:
  - *But let us always remember that all that we have is a gift, including what measure of ability, industry, and foresight we have, a gift from the hand of a Father who delights in the delight of his children, and [if we remember this principle] we will know **true** joy, the joy of **freedom**.*
- Does this remind you of something the Apostle once said?
  - *For who makes you different from anyone else? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not? (1 Cor 4:7 NIV)*
- Do you find yourself sometimes forgetting this principle?