

THROUGH THE BIBLE STUDY

ISAIAH 59-62

When the average adult male stretches out his arms the distance from fingertips to fingertips is 2.1 inches longer than his height. We call that his “wingspan.”

Whereas, the average NBA prospect has a wingspan of 4.4 inches longer than his height. Basketball great Kevin Durant is 6’9” tall, but his wingspan is almost 7’5”. He is an incredibly 8 inches wider than he is tall.

Today, basketball scouts look for players with long wingspans as much as they do players with height. The question they ask is, “How long does he play?”

And this is also what Isaiah scouts out about God in 59:1. He notes God's reach - *his wingspan...* “Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save...”

At the time of Isaiah, the nation Judah was in trouble.

Some of the Jews questioned if God was even *able* to save. *How long was His reach?...* Isaiah assures his people that God's hand is not short. **God plays long!**

His wingspan *spans* the universe. He can reach from the pit of hell to the highest heaven at the same time. No one is beyond God's grasp - *His ability to save.*

“Nor His ear heavy, that it cannot hear.” God is not hard of hearing! The ear of God can hear a pin drop.

Rest assured when men are lost and in trouble it's not God's fault. It's not that He doesn't hear their cries or is unable to reach

them. There is nothing you've done - *no crime, no perversion* - God won't forgive .

God's ear is tuned to the frequency of sincerity. He is quick to respond to every heart-felt cry of repentance.

The reason hordes of people are marching off to Hell today isn't that God can't hear or reach. The problem is not God. Isaiah explains in verse 2, "*But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear.*"

It's not *God's inability*, but it's *man's iniquity*.

The Jews were blaming God, "*He doesn't hear our prayers. Our problems are out of His reach.*" But the problem was their own heart. While they were pleading for God's help, they were holding on to their sin. They needed to repent - turn from their sin - for God to help.

God hears everyone, God can save anyone... but He's willing to save only those who give Him complete prerogative to change their life however He desires.

“For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue has muttered perversity.” All the while they cried for God’s help - no wonder He refused to answer.

Isaiah 59 goes on to innumerate 32 sins of which the nation was guilty. God heard their cries, but He also read their hearts and saw their wicked ways.

Verse 4, *“No one calls for justice, nor does any plead for truth. They trust in empty words and speak lies; they conceive evil and bring forth iniquity.*

They hatch vipers' eggs and weave the spider's web; he who eats of their eggs dies, and from that which is crushed a viper **breaks out.**" In short, they perpetuate the evil of others. They spread the poison of vipers by hatching their eggs, and weave the webs of spiders to help snare their prey. They may claim to be the people of God, but in reality they're the friends of this world.

"Their webs will not become garments, nor will they cover themselves with their works; their works are works of iniquity, and the act of violence is in their hands." Here's a spider's web that makes no silk. It only traps its prey. Thus, were the words of Judah's leaders. As we're told in verse 4, they spoke "**lies**" and "**empty words**" to deceive. "**No one calls for justice.**"

It sounds like today's politicians... who "**pleads for truth?**" They make promises they don't intend to keep.

Verse 7, “Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood; their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity; wasting and destruction are in their paths.”

The “*shedding of innocent blood*” in our day has to be applied to the wickedness of abortion-on-demand.

“The way of peace they have not known, and there is no justice in their ways; they have made themselves crooked paths; whoever takes that way shall not know peace. Therefore justice is far from us, nor does righteousness overtake us; we look for light, but there is darkness! For brightness, but we walk in blackness!”

We’re looking for a ray of light, but there’s only dark. This is how we would describe our day, yet it was written by Isaiah *for his times*, some 2700 years ago.

I suppose the silver lining in our cloud is that though it seems hopeless, it has seemed hopeless before, and God was able to break through. He can do it again!

“We grope for the wall like the blind, and we grope as if we had no eyes; we stumble at noonday as at twilight; we are as dead men in desolate places.

We all growl like bears, and moan sadly like doves; we look for justice, but there is none; for salvation, but it is far from us.” We gravitate between uproar and complacency. We get angry and growl like bears, or we moan like doves as if there’s nothing we can do.

“For our transgressions are multiplied before You, and our sins testify against us; for our transgressions are with us, and as for our iniquities, we know them...”

Notice, we know our iniquities. Our words might deny them, but we know in our hearts where we've sinned.

“In transgressing and lying against the Lord, and departing from our God, speaking oppression and revolt, conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood. Justice is turned back, and righteousness stands afar off; for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter.” It's a sad day when *“truth has fallen in the street”* - or when men can no longer count on the words of another man - everyone speaks lies.

Verse 15, “So truth fails, and he who departs from evil makes himself a prey. Then the Lord saw it, and it displeased Him that *there was no justice.*” In Isaiah's day truth had failed. Everything had become relative.

There were no longer any absolutes. Human fickleness and arbitrariness had become the final authority. And when that happens there is *“no justice.”*

At that point the only hope is divine intervention. For the Lord to see it, and do something to restore truth.

“He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor; therefore His own arm brought salvation for Him; and His own righteousness, it sustained Him.” When the humbled Jews returned to their land from Babylon, it didn’t take long for the people to again become proud and self-sufficient.

And God looked for a deliverer - an intercessor through which He could work and deliver His people, but He found no one. The Davidic kings had been dethroned. The nation lacked a prophetic voice.

God wanted to work among His people, but had no one to partner with. So, He took matters into His own hands, and God opted for **a do-it-yourself salvation**. He sent His only Son into the world to die in our place.

Remember the covenant God made with Abraham, He ratified it while Abraham snoozed. Abe thought he'd be walking with God through the animal parts, but he woke up just in time to see God walking by Himself.

God did it Himself. All Abraham did was look on and believe. And this is all we're required to do... *believe!*

What an incredible salvation we've received. It is *all God!* It's **His do-it-Himself salvation**. And it not only saves the Jews, but by it all the nations can be saved.

“For He put on righteousness as a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation on His head; He put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloak.” In other words, God dressed for the occasion. He put on righteousness. Jesus committed to what was right - and He had a helmet of salvation. He was determined to do what it would take to save us.

And we should dress like Jesus. Ephesians 6 lists the believer's armor, and Paul includes both the **breastplate of righteousness** and **helmet of salvation**.

But what he doesn't add to our wardrobe are these other two pieces of armor - **“garments of vengeance”** and the **“cloak of zeal.”** And why? Romans 12:19 tells us, **“Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, says the Lord.”** The zeal of judgment is God's prerogative, no ours.

At Jesus' first coming He was dressed up to save. He wore **“the breastplate of righteousness”** and **“the helmet of salvation”** - but

at His second coming He'll be wearing His combat fatigues. He's coming to judge in *“the garments of vengeance”* and *“zeal as a cloak.”*

Verse 18, *“According to their deeds, accordingly He will repay, fury to His adversaries, recompense to His enemies; the coastlands He will fully repay.”* Here's what no one should want. You don't want to be repaid for your deeds. You want God to treat you with mercy.

He punishes his enemies for their wicked deeds.

“So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and His glory from the rising of the sun (that is, the east); when the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him.”

“The Redeemer will come to Zion, and to those who turn from transgression in Jacob,” says the Lord.”

God’s arm it *“not shortened...”* He is willing and able to save those who turn from their transgressions.

This verse is certainly prophetic. Revelation and Daniel tell us that in the last days - the days of God’s judgment on planet Earth - *the Great Tribulation...* the armies of the Antichrist will pour into Israel like a flood.

Yet God will come to His people’s defense. We call this conflict the Battle of Armageddon. But Megiddo is simply the staging ground. The war will be fought over *“Zion”* or *Jerusalem*. And the Spirit of God will raise up another *“standard”* or banner - an opposing army.

The *“Redeemer will come to* (save) *Zion”* - and His name is *“King of kings and Lord of lords.”* Revelation 19 pictures Jesus on

a war horse leading a heavenly army against the usurpers on Earth. As we learned this morning, Isaiah 63 reveals the victor of this battle.

Verse 21, “As for Me,” says the Lord, “this is My covenant with them: My Spirit who is upon you, and My words which I have put in your mouth, shall not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your descendants, nor from the mouth of your descendants’ descendants,” says the Lord, “from this time and *forevermore*.” And in light of verse 21 how can anyone ever question God's faithfulness to the Jewish people.

God is not through with the Hebrews. His Spirit will be with His people not just to the first, or to the second, or even to the third generation, but *“forevermore!”*

Chapter 60, “**Arise, shine; for your light has come! And the glory of the Lord is risen upon you.**”

Once a pastor asked a member of his congregation what he thought was the church’s greatest problem, *ignorance or apathy?* The man replied, “*Aw, I don’t know and I don’t care.*” Well, for centuries this has been Israel’s problem - either *ignorance* or *apathy*.

Rather than “**Arise, shine...**” throughout their history it was more often, “*Arise, whine...*” They complained.

But one day God’s glory will rise upon Israel. The nation will be great. Jesus will reign, and His glory will be the rising tide that raises all boats in His harbor.

Chapter 60 is a vision of what the world will be like when Jesus rules - when God’s Kingdom comes...

“For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and deep darkness the people; but the Lord will arise over you, and His glory will be seen upon you.” When the world becomes darkest, God will shine on His people.

“The Gentiles shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.” God’s plan was always for Israel to be light to Gentiles. Instead, the Jews became proud and prejudiced. They hated Gentiles.

But not so in the Kingdom Age, “inclusion” will be the watchword. Israel will be a testimony to God’s grace. They’ll attract Gentiles like a camping light draws bugs.

And this is a picture of the church’s mission today.

We’re to be a light to the lost. Today, “*darkness covers the earth*” - *humanism, relativism, hedonism, materialism, paganism* - it’s a

“deep darkness.” But it’s against a dark canvas that the light shines brightest.

In Matthew 5:16 Jesus says, *“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”* This is what we should be doing - *speaking of His glory, standing for His truth, savoring His joy, storing up His treasures, showing off His strength.*

Let’s be bold, for it’s been said, *“There isn’t enough darkness in the whole world to put out a single candle.”* The word to Israel of old and us today is *“Arise, shine!”*

“Lift up your eyes all around, and see: they all gather together, they come to you; your sons shall come from afar, and your daughters shall be nursed at your side.”

He's speaking to Israel in the Kingdom Age. Though scattered around the world, in that day they'll look up and see Jews returning to the land from all corners.

“Then you shall see and become radiant, and your heart shall swell with joy; because the abundance of the sea shall be turned to you, the wealth of the Gentiles shall come to you.” Jews who survive the Tribulation return to Israel with gifts from the Gentiles.

Remember, the Egyptians gave the Hebrews gold and silver when they left Egypt... Cyrus paid for their return from Babylon... Likewise, the Jews who return after Armageddon will be funded by the Gentiles...

“The multitude of camels shall cover your land (caravans will arrive from all over), the dromedaries (or young donkeys) of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come; they shall

bring gold and incense, and they shall proclaim the praises of the Lord.”

This was partially fulfilled when the Jews returned from Babylon. But it'll be repeated in the last days.

It's also interesting that when these Jews return they'll come bringing gifts for the Messiah, King Jesus.

And note the two gifts they bring, “*gold and incense.*”

When Jesus was born the wise men brought “gold, frankincense, and myrrh.” Here the same gifts are given with the exception of *the myrrh*. *And why?*

Myrrh was an embalming fluid. It was given to a man who was born to die. But in the Kingdom Age, Jesus' death is behind Him. He was raised to never die again.

Verse 7, “All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together to you, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister to you; they shall ascend with acceptance on My altar, and I will glorify the house of My glory.” Genesis 25 lists “*Nebaioth*” and “*Kedar*” as the first and second sons of Ishmael, father of the Arabs. Both names refer to Arabian tribes. *Kedar* is an ancient name for Kuwait.

This promises to be a sight to see! Israel’s ancient enemy, the Arabs, will offer their flocks as sacrifices to the God of the Hebrews. The former hosts of Mecca and Medina will contribute to glorify the Jewish Temple.

Ezekiel 44:1-3 predicts that when Messiah returns He’ll walk through the Temple’s Eastern Gate.

Today this gate is blocked. In 1543 the Turks sealed it up in defiance of this prophecy. Yet amazingly, in the Kingdom Age the

tribes of Ishmael will give of their wealth to reopen this gate and beautify the Temple.

“Who are these who fly like a cloud, and like doves to their roosts? Surely the coastlands shall wait for Me; and the ships of Tarshish will come first, to bring your sons from afar, their silver and their gold with them, to the name of the Lord your God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because He has glorified you.” Again, Isaiah is speaking of a future return of Jews to their homeland.

And he mentions them coming from “*Tarshish*” and “*the coastlands*.” When Jonah tried to run from God he boarded a ship to Tarshish. It was the furthest western destination you could travel. Commentators have identified it with southern Spain or the British Isles.

Some see in this prophecy a reference to **Great Britain** and the **USA** (or *“the coastlands”*) as the two great facilitators of Jewish return. Both these countries have been Israel’s two main friends in modern times.

It’s interesting, that even after the rebirth of the modern state of Israel and the Zionist movement, still more Jews live in New York City than in Jerusalem.

The cities of London and Paris have the largest Jewish populations of cities outside Israel and the US.

Some people even see airplanes in verse 8. Jews returning to Israel are *“flying like a cloud... like doves...”* *If air travel is in the Bible this is probably it!*

“The sons of foreigners shall build up your walls, and their kings shall minister to you; for in My wrath I struck you, but in My favor I

have had mercy on you.” Israel will be struck by God. He’ll punish and purify the Jews.

Yet in the end, He’ll cause the world to build up Zion.

Verse 11, “Therefore your gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day or night, that men may bring to you the wealth of the Gentiles, and their kings in procession.” What a day this will be!

A continual stream of nations and foreign dignitaries will enter Jerusalem and pay homage to King Jesus!

“For the nation and kingdom which will not serve you shall perish, and those nations shall be utterly ruined.”

Psalms 2 predicts King Jesus will rule the nations with a rod of iron. In the Kingdom Age it’s either bow or bust. Rebellion against the Christ will not be tolerated.

“The glory of Lebanon shall come to you, the cypress, the pine, and the box tree together, to beautify the place of My sanctuary; and I will make the place of My feet glorious.” In the OT, the Temple was called God’s “footstool.” The Almighty fills the heavens, but where did He relax and kick back?... The Temple.

“Also the sons of those who afflicted you shall come bowing to you, and all those who despised you shall fall prostrate at the soles of your feet (if this happened today, that group would include Germans, Russians, Iranians, Palestinians, etc.); and they shall call you the City of the Lord, Zion of the Holy One of Israel.”

Imagine, Israel’s former enemies - from Marxists to Muslims - Antisemites from around the world - bowing down to Jesus and pledging allegiance to Israel.

“Whereas you have been forsaken and hated, so that no one went through you, I will make you an eternal excellence, a joy of many generations.” What a promise, Israel will become “*an eternal excellence.*”

“You shall drink the milk of the Gentiles, and milk the breast of kings...” Israel will nurse support from every nation. “You shall know that I, the Lord, am your Savior and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.

“Instead of bronze I will bring gold, instead of iron I will bring silver, instead of wood, bronze, and instead of stones, iron. I will also make your officers peace, and your magistrates righteousness.” Go to the markets in Jerusalem today and you’ll find bronze trinkets for sale. In the future the bazaars will be selling gold and silver.

“Violence shall no longer be heard in your land, neither wasting nor destruction within your borders; but you shall call your walls *Salvation*, and your gates *Praise*.” Modern Israel has existed for 67 years and has never known peace with her neighbors. Her borders stay guarded. She keeps constant vigilance.

Israel never knows when a rocket from Gaza or Syria will hit one of her villages. But the day is coming when violence will be no longer. *Salvation* and *praise* will be her watchwords - written on her walls and her gates.

Verse 19, “The sun shall no longer be your light by day, nor for brightness shall the moon give light to you; but the Lord will be to you an everlasting light, and your God your glory. Your sun shall no longer go down, nor shall your moon withdraw itself; for the Lord will be your everlasting light, and the days of your mourning

shall be ended.” Isaiah is looking even deeper into the future. This is language reminiscent of Revelation 22:5.

Once this current world disintegrates, God will establish a New Heaven and New Earth. Isaiah is here looking beyond *the Kingdom age* to *the eternal state!*

Verse 21, **“Also your people shall all be righteous; they shall inherit the land forever, the branch of My planting, the work of My hands, that I may be glorified.**

A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation. I, the Lord, will hasten it in its time.” Israel is called ***“a little one”*** and ***“a small one.”***

Today, Israel’s borders are the size of New Jersey. Yet one day the ***“little one”*** will be ***“a strong nation.”***

Chapter 61, “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because the Lord has anointed Me...” Whenever a Hebrew king took office the priest would anoint him with olive oil. The oil was a symbol of the Holy Spirit.

This tradition looked forward to a special King - an heir of David - who would be anointed not by the priest but by the Lord Himself - and not with oil, but with the Spirit of God. This future king was known as “Messiah” or “Christ” - both names mean “The Anointed One.”

This is why at the very outset of Jesus’ ministry, as soon as He rose from the waters of His baptism, the Holy Spirit descended on Him in the likeness of a dove.

And all throughout His ministry, Jesus leaned on the Holy Spirit. In John 8:28 He said, “I can do nothing of Myself.” Jesus live a life that was *dependent on* and *empowered by* the Holy Spirit. He was our example.

Since Chapter 42 Isaiah has been speaking about this special Servant of Yahweh. God introduced Him in 42:1, “I have put My Spirit upon Him.” Now the subject has become the speaker. The Messiah speaks prophetically, *“The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me...”*

And Isaiah declares what God anointed Messiah to do. Here’s His mission. Here are His intentions for us...

He declares, *“The Lord has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn...”*

And if you've read the Gospels these should be familiar words. Fast-forward to Luke 4. Jesus returns to His hometown of Nazareth. He goes to the synagogue.

It was customary for a visiting rabbi to read and comment on a Scripture. Thus, He was handed a scroll and He turned to what we call *Isaiah 61*. Jesus read verse 1 and the first line of verse 2. Then He spoke *what was the equivalent of the shot heard round the world*, “Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”

In other words, “I am the One and today is the day.” He was the Messiah and this is what He'd come to do.

And what a beautiful summation of the intentions of Jesus. *This is so important*. For how can you or I give someone our lives unless we're sure of their intentions.

Thus, here is what Jesus wants to do in our hearts...

First, *“preach good tidings to the poor...”*

Realize, you can be a rich man and still be poor in other ways. I assume we'd all consider the Wall Street Journal an authority on the subject of wealth, yet it stated, *“Money is an article which may be used as a universal passport to everywhere except heaven, and a universal provider of everything except happiness.”*

To be poor is to be without... not only without money... but *without love, friends, laughter, a strong family, peace of mind, purpose in life...* Yet Jesus comes to bring good news to those who are without.

He comes with spiritual treasure. He enriches our deepest needs, and locks us into eternal investments.

Jesus was also sent *“to heal the brokenhearted...”*

These folks are those who've been rejected, or bullied, or taken advantage of... They approach life with high hopes, but live in the wake of disappointment.

Yet Jesus is a balm that sucks out the poison. He's an ointment that soothes our aches. When applied to a hurt over time His love and joy causes healing to occur.

It's been said, "The Great Physician can do wonders with a broken heart, if you give Him all the pieces."

He also wants *"to proclaim liberty to the captives..."*

And I'm not talking about the inmates at Reidsville or San Quentin - or any of the other 4800 prisons and jails that incarcerate 2.3 million Americans. For there is actually a worse prison - it's called the prison of sin.

John 8:34, "Whoever commits sin is a slave to sin."

The problem with most sin is that it's habitual. You can't stop at one. Sin tends to be addictive. It becomes binding. And freedom is not as easy as snapping your fingers. Some sins are like a maze - there's a lot easier to get into, than they are to get out of.

But Jesus is into jailbreaks! He has the power to *restructure mindsets* and *alter behaviors*. He proclaims or speaks liberty to us... On the cross He set us free. Now when we believe His Word, the cuffs fall off and we can walk in the liberty He's created for each of us.

And Jesus also intends to open *“the prison to those who are bound...”* This is a different type of prison.

Bitterness is a prison of our own making.

The broken heart needs to be healed, but the bitter spirit needs to be set free. Like a wounded heart, bitterness begins with a break, but if you break an arm that never gets realigned, it could

heal crooked. This is what causes bitterness. We nurse a hurt - we lick our wounds. Rather than apply the forgiveness of Jesus, we allow our breaks to grow back crooked and bitter.

This is why a bitterness needs to be re-broken. This time with a contrite and humble attitude. Originally, we might've been a victim, but the ungodly way we've handled our hurt, needs to be confessed. When we do, Jesus opens the prison for those bound in bitterness.

And then it was Jesus' intention *“to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord...”* In essence, do it now!

What He'd outlined wasn't just wishful thinking or for a day yet future - it was His intentions then and there.

And here's a marvelous truth. Hebrews 13:8 declares, *“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.”* Just as His intentions that day in Nazareth were the same as Isaiah had

written about 700 years earlier - His intentions are the same today!

Here's what Jesus wants to do in us... *bring good news, heal our brokenness, release us from sin, break us out of bitterness, and do it - not tomorrow - but now!*

Now here's what's interesting, in Luke 4 Jesus stops after "*the acceptable year of the Lord.*" And notice what's next, "*and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn...*" And of course, the mourning Isaiah is referring to is the result of God's vengeance.

Yet on that day in Nazareth, Jesus didn't talk about "*the day of God's vengeance.*" That's for the last days. His first coming was about *salvation*, not *vengeance*.

Being that the Bible is ultimately *His Word*, Jesus recognized at least a 2000 year gap right in the middle of Isaiah's sentence. All

of Isaiah 61 speaks of our Lord, but He understood that some elements spoke of His first coming, while others await His second coming.

One day He'll bring God's wrath, but today Jesus speaks of His love. This should be our mission as well.

Verse 3 continues to describe what Jesus intends to do *at His second coming*, “To console those who mourn in Zion...” His comfort will be for the Jews. The world is being offered salvation today - not in that day.

“To give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness...” Again, this is Jesus' ministry to the Jews after the Great Tribulation and their time of purification.

“That they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified.”

Hosea 5:15 is an interesting verse. People think it's a prophetic utterance of Jesus, "I will return again to My place till they acknowledge their offense. Then they will seek My face; in their affliction they will diligently seek Me." At His first coming Jesus was rejected by the Jews, so He returned to His place, and He's waiting on them to *"acknowledge their offense and seek His face."*

And they will. Zechariah 12:10 predicts the end times Jews, *"Will look on Me whom they have pierced; they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son..."*

It's then that Jesus will swap the believing Jews, *"beauty for ashes"* and *"the oil of joy for mourning."*

Verse 4, *"And they shall rebuild the old ruins, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the ruined cities, the*

desolations of many generations.” When Jesus returns the cities of Israel will undergo a major renovation - an urban face-lift.

Today Israel is famous for its ruins. The countryside is sprinkled with “tels.” A “tel” is an archeological dig that was once an ancient city. The city was demolished in battle only to be rebuilt on the same spot with former materials. A mound eventually rises on the landscape.

A “tel” is literally **“desolations of many generations.”** There’s *Tel-Dan*, and *Tel-Megiddo*, and *“Tel-Aviv.”*

But the day will come when Israel is no longer known for its “tels,” but for its renovation and reconstruction.

“Strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the foreigner shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers. But you shall be named the priests of the Lord, they shall call you the

servants of our God.” The day will come with all the Jewish people will be priests.

In Exodus 19 God promised Israel that if the nation was obedient He'd make them **“a kingdom of priests.”**

“You shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory you shall boast. Instead of your shame you shall have double honor, and instead of confusion they shall rejoice in their portion. Therefore in their land they shall possess double; everlasting joy shall be theirs.” Israel will be treated as firstborn and given a double portion.

Verse 8, **“For I, the Lord, love justice; I hate robbery for burnt offering; I will direct their work in truth, and will make with them an everlasting covenant.**

Their descendants shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people. All who see them shall acknowledge

them, that they are the posterity whom the Lord has blessed.” All nations will know that Israel is God’s firstborn - His special people.

“I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.” Often over her history Israel played the harlot and gave herself to other gods. But in the end, God the groom, and Israel His wife, will live happily ever after.

Verse 11, “For as the earth brings forth its bud, as the garden causes the things that are sown in it to spring forth, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.” Finally, Israel will be the light of God to all the Earth!

Chapter 62, “For Zion’s sake I will not hold My peace, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not rest, until her righteousness goes forth as brightness, and her salvation as a lamp that burns.” Notice, God will not be patient with man’s wickedness forever. He will act...

He’ll judge *“for Zion’s sake... for Jerusalem’s sake.”*

God made promises to Israel. He entered covenants, *relationship defining agreements* - with Abraham, and David, and Jeremiah. And because of these covenants God has unfinished business with planet Earth.

“The Gentiles shall see your righteousness, and all kings your glory. You shall be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord will name.” *What name?* The Spirit doesn’t tell us. But Israel gets a new name!

“You shall also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

You shall no longer be termed Forsaken, nor shall your land any more be termed Desolate; but you shall be called Hephzibah, and your land Beulah; for the Lord delights in you, and your land shall be married.”

“*Hephzibah*” means “my delight is in her.” “*Beulah*” is the Hebrew word for “married.” Have you ever heard the term, “*Beulah-land*?” It’s a reminder of the love relationship Israel will have with God, her husband!

Verse 5, “For as a young man marries a virgin, so shall your sons marry you; and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you.” For two millenniums the land of Israel lay “*desolate*” - “*forsaken*” by the Jews of the Diaspora.

But in the Kingdom Age the Jews will embrace the land with the same passion a young man embraces his virgin bride. God will seal their union with His rejoicing.

Go to Israel today and you'll see that this love affair between the people and the land has already begun.

Which leads to verse 6, if you love someone you'll keep an eye out for them. Thus, "I have set watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem; they shall never hold their peace day or night." If you've been with us to Israel you walked the walls. From the ramparts you can see incoming dangers. God puts watchmen on alert.

"You who make mention of the Lord, do not keep silent, and give Him no rest till He establishes and till He makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth. The Lord has sworn by His right hand and by the arm of His strength: "Surely I will no longer give your grain as

food for your enemies; and the sons of the foreigner shall not drink your new wine, for which you have labored.

But those who have gathered it shall eat it, and praise the Lord; those who have brought it together shall drink it in My holy courts.” Isaiah is telling those who pray to remind God of His promises to Jerusalem.

And the description Isaiah gives of Jerusalem’s status, obviously points to a time that’s still future. For nothing in its storied past parallels these comments.

He writes in verse 10, “Go through, go through the gates! Prepare the way for the people; build up, build up the highway! Take out the stones, lift up a banner for the peoples! Indeed the Lord has proclaimed to the end of the world: “Say to the daughter of Zion, ‘Surely your salvation is coming; behold, His reward is

with Him, and His work before Him.” Apparently, the city’s salvation isn’t a *plan* or *project* but a *person*. It’s Jesus!

“And they shall call them the Holy People, the Redeemed of the Lord; and you shall be called Sought Out, a City Not Forsaken.”

Throughout Jerusalem’s long history the city was sacked hundreds of times. Yet in the end, the city of Jerusalem will be known as “*A City Not Forsaken*.” Jesus will come to her rescue.

And this is what we’ll study next week in Isaiah 63. The battle to end all battles - called it, “*Armageddon*,” or an even better name, “*The Battle Over Jerusalem*.”