

The Millennium Forecast

The Book of Isaiah

Text

Isaiah 60:1-22

Topic

The Lord promises believers that we will outshine the sun with His glory.

Title

“When You Can’t See the Moon ‘Cause You Outshine the Sun, that’s Agape”

Have you heard of the Day the Earth Stood Still? How about the Decade the Moon Disappeared?

It’s not a movie. For several years during the Middle Ages, the moon ‘disappeared.’ As Adrian Monk would say, “Here’s what happened.”

The 1257AD eruption of Indonesia’s Mount Samalas was catastrophic. An immense amount of volcanic ash and aerosols spewed into the atmosphere, spreading across the globe, significantly affecting visibility. The moon seemed to ‘disappear’ for a period of years.

The Greek word for ‘moon’ is *selenē*. *Selenology* is the study of the moon.

Isaiah was a ‘major prophet’ with a minor in selenology. He mentions the moon eight times in his book, including twice here in chapter sixty.

Isaiah had a specialization. We see it in portions of verses three & four, “And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the **brightness** of your rising. **Then you shall see and be radiant...**”

Radiant is something we can get excited about since Jesus told us, "You are the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14). And in Ephesians 5:8, we read, "At one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord."

Don't forget Peter, who said, "You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of Him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light" (First Peter 2:9).

I'll organize my comments around two points: **#1 See Yourself As Radiant**, and **#2 See The Lost As Photophilic**.

Think of Billy Crystal saying, "You look radiant!" A commonly used illustration to describe believers is to say that we *reflect* Jesus the way that the moon reflects the light of the sun. One commentator put it like this: "Our lives can reflect the light of Jesus much like the moon reflects the sun. The moon is not a source of light, it only reflects light from the sun. In the same way, Jesus is the only source of truth and light in our lives. All other things are just a reflection of Him."

True. But we need to be better spiritual selenologists and take it a step further:

- Reflecting bounces-back light from an *external* source.
- Radiating emits light from an *internal* source.

Do Christians have an 'internal source' to emit light? We sure do! When you believe Jesus and receive salvation, you are gifted with the permanent indwelling of God the Holy Spirit. You're 'lit' in the unseen realm. On Earth you might have a glow, a spiritual glow, either often or sometimes.

I haven't forgotten that we are studying Isaiah. Isaiah wrote in the 7th century BC to the Jews in the southern kingdom of Judah. About 150 years after Isaiah was silenced by being sawn in two by his own people, Jerusalem and the magnificent Temple were destroyed by King Nebuchadnezzar. The Jews were taken captive and remained in Babylon for 70yrs.

It is common for Isaiah to jump centuries ahead to the Great Tribulation, to the Millennial Kingdom that follows it, and into Eternity. The basic outline of future events to hold in your mind is this:

1. Jesus came to Earth, God in human flesh, preaching that the material, stick & stone Kingdom of Heaven that was unconditionally promised to the nation of Israel was at hand.
2. The Jewish officials formally rejected the offer. Jesus was violently put to death by Roman crucifixion.
3. Jesus rose from the dead, then ascended into Heaven.
4. The Church Age began. It is the wonderful time in which we live. Gentiles & Jews can receive the Lord and He gives them the permanent indwelling of God the Holy Spirit.
5. At any moment, Jesus will return in the air to resurrect the deceased believers of this Church Age. There will be living believers when He comes. They - **we** - will be raptured, i.e., changed in a moment & receive our resurrection bodies.
6. While we wait in Heaven to return with Jesus, a 7yr period of intense trouble on Earth prepares the nation of Israel to receive Jesus as their Messiah when He returns.
7. He returns and all Israel is saved. The Kingdom of God on Earth is inaugurated, lasting 1000 years.

Isa 60:1 Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.

Isa 60:2 For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the LORD will arise upon you, and His glory will be seen upon you.

The "darkness" is Isaiah's one-word summary of the Great Tribulation. We like to call it, the Time of Jacob's Trouble. Isaiah is consistent with Revelation 8:12, "Then the fourth angel sounded: And a third of the sun was struck, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them were darkened. A third of the day did not shine, and likewise the night."

Has this happened? No, it has not. It will.

Isa 60:3 And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.

Isa 60:4 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 carried on the hip.

Isa 60:5 Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and exult, because the abundance of the sea shall be turned to you, the wealth of the nations shall come to you.

This has never happened in Israel's history. It is going to happen, on the Earth, *tangibly* - not *allegorically*.

Bible prophecy is under siege from a most unlikely opponent: **Believers!** Matt Chandler of The Village Church believes that over the last 150 years, the book of Revelation has been "hijacked" by being read as a prophecy of End Times events. While reading through Revelation, Chandler said he was struck by the parallels between the struggles of the early Church and the modern day, *particularly regarding the spiritual and emotional challenges he witnessed in his congregation post-COVID19.*

COVID was tough. The masks... the distancing... the social isolation. But it was that way for everyone - believers and nonbelievers. *It wasn't persecution.*

I'm sorry, but I don't think COVID can be compared to any of the plagues & devastations of the Tribulation.

The Revelation holds out incredible hope & comfort to every generation. It promises you a blessing just for reading it. End of the day it is future prophecy.

Isaiah's audience was heading into the worst of times. How did the LORD encourage them? *He gave them hope in the 7th century by revealing what would happen to their descendants over 2700 years in their future!*

Jesus is the greatest Comforter. He gave us God the Holy Spirit & calls Him Comforter. It He used future prophecy to comfort...

The lost are photophilic. It means *to be attracted to light*. In this case, the light of the glory of God in Jesus Christ.

We are of the conviction that God is the Savior of all men - especially those who believe. Jesus draws all men to Himself by being lifted up on the Cross. All a person need 'do' is look to Jesus, crucified in his or her place, and believe. God so loved the world that whoever believes in Jesus will have eternal life. You will live forever. Eternal life, however, has more to do with you coming to life and sharing in the life of Jesus.

The remaining verses are not directly for the Church. God is addressing the nation of Israel.

Don't tune out knowing that these are promises to Jews, not to youse.

- You can meditate upon how unfaithful and disobedient the Jews were & rejoice in God's mercy in saving them.
- You can look to them and see prophecy after prophecy fulfilled, encouraging you in the future promises & prophesies that God has made us.

Isa 60:6 A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall bring good news, the praises of the LORD.

Isa 60:7 All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered to you; the rams of Nebaioth shall minister to you; they shall come up with acceptance on my altar, and I will beautify my beautiful house.

Isa 60:8 Who are these that fly like a cloud, and like doves to their windows?

Isa 60:9 For the coastlands shall hope for Me, the ships of Tarshish first, to bring your children from afar, their silver and gold with them, for the name of the LORD your God, and for the Holy One of Israel, because He has made you beautiful.

The Earth's nations come to Jerusalem with gifts & good news. They see Jews as "beautiful." There is an "altar" and the LORD has His "beautiful house."

This is future; this is tangible; this is the Millennium.

Isa 60:10 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.

Isa 60:11 Your gates shall be open continually; day and night they shall not be shut, that people may bring to you the wealth of the nations, with their kings led in procession.

Isaiah gives a cogent summary of the history of Israel: "In my wrath I struck you, but in my favor I have had mercy on you."

Isa 60:12 For the nation and kingdom that will not serve you shall perish; those nations shall be utterly laid waste.

One of the 'I never knew that' things we've learned from Isaiah is that although the Kingdom of God on Earth will be utopian, it will not be perfect. It can't be perfect because humans will be born during the Kingdom who will reject salvation. There will therefore be "nations" "utterly laid waste."

Isa 60:13 The glory of Lebanon shall come to you, the cypress, the plane, and the pine, to beautify the place of my sanctuary, and I will make the place of my feet glorious.

Isa 60:14 The sons of those who afflicted you shall come bending low to you, and all who despised you shall bow down at your feet; they shall call you the City of the LORD, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel.

You might read this and say, "See - the City is allegorical. Believers *are* the City." No, no, no, no. No. We've encountered this before. The example we use is from the MCU. Captain America is proud of his Brooklyn heritage. Cap (that's what we call him) learns that Spider-Man is from Queens. *He calls Peter Parker "Queens" when addressing him.* Same here - you can call Jews "the City of the LORD, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel."

Isa 60:15 Whereas you have been forsaken and hated, with no one passing through, I will make you majestic forever, a joy from age to age,

Isa 60:16 You shall suck the milk of nations; you shall nurse at the breast of kings; and you shall know that I, the LORD, am your Savior and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.

Isa 60:17 Instead of bronze I will bring gold, and instead of iron I will bring silver; instead of wood, bronze, instead of stones, iron. I will make your overseers peace and your taskmasters righteousness.

Isa 60:18 Violence shall no more be heard in your land, devastation or destruction within your borders; you shall call your walls Salvation, and your gates Praise.

Millennial conversation: "Hey, Gene, what are you gonna do today?" "I want to go to the Gates called Praise. I here David is going to be there with his stringed instrument band introducing new choruses."

Isa 60:19 The sun shall be no more your light by day, nor for brightness shall the moon give you light; but the LORD will be your everlasting light, and your God will be your glory.

This doesn't mean that the sun and the moon will disappear in the Millennium. They may be unseen because the Lord, & us, *outshine the sun.*

Isa 60:20 Your sun shall no more go down, nor your moon withdraw itself; for the LORD will be your everlasting light, and your days of mourning shall be ended.

Beyond the thousand years, "The city has no need for the sun, neither of the moon, to shine, for the very glory of God illuminated it, and its lamp is the Lamb. The nations will walk in its light. The kings of the earth bring the glory and honor of the nations into it" (Revelation 21:23-24).

Isa 60:21 Your people shall **all** be righteous; they shall possess the land forever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I might be glorified.

Another amazing thing we have learned, reinforced here, is that from the moment Jesus returns, and all Israel is saved, *every Jew born in the Millennium will be saved!* Not so Gentiles born for one thousand years. Multitudes remain lost and they perish forever.

Isa 60:22 The least one shall become a clan, and the smallest one a mighty nation; I am the LORD; in its time I will hasten it.

I take this to indicate that the nations who follow the Lord in the Kingdom will prosper and take that prosperity into Eternity.

Photophilics are drawn to us. I should say they are drawn to Jesus who has brought us into the kingdom of light, to radiate Him.

I know that many of you (I hope all) have had the experience of your family or friends noticing when you were, as Thumper was, *twitterpated!* You were smitten, overcome by romantic feelings.

The believers in Ephesus started-out with this radiant love. Forty-years later, *after only one generation*, the Lord penned a love letter to them. He accused them of "leaving" their "first love."

I saw a meme online this week that captures some of this. A husband is about to go out the front door to his house. His wife has taped a note to it. It says, "This isn't working. I'm leaving. Goodbye."

The husband stares at the door, then the note, then to door. He starts fooling with the deadbolt. *It works just fine!!* He shrugs it off, oblivious.

If there was a note from Jesus posted on your door...what would He say?

People have come up with ingenious ways of writing to each other and encoding a hidden message. I see something like that in chapter sixty. If we isolate some of the words & phrases that lean towards romance, it sounds like this:

My Beloved,

My glory is risen upon you. My light shines brilliantly upon you, illuminating every shadow and guiding your path. My glory will be seen upon you, radiating through your actions and your love, making you a beacon to the world. You are my chosen, and through you, the world will see My love and My power. You shall become radiant, reflecting My eternal light and love. Your beauty will be like the morning sun, spreading warmth and hope to all who see you. Your radiance is My presence within you.

*Coming soon,
Jesus*