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All Who See Them Will Acknowledge that They are a People the LORD Has Blessed **61: 4-11**

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DIG: Are the promises in these verses primarily material or spiritual? Why? Priests were supported by the gifts of the worshipers, so what is the implication in 61:6? How expensive is this priesthood? Who are the worshipers? Why is God going to do this for the people? Here we see the response to the LORD's promises. In what way are they like a bride? A garden? What emotions are these images meant to convey?

REFLECT: If you are a Gentile, how do you feel about these verses? Even though it is Scripture, does any of it rub you the wrong way? If you are Jewish, how do you feel about these verses? Is it payback time? In your response to God's promises, are you like a woman preparing for marriage, or one wondering whether to go out on a second date? Why?



After **Messiah's** Second Coming **Isra'el** will **rebuild** her **ruined cities** and **restore the places devastated long ago; they will renew the ruined cities that have been devastated for generations (61:4)**. In **54:3** and **58:12**, the promise was made that no matter how devastated the ruins, nor how desolate **the Land**, **God** will make sure it is

rebuilt. **Isaiah** has already said that Babylon (**to see link click [Dk - Babylon, the Jewel of Kingdoms, will be Overthrown](#)**), and Edom (see **[Gi - Edom's Streams Will Be Turned into Pitch](#)**), would be destroyed, never to be rebuilt. But the opposite is true for **Isra'el**. No matter how terrible **her** ruin, new life for **Isra'el** will spring up again (see **[Kp - My Chosen People Will Inherit My Mountains](#)**).

What will happen when **Isra'el** is restored? **Aliens will shepherd your flocks; foreigners will work your fields and vineyards (61:5)**. Two extremes are ruled out. On the one hand, **aliens and foreigners** will no longer oppress **Isra'el**, and **Isra'el** will no longer bow down to them and their gods. A day is coming when **she** will fear **the** Gentile **nations** no more. Although history may seem to suggest that the gods of the Gentiles are greater than the **God of Isra'el**, in the end, it will be crystal clear that they are not.

And you will be called *cohanin* of ADONAI, or priests of the LORD, you will be named ministers of our God (61:6a). **Isra'el** will, at long last, become a nation of **priests**. **God** said that He called and redeemed **Isra'el** from Egypt so that they would become **a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (Exodus 19: 5-6)**. Because of their sin this has never been attained. **Isra'el** has totally failed to keep **God's** Covenant with them. But success will ultimately come in the Millennium when **Isra'el will be called priests of the LORD**, and **will also be named ministers of our God**.

Isra'el is not the ruler of the world, but **priests** of the world. It is not that the gods of the nations are discredited and that **Isra'el**, having been chosen the winner as it were, is then to be in a position of power and privilege. Rather, the gods are discredited in order that **the nations** may come, through **Isra'el**, to a knowledge of the one true **God** and **Savior (45:14-15)**. **Isra'el's** exalted position is to be one not of privilege but of responsibility. A **priest** is to be a mediator between humans and **God**, assisting humans in their worship of **God** and the ways of **God**, as did the Levitical priests (see the commentary on **Exodus [Ft - The Levitical Priesthood](#)**). **Isra'el** is to be a **priest** to the nations. This understanding of **Isra'el's** calling and function has been explicit from the call of Abram, **All the peoples on earth will be blessed through you (Genesis 12:3b)**.²⁴⁵ When **Isra'el** fulfills **her** calling, instead of receiving grief, heartache, and persecution, **she** will receive **the wealth of the Gentile nations (60:10-14)**, and **in their riches she will boast (61:6b)**.

Instead of their shame My people will receive a double portion, and instead of disgrace they will rejoice in their inheritance (61:7a). **Isra'el** will receive a double blessing following **double** punishment. Remember in this section **God** is dealing with the third part of **40:2**, his three-fold message: **that she had received from the LORD's hand**

double for all her sins. So **double** punishment will give way to **double** blessing when **all Isra'el will be saved (Romans 11:26).** **Instead of shame and disgrace,** the **disgrace** of defeat and captivity, of having seemingly been deserted by, or worse, failed by, one's **God,** there will be the honor of a **double portion.**

And so they will inherit a double portion in their Land, and everlasting joy will be theirs (61:7b). The **double portion** refers to the inheritance that the eldest son in a family would receive from the father's estate (**Deuteronomy 21:17**). The eldest son was given special honor. Similarly, **Isra'el, the Lord's** firstborn (**Exodus 4:22**) will be honored. As a result, instead of dishonor, there will be honor; instead of dispossession, there will be possession of twice what had been before. We have seen throughout this study of **Isaiah,** and throughout the Scriptures in general, that **God** is a promise keeper. **He** will fulfill **His** promises to **His people Isra'el** for all eternity. **Everlasting joy** will be **their double portion.** It will be fullness of **joy!** What a day that will be.

For I, the LORD, love justice; I hate robbery and iniquity. In My faithfulness I will reward them and make an everlasting Covenant with them (61:8). The culmination of these blessings is that **God will make a New Covenant with the house of Isra'el and the house of Jacob (Jeremiah 31:31-34).** **God** loves **justice,** and **He** hates **robbery and iniquity.** Therefore, **God** promises this **reward** to the faithful remnant. Not to keep **His everlasting Covenant with them** would be an injustice and **robbery.**

Their descendants will be known among the Gentile nations and their offspring among the peoples. All who see them will acknowledge that they are a people of the LORD, whom He has blessed (61:9). At that time **Isra'el's** standing will be that she **will be known among the nations,** and the entire Gentile world will confess and **acknowledge that they are a people the LORD has blessed.** All those who say that the Church has replaced **Isra'el** in Scripture and that because of **Isra'el's** sin, all the promises that **God** made to **Isra'el** will now be conferred upon the Church will have to confess and **acknowledge that Isra'el is a people the LORD has blessed.** They will have to admit that *replacement theology* (that the Church has replaced **Isra'el**) is a false teaching. All amillennialists will have to admit that there really will be a thousand year reign of **Christ** ruling and reigning from Jerusalem. They will realize that **His** word is true and that **He** is **the Promise Keeper.**

In the next two verses the prophet seems to be speaking for the redeemed remnant who will rejoice in response to **ADONAI's** blessing in **61:1-9. I delight greatly in the LORD; my soul rejoices in my God (61:10a).** **Salvation and righteousness** are pictured as clothes

worn by **the holy ones (Deuteronomy 33:2-3)**. In other words, **the Israelites** will be characterized by **salvation (God's redeemed people)** and **righteousness (God's own righteousness being transferred to their spiritual account)**.

For He has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of righteousness (61:10b). The chapter ends with a description of **Isra'el's righteousness**. **Salvation and righteousness** are pictured as clothes worn by **the people of Isra'el**. **The LORD** will clothe **her with the garments of salvation and in a robe of righteousness**. Those to whom **He** wraps in **His robe of righteousness**, not only experience **salvation**, but are *empowered* by **the Ruach ha-Kodesh** to live righteously. **ADONAI** commands **righteousness**, and by **His** power alone, **He** provides it.

As a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels (61:10c). The simile used here is that of the **bride** and the **bridegroom**. To picture their joy and blessing the **bridegroom adorns his head like a priest (Exodus 39:28 and Ezekiel 44:18)**. Again the emphasis is that **Isra'el** will become a nation of **priests**. **And the bride adorns herself with her jewels**. **The adornment of the head of the bridegroom with a linen turban was a Jewish custom until the destruction of the second Temple by the Romans. As a result of the destruction of the Temple and as a symbol of mourning the rabbis forbid the bridegrooms from wearing linen turbans on their heads. For a similar reason the bride also was not allowed to wear a wedding crown.** **Isaiah** is saying that will be restored some day. And not only will **Isra'el** be **righteous**, **she** will produce **righteousness** before **the Gentile nations**.

Where in the past **Israel's** sins caused **God's** name to be profaned among **the nations**, in the future **Israel's righteousness** will produce **righteousness** among **the nations**. There will be material benefits and physical improvements to **the Land**, but the true blessings will be *spiritual* in that day. **For just as the earth brings forth its plants, or a garden makes its plants spring up, so ADONAI will cause victory and glory to spring up, or be known by, before all the Gentile nations (61:11 CJB)**. If nature is reliable, how much more so is **the Creator** of nature! **He** will plant **righteousness** in the **garden of Isra'el**, and it will **spring up** like flowers in a **garden** (see **45:8** for the same promise). **Faithfulness springs up from the earth, and righteousness looks down from heaven, the LORD will indeed give what is good, and our Land will yield its harvest (Psalm 85:11-12)**.

For He has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of righteousness (61:10b) has significance today to observant **Jews**, or **Jews** who practice

their faith, in that they believe that a deceased man or woman is made ready to meet **God** by a physical ritual purification or *teharah*. They make an incredible effort to come before **God** in a physically “clean” state, even if there are no guarantees that it will make them acceptable to **God**. Religious Jews believe that mankind is composed of body and soul, and the soul is the essence of each person contained within the living body. They also believe that when a person dies, the *neshama*, or the soul, maintains consciousness and remains near the body until it is buried. Because of this they comfort the soul by reciting **Psalms** and providing a *shomer* for the body of the deceased. A *shomer* is an honor guard, a Sabbath-observant Jew, who will accompany the body (and soul according to their belief) from the moment the *teharah* is completed until the time of the funeral.

The deceased is washed and dressed by members of the *Chevra Kadisha*, which means *the holy brotherhood*. The body is carefully washed and dried, in a specific order, by members of the same gender; fingernails and toenails are cleaned. All jewelry and other objects are removed. After this, the deceased is “made pure” through immersion in running water. If the location where the *taharah* takes place does not have a *mikvah* (body of water used only for ritual immersion to achieve a state of ritual purity), a cascade of water must be poured over the body. The body must be completely clean and bare, with nothing foreign on it, before being immersed in the *mikvah*. Once the deceased is declared pure, the body is gently dried and dressed in shrouds of white linen. All throughout the *taharah*, particular prayers and portions of the TaNaKh are recited, **Isaiah 61:10** being one of them.²⁴⁶

But sadly, all these preparations cannot produce a right standing before **God**. It is only through faith, trust, and belief in **Yeshua Messiah, Jesus Christ**, that we can present ourselves **dressed in fine linen, white and clean (Revelation 3:4-5. 4:4, 19:14)**, and knowing that it is **He** who dresses us in **His righteousness**.