

Christ's Radiant Kingdom

Isaiah 60:1-22

Halifax: 3 April 2011

Introduction

A couple of weeks ago I told you that we were coming to the portion of Isaiah's prophecy where he speaks about the glorious reign of Jesus Christ.

- We took Psalm 47 as our Psalm of focus to go along with these chapters because it calls us to rejoice in Jesus reign and in the way He gathers the nations to Himself to serve Him!
 - When Isaiah writes about this glorious reign,
 - he does not attempt to divide it into need little time segments...
 - He simply tells us that Jesus is going to come to turn His people to God,
 - And that when He does the nations will come to Him,
 - And that in the end the whole world will be one big worshipping community that belongs to Him and that the wicked will be judged and cast out.
- Last week, in Isaiah 59, most of what we saw was quite negative.
 - Isaiah was telling the church of his day that the reason God was not blessing them and answering their prayers was because of their sin.
 - In verse 2 (of chapter 59), he said:
 - **Isa 59:2: "Your iniquities have separated you from your god and you sins have hidden His face from you."**
 - And then He went into a long discourse about how great their sin was and how He couldn't even find one person to intercede.
 - No one was fit for the job.
 - But then there was the good news—the excellent news...
 - That God was displeased that there was no one to intercede and decided that He Himself would do all that was necessary to save them!
 - In particular, we saw in verse 20 & 21 that He was going to send the redeemer to those who turned from their transgressions...
 - And that He would take the Holy Spirit who was upon the Redeemer and the words that were upon His lips and put them upon His people and their children!
 - Not only would He come to redeem them, but also that He would turn them to His redemption.
 - In this we have a complete summary of Christ's saving work...
 - He redeems His people by His blood and He baptises them with His Spirit so that they will come to Him to serve Him.
 - That is what He does to establish His righteous kingdom.

- And now in chapter 60—he tells us of the great consequences of this saving work which he describes as the light arising upon the people.
 - He shows the blessing that it brings to them and the effect that it has on the nations and drawing them to become His servants.
 - The light begins to shine upon Israel, and then it shines into the rest of the world.
- It is one great and marvellous hope that Isaiah presents to us!
 - But too often we don't realise what we have!
 - Christ is our head and king and saviour and our future is with Him!
 - Glorious! Glorious! Glorious!

As I was working on this message I thought of Jay Adam's illustration about Gus.

- Do you know it?
 - Gus is a frog who plays the piano...
 - Gus's owner shows up to audition at the end of the day when the agent who is evaluating the auditions is about to go home for the day.
 - He is tired and discouraged because he has not seen anything worthwhile.
 - But Gus's owner shows up with his little black bag.
 - First he pulls out a little piano and sets it on the table.
 - Then he pulls a fish out of his bag, "This is Goldie—she sings"
 - Then he takes the frog out, "This is Gus—he plays the piano."
 - The agent is quite leans forward with interest and motions to go on and have them perform.
 - Gus is marvellous on the piano and Goldie signs beautifully.
 - The agent is ready to sign them on, but suddenly Gus's owner drops his countenance and says,
 - "I can't go through with this—it's all a fake..."
 - He packs up his bag, goes through the door, and starts down the hall.
 - The agent chases after him—"What do you mean it's a fake?"
 - "Please tell me, How is it a fake?"
 - Gus's owner looks up sadly and replies,
 - "Goldie can't sing."
 - "Gus is a ventriloquist!"

Gus's owner did not realise what he had in his bag!

- Too often, that is the way we are as Christians.
 - We don't realise the unsurpassing riches we have in Jesus Christ!

- And so today, I want you to take a fresh look at the glorious kingdom of Jesus as His reign is described to us in Isaiah 60!
 - Before I begin, I want you to understand your position with reference to this passage.
 - From Isaiah's vantage point, you are the distant nations he speaks about that will come to the light after it arises in Israel.
 - But if you are among those who have come, you engrafted into Israel and so are now a part of the people upon whom the light has arisen.
 - And that is how I am going to address you.
 - I want to tell all of you who are in Christ the tremendous blessings that belong to you as those who are the Israel's God!
 - I want to show you the glory of what you have in Christ.
 - I want to make sure that you are not like Gus's owner!

So Christian, first of all,

I. See here that you are called to "Arise and shine because your light has come!"

- There is no need to mope around as if you were missing out!
 - There is no need to look with envy at those who are perishing as if they have something worthwhile that you are missing out on!

A. Look at what Isaiah is describing here in the first 2 verses...

1. He sees a darkness that envelops the whole world...
 - not just the heathen nations who do not know God,
 - But a darkness that even envelops Israel!
 - Before Jesus came, Israel had the morning star of God's promise, but there was still darkness because the light of salvation had not yet come.
 - In verse 2 he says,
 - **Isa 60:2: For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, And deep darkness the people;**
 - Such a darkness indeed!
 - Sin has separated the whole human race from God and there is no one who can do a thing about it...
 - Our sin problem is too deep for us to deal with.
 - We are buried in the darkness without any resources from within ourselves
 - The world doesn't realise just how deep the darkness is because we are used to it.

- Some people realise it more than others,
 - but essentially we are cut off from our God and we cannot serve Him and we cannot please Him—
 - not because He is hard to please but because we are wicked and He is pure and holy...
 - We don't love our Creator—we don't even know Him.
 - Sin has cut us off and left us in darkness.
2. But Isaiah, looking into the future, sees the light arising upon Israel!
- a. God's people were unique in the Old Testament because it was to them that God had promised to send the light!
 - Isaiah is looking into the future and seeing the coming of Jesus!
 - Jesus referred to Himself as the Light of the World and as the Light that shines in the darkness!
 - The sun was to arise upon Israel when He came!

TRANS> And so, just as God said,

- b. When Jesus came, the light was fully revealed!
 - It had been prophesied that He would come to save His people,
 - But it was not until He came that the light arose upon us so that we could see what His salvation was to be!
 - He was revealed openly among us as crucified to take away our sins!
 - God the Son Himself did this for us!
 - In Him and His saving work, we see what God done to take away our sin...
 - We see how holy God is that such a great offering was required.
 - We see how gracious He is to provide such an offering!
 - We see Him in the light of Jesus Christ crucified!
 - And it is marvellous in our eyes!
- c. And when we see and believe, the light fills us from the inside out!
 - We who were once darkness become full of glorious light!
 - We are reconciled to our Creator and we walk in the light!
 - He fills us with new life in Jesus so that we begin to be like Him.
 - We ourselves become light in the Lord!
 - The light fills us and it fills our souls and it fills the world!

B. And so there is the command, now that the light has risen upon us, to “Arise; shine.”

1. This is what we are called to do when the light comes to us!
 - Jesus told us to do this in the Sermon on the Mount when He said,
 - **Matt 5:14,16: “You are the light of the world—Let your light so shine before men that may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”**
 - Do you see—you are the people of God if you have Jesus!
 - The light has come upon you!
 - So let your light shine!
 - People ought to see a difference in you!
 - You know God!
 - You have been delivered from darkness of confusion and ignorance of God and now you know Him and you are reconciled to Him.
 - The darkness of guilt is gone.
 - The darkness of uncertainty is gone—you have a sure Saviour...
 - The darkness of rebellion is gone—you are walking in the light, serving your God, rejoicing in His commandments!
 - Arise, Shine! For your light has come!
2. But this is not merely a command—this is also blessing!
 - What do I mean by that?
 - I mean that it is a command that is accompanied by God’s power!
 - It is a command of God that brings about the thing that is commanded!
 - It is as it was when God commanded the light to shine in the darkness at Creation.
 - It was dark, so He said, let there be light and there was light!
 - When He says to His church, “Arise, Shine,” the church does arise and shine because His command has power to cause us to shine!
 - It is like Jesus’ command to a leper to “Be clean.”
 - The leper had no power to make himself clean, but Jesus command made him clean.
 - It is like the command to Lazarus after he had been dead for four days to “come forth!”
 - Lazarus had no power to “come forth.”
 - He was dead!
 - But when Jesus spoke those words, the power to obey was in the command!
 - So it is when the Lord says, “Arise, shine!”
 - You have no power to do it—you are darkness...

- But you arise and shine because He joins His power and grace to His command!
- If you are in Jesus today—trusting in Him, living for Him, enjoying forgiveness and new life in Him,
 - It is because He has commanded you to “arise and shine because your light has come”
 - and by His grace, you have done so!
 - To Him be the glory and the praise!
 - You were dead in your trespasses and sins and He has shone in your heart by the gospel of Jesus and now you live!

3. So arise and shine!

- a. You are a part of that great society called the church that His glory has risen upon by sending Jesus!
 - As it says in verse 2,
 - Isa 60:2: The LORD will arise over you, And His glory will be seen upon you.
 - That has now happened.
 - Jesus has come and it is ours to shine forth in the glorious gospel.

TRANS> Verse 3 tells you what happens when the light is upon us and we arise as God’s people!

- b. The light that is upon us has a powerful drawing effect upon the nations of the world who are in darkness!
 - Verse 3 says that they actually come to the light!
 - **Isa 60:3: The Gentiles shall come to your light, And kings to the brightness of your rising.**

1) Do not underestimate the glory of this!

- The world was lost, without hope, without God in the world, under His wrath and curse, in deep darkness—a miserable hopeless condition!
- But as soon as Jesus, the light, arose upon us,
 - The Gentiles started coming!
 - These nations that were in the darkness!
 - They saw the light upon those few disciples who embraced Jesus and they came to the light!
 - And now there are people all over the world worshipping the true God—people full of light!
 - It is a most remarkable fulfilment of prophecy that we are here worshipping today—
 - We are among those nations that have come to the light.

- 2) And now as God's people, we have the privilege not only of having this light, but also of being a light to those who are yet in darkness!
 - See that you shine forth!
 - See that the light is shining upon you so that it may shine from you!
 - Come to the light and be the light—and the nations will come!

TRANS> And this brings us to the second thing that Isaiah tells us to do...

- Having told us to arise, shine,
- He now tells us to...

II. Look up and see the Gentiles flooding into the church to serve the Lord!

- Verse 4 says:
 - **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 nursed at your side.**

A. He has to tell us to lift up our eyes and see His great work of ingathering!

1. God is doing this great work in the world and too often we don't see it!
 - We are too much like Gus's owner!
 - We don't realise what we have.
 - We don't see the glorious expansion of the kingdom.
2. Every day the LORD is bringing people who were once darkness into His kingdom of light!
 - Every day, there are almost 7000 people who profess Christ—
 - And this does not include those who were born in Christian homes!
 - Some of these are not true conversions of course, but many of them are!
 - These are eternal souls added to Christ's glorious kingdom!
 - The Lord is gathering them together with us to live with us forever in God's house!
 - Just think, even in our little congregation there have been many professions of faith made—Ron & Katie Mohammed, Paul & Michelle Lindsey, Jason Lindsay and his brother Peter, Kyle Stewart, Rebecca Gillingham, and Daniel professed his faith among us after coming to Christ on the Street—
 - And there are others from the more distant past and I have not even mentioned those who grew up in the covenant and professed faith.
3. Does this not thrill your soul?
 - Verse 5 explains encouraged we will be if we will lift up our eyes and see!

- It says...
 - **Isa 60:5: Then you shall see and become radiant, And your heart shall swell with joy;**
- What a delight it is to see Christ gathering people into His kingdom!
 - The language used here is that of very intense joy—joy that makes you quiver within!
 - What delight it gives us to see it—
 - Look and see!

B. The nations will come in great abundance to fill up Christ's kingdom!

- Isaiah goes into many details to fill out the picture of the Gentiles coming to serve Christ in verses 5-16.
 - There are two main things that are brought out.

1. First, that they come in great numbers!

- a. In verses 6-7 He speaks of them coming from all different directions...
 - From Midian, which was in the south...
 - From Ephah, which was in the east...
 - From Kedar and Nebaioth, which were in the northeast...
 - From Tarshish (v. 9), which was in the west...
 - They come from all around in great numbers!
- b. He gives us a couple of pictures to show how many there are...
 - 1) In verse 8, he describes them as flying like a cloud—even a cloud of birds to their roost...
 - **Isa 60:8: Who are these who fly like a cloud, And like doves to their roosts?**
 - There are so many of them that they look like a cloud coming to God's house—streaming up to Mount Zion to worship Him.

TRANS> In verse 11, Isaiah gives us the second picture of their abundance.

- 2) He tells us that there is such a flood of them coming into God's city that the gates cannot be closed...
 - And he speaks not just of individuals, but of kings in procession with their entourages:
 - **Isa 60:11: 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.**

- Understand that Isaiah is using the language of Old Testament typology here to describe the gathering of the Gentiles after the coming of Jesus!
 - It is not that the nations literally go on pilgrimage to the earthly city of Jerusalem!
 - In John 4 Jesus made it in his talk with Samaritan woman that worship would involve going on pilgrimage to Jerusalem.
 - In John 4:21, He said:
 - **John 4:21: Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father.**
 - And then in 4:23, He adds:
 - **John 4:23: "But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him.**
 - Coming to Him did not mean that the Samaritans (or these nations Isaiah speaks of) would start going to Jerusalem—
 - It meant that they would offer up prayer and praise to God in the name of Jesus in their own communities,
 - giving thanks for the blood of the covenant that He shed to atone for their sins.
 - Jesus is the altar for the nations.
 - Our sacrifice of praise is acceptable because we offer it up in His name.
 - He is in heaven, and we gather before His heavenly throng to worship wherever we are gathered in His name.

TRANS> If Isaiah was not speaking in types here and all these nations really were coming up to the earthly Jerusalem to worship,

- there would not be nearly enough room to contain them all!
 - He speaks of a continual stream into the city!

c. Even those who were once enemies to Israel are among them...

1) In verse 14, Isaiah says:

- **Isa 60:14: 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...**
- Not that they come to worship God's people—of course not!
 - Again, this is pictorial language...

- These nations rather begin to bless God's people whom they once cursed—they become one with them in service to King Jesus.
 - This reminds us that when we come to Christ, we are not only reconciled to Him, but also to His people.
 - If you claim to have come to the light but you do not love the people He has redeemed, you are a liar!
 - Verse 12 makes it clear that:
 - **Isa 60:12: "The nation and kingdom which will not serve you shall be perished and those nations shall be utterly ruined.**
 - Jesus gives them time to repent,
 - but if they will not come to the light and unite in love with His people, He destroys them in His providence...
 - Did He not destroy Jerusalem for oppressing those who came to the light?
 - And then did He not destroy Rome for the same reason?
 - In Matthew 25, Jesus said that what we do to the least of His brethren, we do to Him.
 - We serve Him by serving one another in the church!
 - And if we do not serve His people, we do not serve Him and will be cast to eternal destruction:
 - **Matt 25:45-46: 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.' And these will go away into everlasting punishment,**
 - You are totally deceived if you say that you love God, but you do not love and serve His people.
- 2) In verse 15-16 Isaiah describes how these who once oppressed the people of God now provide for them...
- He says, addressing those who belong to Him:
 - **Isa 60:15-16: "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. You shall drink the milk of the Gentiles, And milk the breast of kings; You shall know that I, the LORD, am your Saviour And your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.**
 - This was beautifully fulfilled when the gospel went out to the Gentiles under Paul's ministry—
 - and they saw their poor persecuted starving Jewish brethren back in Jerusalem and took up collections for them.

- What a change—from Gentiles that despised God’s people to those who serve them and provide for them!
- But this was only the beginning of the help that believers offer to one another in the body of Christ!
 - What a beautiful, glorious thing it is to behold!
 - What sacrifices have been made by one believer to help another!
 - And whenever this is done, those who were in need give glory to God—seeing His provision for them through those that Christ has redeemed and added to them!

TRANS> Now this brings us to the second main thing that Isaiah describes about the nations coming to Christ.

- Not only do they come in great numbers...
- 2. They also come to serve the LORD and His church with all that they have.
 - This theme runs all the way through verses 5-16.
 - a. In verse 5, it says that the Gentiles who are drawn by the light bring all that they possess and offer it to God.
 - **Isa 60:5: The abundance of the sea shall be turned to you and the wealth of the Gentiles shall come to you”**
 - It goes on to talk about camels and gold and incense and flocks coming to the service of Christ in verse 6.
 - Verse 9 says that they bring their silver and gold...
 - Verse 11 says they bring their wealth to Jerusalem.
 - Verse 13 refers back to the days of Solomon when the great trees of Lebanon were used to build the temple and beautify the sanctuary of God.
 - And all of these offerings are fully acceptable to God!
 - Verse 7 says that all this will “ascend with acceptance” on God’s altar and that He will glorify the house of His glory...
 - The idea is not that they put everything they have in the offering plate as such (or burn it on the altar as a sacrifice).
 - A due portion is used in this way, and another portion is used to help out those who are in need...
 - But the idea is that all their possessions are used for the glory and honour of King Jesus—with thanksgiving to Him and in service to His kingdom.

- When we are converted, it is not just our tithe that we give to God,
 - but everything we have—it's all His—it's all from Him and we endeavour to use it all for Him!
 - Instead of using our wealth for sexual immorality, for drunkenness, for vanity, and such things—we use it in ways that honour Him.
 - When you turn to the LORD it totally changes the way you use your wealth.
 - God delights in prospering His people in order that they may be rich in good works and in thanksgiving!
 - One of the most difficult things for us is to learn to use our wealth for His glory.
 - Too often the church has honoured the monastery where men make vows of poverty instead of the household of Job where riches are brought into God's service from grateful hearts.
- b. And not only do the nations who are drawn to the light bring their wealth, they also bring themselves into God's service...
- Verse 10 says:
 - **Isa 60:10: 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 favour I have had mercy on you.**
 - Again, this is obviously not referring to the walls of the physical city of Jerusalem.
 - It is referring to kings among the nations—governments and heads of state—who become defenders of the church...
 - who build up her walls and who minister to her by upholding God's law under Christ in their dominions and realms.
 - The reformed view is not that the church rules over the state (as in Roman Catholicism),
 - or that the state rules over the church (as in Erastianism where the king is thought to be the head of the church),
 - but rather that both the church and the state submit themselves to Christ and His word in their realms of responsibility,
 - mutually helping and supporting each other—the church teaching the state and the state defending the church and enforcing God's law in their dominions—avenging wrongs in His name.
 - This is how kings build the walls and minister to the church.

3. The influx of all these Gentiles with their gifts brings great prosperity to Christ's kingdom.
 - Look at verses 17-18—
 - There are three ways that He prospers His kingdom...
 - a. First, that the LORD replaces adequate materials with precious materials!
 - Verse 17 says:
 - **Isa 60:17: "Instead of bronze I will bring gold, Instead of iron I will bring silver, Instead of wood, bronze, And instead of stones, iron.**
 - As His kingdom comes, the Lord adds more and more blessing to His people—
 - He loves to enrich us—if only we would not let it be our ruin when He does!
 - If only we would learn to love what He gives us and receive it with thanksgiving.
 - In glory we will finally know how to do this—
 - but perhaps along the way as the kingdom of God grows we will learn.
 - Each of the nations has something of their own to contribute and the result is blessing for all—
 - because now we are serving each other instead of destroying each other.

TRANS> Secondly, when the nations come,

- b. The LORD makes righteousness and peace to be the officers of His people!
 - This is what the rest of verse 17 says.
 - **Isa 60:17: I will also make your officers peace, And your magistrates righteousness.**
 - Notice that it does not say simply that the officers will be peaceable and righteous—
 - It is that peace and righteousness will be the officers and the magistrates!
 - The people in Christ's kingdom will be governed by peace and righteousness!
 - They will answer to them so that they will not need to be restrained by civil authorities.
 - Self government only works when, through Christ, we are governed by peace and righteousness.
 - When a society is not, its freedoms are lost and it is brought into bondage under oppressive rulers.

- Blessed is the society who needs no policemen and few laws because Christ has the hearts of the people and they love His law and serve each other in love!

TRANS> Thirdly, when the light comes,

- c. The LORD replaces violence and destruction with salvation and praise!
 - **Isa 60:18: 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.**
 - Instead of destroying each other, His people serve each other...
 - Instead of enemies attacking from without, enemies are drawn to Christ.
 - Instead of storms and famines, the LORD sends the gentle rain and receives thanksgiving from His people.

TRANS> See what blessing arises when Jesus the Light arises in the world!

- Isaiah is describing the direction in which the kingdom of Jesus moves...
 - There are periods of declension and periods of progress—
 - but overall, Jesus continues to reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet.
 - We need to labour to see His kingdom come so that His will is done on earth as it is in heaven!
 - That is the ultimate aim!
- But as great as the ingathering of the Gentiles and the prosperity that comes with it may be, we must not miss the greatest blessing of all!

III. The greatest blessing that God Himself came to dwell with us!

- A. Isaiah makes it absolutely clear that the Light that arises on God's city to bless it is God Himself!
 - In verses 19-20 he says:
 - **Isa 60:19-20: "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.**
 - 1. Every person in the world has the light of the sun and the moon.
 - God has given them to us to rule the day and the night and they are a wonderful blessing.

- But the thing that makes us unique as God's people is that we have God Himself for our light and our glory!
 - He Himself has come to save us in order that He might dwell with us forever—He as our God and we as His people!
- The light we have from the sun and the moon is nothing compared to the light of His presence!
 - Sure, they can show us beautiful things around us, but they cannot show us how to live our lives!
 - They cannot flood our souls with the joyful light of the gospel that saves us from our sins!
 - They cannot empower us to live for the Lord and to love each other.
 - They are important to keep us alive, but they cannot give us life from the dead.
 - Only God with us—Emanuel—Our Lord Jesus Christ—can bring us into His righteous kingdom that we may live forever,
 - flooded with the light of His fullness, beauty, majesty and glory!

2. And He has come to abide with us forever!

- Twice it says that He is our everlasting light!
 - He did not come merely to visit, but to abide with us forever!
 - His is a light for our souls that can never be put out!
 - He is our King who will ever reign with us.

3. Do you see what you have Christian?

- The God of eternal light has come to save you that He might dwell with you forever!
 - This is all our glory and our good!
 - Bask in this glorious light!
 - Let this light flood into your soul forever!
 - Tell me, what else do you have?
 - What does the world have without the everlasting light?
 - What real glory is there apart from this glory?

B. Look at what happens when you have Jesus as your Light!

1. Your days of mourning are forever ended—

- It is stated at the end of verse 20.
 - Of course it is!
 - How can we mourn when we have God Himself with us as our light?

- Mourning is incompatible with His presence!
 - There is so much beauty, so much glory, so much truth, so much goodness, so much love—
 - All of our tears are wiped away in the light of His presence!
2. Not only that, but verse 21 tells us that we are all righteous:
- **Isa 60:21: Your people shall all be righteous**
 - That is amazing!
 - Isaiah has been telling the covenant people that they are far from righteousness...
 - but he has also told them that He will provide righteousness for them.
 - On our own, we are transgressors who bring down God's wrath and judgements,
 - but when Jesus the light arose upon us, His chief work was to make His people righteous—to save them from their sins.
 - He went to the cross to bear the penalty of our sins!
 - And God accepted His sacrifice.
 - Because He is our head and has paid for the sins of the whole kingdom, we are all righteous!
 - All who come to the light are cleansed by His blood from all their sins!

TRANS> But this is still not all we have when He dwells among us...

3. When you have Him as your light, verse 21 goes on to say that we shall inherit the land forever!
- Now you know what the land was!
 - It was the place where God dwelt among His people—where He established His footstool.
 - Moses described this as the only thing that distinguished Israel from the nations—that God dwelt among them!
 - And now that the light has arisen in the person of Christ,
 - We are given the inheritance of a new heaven and a new earth with King Jesus in the midst of us!
 - We are given a place where He dwells among us forever.
4. Verse 21 goes on to say that we are planted by Him in this glorious fruitful land so that we ourselves become the work of His hands!
- We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus!

- His masterpiece—that which He is shaping for beauty and honour!
 - Just think of it!
 - God is working in you to make you beautiful and fruitful
 - The light of Jesus fills you with new, beautiful, delicious life that brings glory to God.
 - It is glorious—we are so crooked, so full of sin—
 - But Hallelujah! He is changing all that!
5. And then He multiplies us—
- Verse 22 says: **“A little one shall become a thousand and a small one a strong nation.”**
 - There is so much hope in these words!
 - He plants us to beautify us and make us fruitful, and then He gives us children who also love Him!
 - The LORD began this with Abraham—
 - He brought him near and promised to bless him, calling him to “walk before me and be perfect.”
 - He chose him to be holy and without blame before Him in love.
 - This was the blessing...
 - Now it would have been a splendid thing if God had done this only for Abraham—
 - but He also told him that he would multiply him into to great nation!
 - Not just a crowd of people, but a people who were His people and had Him as their God!
 - But it looked so impossible!
 - Abraham and Sarah were barren—they could not even have one child.
 - But you know the story—God made one to become a thousand!
 - And He keeps on doing this!
 - When the light first arose, there were only the twelve disciples and a few others—a very small and pitiful company.
 - It looked impossible that this could spread to the nations—
 - But it did—
 - One became a thousand!
 - Here we are to prove it!
 - But now here we are again, looking at the world that Jesus said He would bring under His feet.

- And we feel small and helpless and outnumbered!
 - God has always done it this way—He loves to do it this way!
 - Can we not look to Him to make one a thousand all over again?
- Do you feel small as a Christian?
 - He will make you a thousand!
 - He will do it because He is with you!

Conclusion: What Glorious things God has promised to us!

- Do not suppose that He has given you a mere pittance!
 - He has lavished you with every spiritual blessing in Christ Jesus.
 - Bask in it!
 - You have Gus in your bag!
- You will say, “But where is all this glory that is promised?”
 - Look at the very last words in our text...
 - “I, the LORD, will hasten it in its time.”
 - Abraham had to wait so long for God’s promise that he thought it might not come—
 - but then God gave him the son of promise and was all the more glorified for doing it when he was past the age to have children.
 - Israel had to wait for four hundred years in Egypt—
 - but in His time He did what He had promised and brought them out to dwell with Him.
 - The faithful in Israel had to wait through the captivity and all the terrible years that followed until the light arose upon them...
 - but God did what He said in His time—He sent the Messiah and began to gather the nations
- Now we have seen the gospel break out into the world...
 - But we are waiting for all things to be brought under the feet of Christ.
 - Will God not do it?
 - Of course He will!
 - All that He has promised, He will do!
 - Bask in the riches of His glory!
 - You have Gus in your bag!