

Series: Christmas Through the Eyes of the Prophets

12/31/23 “Global Worship,” Isaiah 60:1-3, 16b, NLT

INTRODUCTION: Who has wondered if God has abandoned you? Who has sought God but not felt His Presence, not heard Him or not seen Him move on your behalf—as though He is far away?

Context: 700 yrs before Jesus, before Babylonian captivity, God gave to Isaiah to encourage people after captivity (commentaries); also to encourage His people throughout the ages.

MAIN IDEA: God will never abandon us to darkness. Here He seeks to encourage us by promising two things.

I. First, He brings light (1)

Light: illumination in every sense, including lightning, happiness, etc.; life vs. death (darkness) –*Strong’s*

A. through Jesus

John 8:12, NLT: I am the light of the world. If you follow me, you won’t have to walk in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life.

1. 2,000 years ago on Christmas
2. continues through us

Matthew 5:14, NLT: You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden.

Philippians 2:15, NLT: Live clean, innocent lives as children of God, shining like bright lights in a world full of crooked and perverse people.

3. will be even brighter when He returns & rules (3)
4. He will be the only light—no sun or moon (19)

B. into a world of darkness that gets us down (2)

Darkness: distress, dread, terror, mourning, perplexity, ignorance, evil, sin (BDB)

EX: Too little daylight, dark circumstances

1. covers all nations: evil rulers, mistreatment, crime,
2. covers all people: sin, depression, oppression, etc.

ILLUSTRATION:

II. Second, He blesses us in front of others (3, 14, 15)

NOTE: The Jews have been persecuted for millennia. God’s people who are grafted in have been persecuted for 2,000 years (more martyred for Jesus 1900-2000 than in the previous 1900 years).

A. all nations will eventually “see” the Truth, even leaders
(or be destroyed, 12)

1. He will rule every nation for 1,000 yrs (Rev. 20:2)
2. He will vanquish all opposition (Rev. 20:7-15)

B. individually we may experience the same...

1. Jesus is “invading” every nation now; individuals are joining His family; they are repenting of their sin: idolatry & mean treatment of God’s people, rebelliousness, lawlessness
2. Holy Spirit brings conviction on enemies as we live for Jesus

Luke 6:28-28, NLT: “But to you who are willing to listen, I say, love your enemies! Do good to those who hate you. 28 Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who hurt you.

1Peter 3:15-16, KJV: ¹⁵ But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and *be* ready always to *give* an answer to every man that asks you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear: ¹⁶ Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.

3. our “foes” receive Jesus & become family

C. former “enemies” will worship together (6c)

ILLUSTRATION:

CONCLUSION: