

Isaiah 60:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee: for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favour have I had mercy on thee.

Analysis

The prophecy shifts to Zion's reconstruction: "And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee." Former enemies become builders and servants—complete reversal. This was partially fulfilled when Persian kings funded temple rebuilding (Ezra 6:8-12), but ultimate fulfillment is spiritual. Gentiles become living stones building God's spiritual temple (1 Peter 2:5, Ephesians 2:19-22). The reason for this reversal is stated: "for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favour have I had mercy on thee." God's wrath brought exile and destruction; His favor brings restoration. The Hebrew *qetseph* (wrath) and *ratson* (favour) stand in stark contrast. The final phrase *richam tik* (had mercy) comes from *racham*, meaning compassionate love. From a Reformed perspective, this illustrates the distinction between God's justice and mercy. Justice demanded judgment for covenant violation; mercy restores beyond what is deserved. This points to Christ's work—He bore God's wrath so we might receive God's favor (2 Corinthians 5:21). The transition from wrath to mercy demonstrates God's sovereign prerogative and gracious character.

Historical Context

The Babylonian exile demonstrated God's wrath against covenant unfaithfulness—Jerusalem's walls destroyed, temple burned, people exiled. The Persian period brought mercy—Cyrus's decree (Ezra 1:1-4), Artaxerxes's support (Ezra 7:11-26, Nehemiah 2:7-8), enabling rebuilding. However, Gentiles remained generally

hostile or indifferent. True fulfillment came when Gentile believers joined in building the church, with former persecutors like Paul becoming master builders (1 Corinthians 3:10). This continues as converts from all nations build up Christ's body.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does the transformation of strangers into builders illustrate the reconciling power of the gospel?
2. What does the transition from God's wrath to His favor teach about His character and redemptive purposes?
3. How are we, as Gentile believers, participating in building up God's spiritual temple?

Interlinear Text

ישַׁרְתָּה וְתַּרְגַּם וּמְלָכִים מִן חַמְמָת יְהֻנָּה וְבָבָב וְ	ישַׁרְתָּה וְתַּרְגַּם וּמְלָכִים מִן חַמְמָת יְהֻנָּה וְבָבָב וְ	ישַׁרְתָּה וְתַּרְגַּם וּמְלָכִים מִן חַמְמָת יְהֻנָּה וְבָבָב וְ
shall build up And the sons of strangers	thy walls and their kings	shall minister
H1129	H1121	H5236
		H2346
		H4428
		H8334
רְמַמְתִּים: וְבָרְצֹונָה יְהֻנָּה בְּקַאֲפִי הַפִּיתְתָּה יְהֻנָּה וְ	רְמַמְתִּים: וְבָרְצֹונָה יְהֻנָּה בְּקַאֲפִי הַפִּיתְתָּה יְהֻנָּה וְ	רְמַמְתִּים: וְבָרְצֹונָה יְהֻנָּה בְּקַאֲפִי הַפִּיתְתָּה יְהֻנָּה וְ
unto thee for in my wrath I smote thee but in my favour have I had mercy		
H3588	H7110	H5221
		H7522
		H7355

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 61:5 (Parallel theme): And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers.

Isaiah 49:23 (Kingdom): And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers: they shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I am the LORD: for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me.

Revelation 21:26 (Parallel theme): And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.

Revelation 21:24 (Kingdom): And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.

Isaiah 60:3 (Kingdom): And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.

Zechariah 6:15 (Parallel theme): And they that are far off shall come and build in the temple of the LORD, and ye shall know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto you. And this shall come to pass, if ye will diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God.

Isaiah 12:1 (Parallel theme): And in that day thou shalt say, O LORD, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me.

Psalms 30:5 (Parallel theme): For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.

Isaiah 66:21 (Parallel theme): And I will also take of them for priests and for Levites, saith the LORD.