

Isaiah 60:21

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified.

Analysis

The chapter's climax describes the citizens: "Thy people also shall be all righteous." The comprehensiveness is striking—kulam (all)—not partially but entirely righteous. "They shall inherit the land for ever." This echoes the Abrahamic covenant (Genesis 13:15, 17:8) but extends to eternal inheritance (Matthew 5:5, Romans 4:13). The means of production follows: "the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified." Three metaphors:

1. "branch" (netser)—organic growth from divine planting
2. "planting"—God cultivated them
3. "work of my hands"—divine craftsmanship.

The purpose: "that I may be glorified." From a Reformed perspective, this teaches sovereign grace and divine glory. The people's righteousness isn't self-achieved but results from God's planting and forming—He plants faith, cultivates holiness, perfects righteousness (Philippians 1:6). The comprehensive righteousness points to imputed righteousness in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:21) and completed sanctification in glorification (1 John 3:2, Jude 24). God's glory is the ultimate purpose—all redemptive work serves His praise (Ephesians 1:6, 12, 14).

Historical Context

Post-exilic Israel was a mixed multitude—some faithful, many compromising (Ezra 9:1-2, Nehemiah 13:23-27, Malachi 1:6-14). Universal righteousness seemed impossible. The prophecy looked beyond ethnic Israel to the true Israel—elect from all nations who inherit eternal life through faith in Christ (Romans 9:6-8, Galatians 3:7-9, 29). The church is God's planting (1 Corinthians 3:6-9), His workmanship created in Christ Jesus (Ephesians 2:10), destined for complete righteousness at glorification (Romans 8:29-30).

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does the promise that all God's people will be righteous relate to imputed and imparted righteousness?
2. What does it mean that we are 'the branch of His planting' and 'the work of His hands'?
3. How does the purpose 'that I may be glorified' shape our understanding of salvation's ultimate goal?

Interlinear Text

וְעַמּוֹ	כָּל	צַדִּיקִים	לְעוֹלָם	יְהוָה
Thy people		also shall be all righteous	for ever	they shall inherit
H5971	H3605	H6662	H5769	H3423
אֶרֶץ	נֶצֶר	מִטְעַי	מַעֲשֵׂה	יָדִי
the land	the branch	of my planting	the work	of my hands
H776	H5342	H4302	H4639	H3027
				לְהִתְפָּאֵר:
				that I may be glorified
				H6286

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 37:22 (Parallel theme): For such as be blessed of him shall inherit the earth; and they that be cursed of him shall be cut off.

Matthew 15:13 (Parallel theme): But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.

Psalms 37:11 (Parallel theme): But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

Isaiah 29:23 (Parallel theme): But when he seeth his children, the work of mine hands, in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel.

Isaiah 61:3 (Righteousness): To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified.

Psalms 92:13 (Parallel theme): Those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God.

John 15:2 (Parallel theme): Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

Revelation 21:27 (Parallel theme): And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Isaiah 45:11 (Parallel theme): Thus saith the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker, Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me.

Isaiah 52:1 (Parallel theme): Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean.