

Isaiah 60:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the LORD thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee.

Analysis

God explains: "Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first." The "isles" (iyyim) refers to distant coastlands—the furthest reaches of the known world. "Wait" (qawah) means eager expectation, the same word used for waiting on the Lord in prayer (Psalm 27:14, Isaiah 40:31). Even distant Gentiles will eagerly anticipate God's salvation. "Ships of Tarshish" were large merchant vessels capable of long voyages (1 Kings 10:22). Their purpose: "to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the LORD thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee." The ships bring both people (scattered Jews, converted Gentiles) and wealth, all dedicated "unto the name of the LORD." Everything serves His glory, for "he hath glorified thee"—God has honored Zion. From a Reformed perspective, this illustrates God's sovereignty in redemption. He glorifies His church, which in turn glorifies Him. The ingathering occurs "unto the name of the LORD"—for His fame and worship. Missions serves doxology; evangelism magnifies God's glory.

Historical Context

Tarshish likely refers to distant Mediterranean ports, possibly southern Spain—representing the far west of the known world. Ships of Tarshish symbolized extensive trade and wealth (1 Kings 10:22, Jonah 1:3). The prophecy looked

beyond the Persian period to when maritime nations would serve God's purposes. The spread of Christianity throughout the Roman Empire and beyond, often following trade routes and using sea travel, fulfilled this. Paul's missionary journeys utilized sea transport (Acts 13:4, 14:26, 16:11, 18:18, 21:1-3, 27-28). The gospel's global spread continues this pattern.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How do distant peoples 'waiting for' God demonstrate the universal scope of redemption?
2. What does the dedication of wealth and resources 'unto the name of the LORD' teach about stewardship?
3. How should missions be oriented toward God's glory rather than merely human benefit?

Interlinear Text

כִּי H3588	לִי H0	אֵימָם H339	יָקוּמוּ H6960	וְאֲנִי וְתַנְשִׁישׁ H591	תַּרְשִׁישׁ H8659
		Surely the isles	shall wait	for me and the ships	of Tarshish
הַ	בְּרִאשׁוֹנָה	לְבָרֵךְ יֵאָבֵד H935	בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל H1121	מִמְּרוֹת וְלִקְרִיבָה H7350	כֶּסֶף וְזָהָב H3701
	first H7223	to bring	thy sons	from far	their silver and their gold H2091
אִתָּם H854		לְשֵׁם H8034	יְהוָה H3068	אֱלֹהֶיךָ H430	וְלִקְדוֹשׁ H6918
		with them unto the name	of the LORD	thy God	and to the Holy One
לְיִשְׂרָאֵל H3478	כִּי H3588	פָּאֲדָרְךָ: H6286			
of Israel		because he hath glorified			

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 55:5 (Glory): Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not, and nations that knew not thee shall run unto thee because of the LORD thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel; for he hath glorified thee.

Isaiah 2:16 (Parallel theme): And upon all the ships of Tarshish, and upon all pleasant pictures.

Isaiah 11:11 (References Lord): And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.

Isaiah 51:5 (Parallel theme): My righteousness is near; my salvation is gone forth, and mine arms shall judge the people; the isles shall wait upon me, and on mine arm shall they trust.

Isaiah 49:1 (References Lord): Listen, O isles, unto me; and hearken, ye people, from far; The LORD hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name.

Isaiah 42:4 (Parallel theme): He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law.

Isaiah 42:10 (References Lord): Sing unto the LORD a new song, and his praise from the end of the earth, ye that go down to the sea, and all that is therein; the isles, and the inhabitants thereof.

Galatians 4:26 (Parallel theme): But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.

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