

Isaiah 61:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But ye shall be named the Priests of the LORD: men shall call you the Ministers of our God: ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves.

Analysis

The identity transformation is profound: "But ye shall be named the Priests of the LORD: men shall call you the Ministers of our God." Israel receives priestly identity—kohanim Adonai (priests of the LORD) and mesharetei Eloheinu (ministers of our God). This fulfills Exodus 19:6: "ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests." Peter applies this to the church: "ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood" (1 Peter 2:9). All believers receive priestly status, offering spiritual sacrifices (1 Peter 2:5, Hebrews 13:15-16) and mediating God's presence to the world. The material blessing follows: "ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves." This isn't exploitation but the nations bringing their wealth and glory into God's kingdom (Isaiah 60:5-6, 11, Revelation 21:24-26). "Boast" (titmaru) can mean "exchange" or "glory in"—believers glory in God's work among the nations. From a Reformed perspective, this describes the believer's dual identity: priests to God and recipients of comprehensive blessing—spiritual and material, individual and corporate.

Historical Context

Under the old covenant, only Levites served as priests, with most Israelites excluded from direct priestly ministry. The new covenant democratizes priestly status—all believers access God directly through Christ the High Priest (Hebrews 4:14-16, 10:19-22) and serve as priests to God (Revelation 1:6, 5:10). The early church experienced this as both Jews and Gentiles functioned as priests, offering

spiritual worship. The riches of Gentiles flowing to God's people was fulfilled as Gentile converts brought resources to support gospel work (Philippians 4:18, 2 Corinthians 8:1-5).

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does your identity as a priest to God shape your daily worship and service?
2. What spiritual sacrifices are you called to offer as part of the royal priesthood?
3. How should believers 'boast in' or 'glory in' the riches that flow into God's kingdom?

Interlinear Text

מִשְׁרִית יְהוָה כְּפָנָיו תִּקְרֹב אַתָּה מִשְׁרִית
the Priests of the LORD But ye shall be named you the Ministers
H859 H3548 H3068 H7121 H8334

תָּאכַל גָּוִים כְּלֹת מִלְּכָה יְהוָה יְהוָה יְהוָה
ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles of the LORD of our God
H398 H1471 H2428 H559 H430

וּבְכָבֹד מִתְּמִרְאָה תִּתְּמִרְאֶה
shall ye boast and in their glory
H3235 H3519

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 19:6 (Parallel theme): And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

1 Peter 2:5 (References God): Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 2:9 (Parallel theme): But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

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

Revelation 20:6 (References God): Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

Revelation 5:10 (References God): And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.

1 Corinthians 4:1 (References God): Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.

2 Corinthians 11:23 (Parallel theme): Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft.
