

Isaiah 66:19

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And I will set a sign among them, and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal, and Javan, to the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles.

Analysis

God explains His plan: "And I will set a sign among them, and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal, and Javan, to the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles." The "sign" (ot) may refer to a remnant preserved through judgment or a miraculous demonstration. The survivors become missionaries to distant nations—Tarshish (Spain), Pul/Phut (Libya/North Africa), Lud (Lydia/Asia Minor), Tubal (Asia Minor/Caucasus), Javan (Greece/Cyprus), and distant coastlands. These represent the known world's extremes. Their mission: declare God's glory to nations that "have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory." From a Reformed perspective, this prophesies the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20). The redeemed become missionaries, taking the gospel to every nation. Those who experience salvation declare it to others. The church's missionary expansion fulfills this—beginning in Jerusalem, extending to all nations (Acts 1:8). The gospel reaches previously unreached peoples, fulfilling God's purpose to gather elect from every tribe and tongue.

Historical Context

The post-exilic Jewish community had limited missionary vision—they were inward-focused, rebuilding and preserving. This prophecy looked beyond to the church age when gospel would spread globally. The early church initially struggled with this (Acts 10-11, 15), but eventually embraced God's call to reach Gentiles (Acts 13:2-3, 47). Paul's missionary journeys took the gospel to Asia Minor, Greece, and eventually Rome, with plans for Spain (Romans 15:24, 28). Throughout church history, missionaries have carried the gospel to every continent. Today, the church exists in virtually every nation, though many remain unreached. Complete fulfillment comes when the gospel is preached to all nations (Matthew 24:14), then the end comes.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does personal experience of salvation naturally lead to missionary declaration of God's glory?
2. What does the specificity of distant nations teach about God's global redemptive plan?
3. How are contemporary believers participating in declaring God's glory to unreached peoples?

Interlinear Text

וְשִׁמַּתִּי	אֹת	בְּהֶם	וְשִׁלַּחְתִּי	מִן		
And I will set		a sign	among them and I will send			
H7760		H226	H7971	H1992		
פְּלִיטִים	אֶל	בְּגוֹיִם:	תַּרְשִׁשׁ	פּוּל	וְלֹד	
those that escape		among the Gentiles	to Tarshish	Pul	and Lud	
H6412	H413	H1471	H8659	H6322	H3865	
לֹא	אֲשֶׁר	רְחֹקִים	הָאֵיִלִּים	וְנָוִן	לְקֶשֶׁת	מִשְׁכֵּי
that draw	the bow	to Tubal	and Javan	to the isles	afar off	
H4900	H7198	H8422	H3120	H339	H7350	H3808
שָׁמַעַי	אֶת	שְׁמִיעִי	וְלֹא	רָאוּ	אֶת	כְּבוֹדִי
that have not heard		my fame		neither have seen		my glory
H8085	H853	H8088		H7200	H853	H3519
וְהֵגִידוּ	אֶת	כְּבוֹדִי	בְּגוֹיִם:			
and they shall declare		my glory	among the Gentiles			
H5046	H853	H3519	H1471			

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 52:15 (Parallel theme): So shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider.

Romans 15:21 (Parallel theme): But as it is written, To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand.

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.

Ezekiel 27:10 (Parallel theme): They of Persia and of Lud and of Phut were in thine army, thy men of war: they hanged the shield and helmet in thee; they set forth thy comeliness.

Isaiah 60:9 (Glory): 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.

Isaiah 62:10 (Parallel theme): Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people.

1 Chronicles 16:24 (Glory): Declare his glory among the heathen; his marvellous works among all nations.

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 65:1 (Parallel theme): I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not: I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name.

Isaiah 18:3 (Parallel theme): All ye inhabitants of the world, and dwellers on the earth, see ye, when he lifteth up an ensign on the mountains; and when he bloweth a trumpet, hear ye.