

Isaiah 9:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thou hast multiplied the nation, and not increased the joy:
they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, and as
men rejoice when they divide the spoil.

Analysis

The multiplication of the nation and increase of joy describes Messianic kingdom blessings. The corrected reading 'thou hast multiplied the nation, thou hast increased their joy' (some manuscripts say 'not increased') emphasizes expansion and blessing. The joy is compared to harvest celebration and dividing spoils after victory—complete, exuberant gladness. This prophesies the gospel's spread to all nations (Gentiles) and the joy of salvation. The Reformed vision of Christ's kingdom encompasses all peoples, fulfilling Abrahamic promises.

Historical Context

Partially fulfilled when Galilee became the launching point for Christianity's spread to the nations. Jesus's disciples from this region carried the gospel throughout the Roman Empire. The multiplication of the nation (spiritual Israel, the church) continues through history as the gospel creates 'one new man' from Jew and Gentile (Ephesians 2:15). The joy before God represents the gladness of salvation experienced by those transferred from darkness to light.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. How does the church's growth from a Galilean start to worldwide presence fulfill this multiplication?
2. What is the relationship between genuine salvation and the joy described here?
3. How do we cultivate the joy of harvest and victory in our Christian lives and communities?

Interlinear Text

הָרַבּ יְתָ	הַגּוֹי	לֹא	הִגְדָּלָהּ	כְּשִׂמְחָה	וְכִשְׂמֵחָה
Thou hast multiplied	the nation	H3808	and not increased	the joy	they joy
H7235	H1471		H1431	H8057	H8055
לִפְנֵי יְיָ	כְּשִׂמְחָה	בְּקֶצֶץ יֵרֶק	כְּאִשׁוֹר	וְגִילּוֹ	בְּחִלְקָם
before	the joy	in harvest	H834	and as men rejoice	when they divide
H6440	H8057	H7105		H1523	H2505
שָׁלַל:					
the spoil					
H7998					

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 119:162 (Parallel theme): I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil.

Isaiah 26:15 (Parallel theme): Thou hast increased the nation, O LORD, thou hast increased the nation: thou art glorified: thou hadst removed it far unto all the ends of the earth.

1 Peter 1:8 (Parallel theme): Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:

Isaiah 66:10 (Parallel theme): Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her:

Isaiah 65:18 (Parallel theme): But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy.

Isaiah 35:10 (Parallel theme): And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

1 Samuel 30:16 (Parallel theme): And when he had brought him down, behold, they were spread abroad upon all the earth, eating and drinking, and dancing, because of all the great spoil that they had taken out of the land of the Philistines, and out of the land of Judah.

Psalms 4:7 (Parallel theme): Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased.

Luke 11:22 (Parallel theme): But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.