

42). October 12-18—Isaiah 58-66

1) Isa 61:10—**Bride** (Fictional) ~750 BC

The bride represents the Lord's redeemed people in this joyful declaration of salvation. Isaiah proclaims, "I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God" because He "clothed me with the garments of salvation" and "covered me with the robe of righteousness." God dressed His people in beautiful garments like wedding attire.

The imagery compares this transformation to both the bridegroom and bride who "adorneth herself with her jewels." In ancient Israel, weddings were occasions of great celebration where both bride and bridegroom wore their finest clothing and ornaments. The bride especially adorned herself with precious jewels, preparing carefully for her wedding day.

This double comparison to both bride and bridegroom, emphasizes the unity, completeness, and splendor of God's salvation. Just as wedding garments transform ordinary people into radiant brides and grooms, so does God's righteousness transform His repentant people from sinners to sanctified saints (Ps 132:9, 16). (*See *Isa 49:18*)

2) Isa 62:4-5—**Virgin Married to Bridegroom** (Fictional) ~750 BC

The bride represents restored Jerusalem in this prophecy of redemption. God promises that the city would never again be called "Forsaken" or "Desolate" but would receive new names that translate to "My Delight Is in Her" and "Married" (ESV), because "the LORD will take delight in you, and your land will be His bride" (Isa 62:4, BSB).

Isaiah compared this transformation of the city of holiness "as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee" (Isa 62:5). In ancient Israel, a virgin bride represented purity, honor, and new beginnings. The entire community joyously celebrated her marriage. The prophet then added, "as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee."

Throughout ancient scripture, Jehovah uses the image of Himself as a bridegroom married to the bride (as either Jerusalem or Zion), and most often their son is Israel (Isa 62:5). The forsaken woman becomes a cherished bride, transforming abandonment into intimate covenant relationship.

3) Isa 62:11—**Daughter Zion** ~750 BC

"Behold the LORD hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him." (*See *Isa 1:8*)

4) Isa 66:7-9—**God as Midwife** ~750 BC

The woman who gives birth represents Zion in this prophecy of miraculous restoration. Isaiah described an extraordinary delivery: "Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child" (Isa 66:7). Normally, childbirth involves prolonged labor and intense pain, but this woman delivered her child instantly, without the usual suffering.

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The prophet marveled at this miracle: “Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once?” (Isa 66:8). Yet Isaiah declared that “as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children” (Isa 66:8). This woman’s supernatural delivery symbolized how God would rapidly restore His scattered people.

The Lord Himself acting as midwife guaranteed the completion of this birth: “Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? . . . shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb?” (Isa 66:9). The divine midwife would never abandon a delivery in progress, just as He will certainly finish His work of gathering Israel (1 Ne 22:12).

5) Isa 66:12-13—**God as Nursing and Nurturing Mother** ~750 BC

Peace flows from God as He takes the role of the nursing and nurturing mother: “I will extend peace to her like a river . . . then shall ye suck, ye shall be borne upon her sides, and be dandled upon her knees” (Isa 66:12). The imagery shifts to an infant nursing, being carried, and bouncing on mother’s knees. God promised, “As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem” (Isa 66:13). These maternal images reveal God’s nurturing care that delivers, nurses, carries, and comforts His children like a devoted mother (Deu 32:18). (*See *Isa 49:15*)