

Digging Deeper: The Greater Meaning of Isaiah 60:22

“The little one will become a thousand And the small one a mighty nation. I myself, Jehovah, will speed it up in its own time.” (Isaiah 60:22)

These words close Isaiah chapter 60, a prophecy about Jehovah’s glory shining on Zion while darkness covers the nations. The main point is that Jehovah promised to take a small, weak group of his people and make them grow into something great, and he guaranteed it with his own name. The Watchtower explains that this has come true in our day: when anointed Christians were restored to activity in 1919, they were few in number, truly “a little one.” Since then,

honesthearted people have kept streaming in, and “the small one” has become “a mighty nation.”

1 “The Little One”: Small Beginnings Jehovah Does Not Despise (קָטוֹן, *qaton*)

The Hebrew word קָטוֹן (*qaton*) means small, little, or young. It can describe something small in size or number, or someone who seems unimportant. The same word was used for the youngest son in a family, the one people often overlooked.

Jehovah does not judge by size. When the Jews rebuilding the temple felt their work was too small to matter, he asked: “Who has despised the day of small beginnings?” (Zechariah 4:10) The footnote there says “small things,” using a word from the same Hebrew family as *qaton*. In 1918, fewer than 4,000 on average

shared in the preaching work each month. It looked small, but Jehovah was behind it.

- What starts small in Jehovah's service can grow beyond anything we imagine, because he is the one who gives the growth.

2 “A Mighty Nation”: Strong and Numerous (עָצוּם, ‘atsum)

The word for “mighty” is עָצוּם (‘atsum). It means powerful or strong, and it often carries the idea of being numerous, strong in numbers. Isaiah set it in direct contrast with the “small one.” The tiny group would not just get a little bigger. It would become a nation too large to overlook.

Jehovah used this same word in his promise to Abraham: “Abraham is surely going to become a great and mighty nation.” (Genesis 18:18) In our day, John's

vision of “a great crowd, which no man was able to number, out of all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues” has been coming true. (Revelation 7:9) The Watchtower notes that Jehovah’s people today are more numerous than many of the world’s countries.

- Each person who comes to worship Jehovah is part of this mighty nation, and that includes you.
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3 “Speed It Up”: Fast, but Right on Time (חֻשׁ, *chush*)

The verb behind “speed it up” is חֻשׁ (*chush*). It means to hurry, to hasten, or to act quickly. Jehovah said he would do it “in its own time,” using the word עֵת (*eth*), “time,” for the season he has chosen. So the growth would move fast, but never ahead of or behind Jehovah’s schedule.

Jehovah told Habakkuk: “The vision is yet for its appointed time, . . . Even if it should delay, keep in expectation of it! For it will without fail come true. It will not be late!” (Habakkuk 2:3) The Isaiah book explains that Jehovah, through Jesus Christ, has directed the Kingdom work and has sped it up, and it is a joy to have a part in it.

- We can work hard in the ministry and leave the results, and the timing, in Jehovah’s hands.

Key Spiritual Reflections

- **Valuing Small Beginnings:** Do I ever feel my efforts in Jehovah’s service are too small to matter, and how does Zechariah 4:10 change that view? (Zechariah 4:10)

- **Being Part of the Nation:** How does seeing the worldwide growth of Jehovah's people strengthen my confidence that he is directing this work? (Genesis 18:18; Revelation 7:9)
- **Trusting His Timing:** When I am waiting for Jehovah to act, in my ministry or my life, will I keep in expectation, knowing he will never be late? (Habakkuk 2:3)