

April 26, 2020

“A Justice-Loving God”
Lesson 4 of Unit

Isaiah 61:8 – 62:2-4a

Intro

Israel during Isaiah’s time and through the captivity and return that followed about 150 years after Isaiah died, isn’t a lot different from our world. There are the righteous and the wicked, there are the leaders and the followers. There are believers (Israel) and non-believers (Gentile nations).

Because of His covenant with David (2 Sam. 7:1-17), God is willing to deliver the repentant. In Isaiah’s writings, he delivers God’s words about Israel’s future, when they will be a light to the nations.

Read Isaiah 61:8 – 11

1. In 61:6, God speaks of Israel as His priests. What conditions does God lay down in 61:8 for His priests?
2. The word justice is frequently associated today with carrying out judgment. God is called just by Moses in Deut. 32:4, and God expects His people to be just (see Prov. 21:3 and Is. 56:1), especially the leaders (see Prov. 29:4). What meaning applies to carrying out justice in Is. 1:17? In Gen. 18:19?
3. What positive aspects of a proper and honorable relationship with God does He promise in vs. 8b?
4. What kind of reward might God be referring to?

Note: Verses 9-11 are typical examples of Hebrew poetry using parallelism. This means the second line either uses similar or opposite examples. These two verses use similar phrasings. Look for them as you study this passage.

5. When the Babylonian captivity comes, how will the Israelites be referred to (see Jer. 29:17-19)? In Isaiah 62:9, which is telling about after the captivity, how will the people of God be referred to?

6. In verse 10, the speaker changes from God to the nation of Israel (Zion). What is their perspective toward God here, and what has caused this view?

7. In the second half of vs.10, something has been done to and for the speaker. What is it that has been done, by whom, and what is the significance of that action?

8. Read Ephesians 5:22-33, Rev. 19:7-9, and Rev. 21:2. What connection can we see between these passages and the last part of verse 10?

9. In vs. 11, who is this “garden” and what is it supposed to grow? What is the intended effect of this “crop” (look at Is. 2:2-4, 5:26, 49:6, 60:3, and 66:18-20)?

Read Isaiah 62:1-4

1. In vs. 2, what are the nations seeing in Israel’s behavior? What effect does this have on these nations, both in what is in the verse, and what is suggested by what is said?

2. In vs. 2b, God says that He will call His people by a new name (see Rev. 2:17). Consider the OT name changes of Abram, Sarai, and Jacob, and the NT name change of Simon (Peter). Why were their names changed? What ideas / reasons does that suggest to you about why God will give us a new name?

3. In vs. 3, what do crowns and diadems usually signify? What is being suggested by the idea that we will be a “crown” and a “royal diadem” in God’s hand?

4. To the Israelites being talked to in vs. 4, what would they think of if they were called Deserted or their land Desolate? What would it mean to them, and what does it mean to us, that we are “no longer” called Deserted or our land Desolate?

Application: Our text shared this story.

“Domesticated horses live longer and healthier lives than wild ones because of care. Horses also thrive when they have work to do.”

Our lessons on justice over the past four weeks have encouraged us to use God’s standards for the actions we take in this world. We are to be people who show justice, whether we are in a leadership position, or just living our regular, daily lives. And like those horses, we live better lives and are blessed when we live under God’s control and care. They will be lives of higher quality than if we were living them under our own control.

Prayer: Father God, this section of Scripture today shows both what you want us to do, and the benefit to ourselves and others when we follow your lead. Please help us to further allow you to control our lives, so that others may see You through what we do and say, and will come to You and give glory to You. In Jesus’ name, Amen.