

Lesson 9—April 26, 2020

DEVOTIONAL READING: Isaiah 42:1-9

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 61:8–62:12

PRINT PASSAGE: Isaiah 61:8-11; 62:2-4a

Key Verse—For I the LORD love judgment, I hate robbery for burnt offering; and I will direct their work in truth, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. (Isaiah 61:8, KJV)

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“For I, the LORD, love justice; I hate robbery and wrongdoing. In my faithfulness I will reward my people and make an everlasting covenant with them.” (Isaiah 61:8, NIV)

What Goes Around Comes Around



Teacher's Resource Kit

- Townsend Press Commentary: Teacher's Edition
- Townsend Press Flashlight Commentary
- Bible Studies for Adults
- Bible Studies for Young Adults
- (Optional: Adults/Young Adults Leadership Resource Kit [materials for this lesson])

Lesson Aims

As a result of experiencing this lesson, the participants should be able to do these things:

- Explicate the hope of vindication for the righteous and faithful.
- Long for salvation and restoration for God's people.
- Commit to making just decisions in everyday life.



*Key Terms

Diadem (62:3)—Hebrew: *tsaniph* (tsaw-neeῑ): a turban, hood, headdress.

Faithfulness (61:8)—Hebrew: *emeth* (eh-meth): “truth” (KJV); firmness.

Rejoice(s) (61:10)—Hebrew: *sus* or *sis* (soos): exult(s); rejoice(s) greatly; delight(s).

*(Word Study Supplement—Refer to page 4)

Preparing the Lesson

- Refer to the *Townsend Press SS Commentary Teacher's Edition* for an additional lesson plan—with word studies, insights on teaching adults, learner matrices, etc.
- Review last week's student assignments (“Your Life” and Your World!).

- This guide offers two options for leading your class.
- Thoroughly review your student book for your adult or young adult class.
- See page 7 for how to plan each week's lesson.
- See page 6 for a student *Personal Growth Plan*.
- See page 113 for the *Faith in 3-D* as it explains how to live out their faith in the world.

WHY THIS LESSON MATTERS

When people feel helpless and angry, they seek help from others. What hope is there that the conditions of the powerless will be addressed? Solomon's wise decision confirms that God loves justice, and Isaiah affirms that the righteous will be vindicated.

THE LESSON IN FOCUS

Our Christian musical heritage includes multiple hymns and spiritual songs whose lyrics speak of a better and brighter future: "There's a Brighter Day Ahead"; "Won't It Be Wonderful Over There"; "When We All Get to Heaven." The agony of slavery led our ancestors to compose what we identify as "Spirituals" that expressed longing for freedom and escape from its horrific conditions. There was that hope that those who oppressed them and treated them inhumanely would one day reap the pain and suffering they had sown. If we are honest with our own feelings about being misused, we may inwardly express the wish for our enemies to be punished for what they do to us. God's chosen people, Israel, suffered famine, disease, and death at the hands of those God chose to punish them for their sins. Though they deserved His judgment, they complained that He had abandoned them and had not kept His promises. The prophet Habakkuk even questioned why God would use people more wicked than they as the instrument of His divine judgment. For His own integrity and not because of their complaining, God let it be known that He had not forgotten His covenant with Abraham. Even before, during, and after they had been defeated and dispersed by Assyria and exiled in Babylon, God spoke through His prophets to comfort them

with the assurance that the day would come when He would repay all of their enemies in kind. He would prove the principle that what goes around comes around to those who mistreat His people. The brighter day ahead for God's people will see the condemnation and judgment of those who engage in injustice and evil against them. The righteous will be vindicated.

THE LESSON IN CONTEXT

Isaiah prophesied during the period of the divided kingdom of Israel. He witnessed the fall and dispersion of Israel in the north and thirteen years later, he witnessed the destruction of many of Judah's walled cities by Assyria. In fact, in his lifetime he saw both Israel and Judah with the exception of Jerusalem destroyed by the Assyrians. His prophetic ministry can be thematically divided into two categories. Chapters 1–39 focus on God's judgment of Israel, Judah, and the nations around them, while chapters 40–66 focus on comfort. In this second category of messages, those in Jerusalem who had witnessed the collapse of their nation are given comfort and hope for a glorious future to be ushered in by God's messenger, the promised Messiah. Chapter 61 presents the commission of God's messenger to minister to the post-exilic community (verses 1-3). The result of His ministry will be the restoration of Jerusalem and the surrounding cities, the establishment of Israel as a kingdom of priests, and a reversal of the conditions of the land (verses 4-7). The remaining verses of this chapter are the text for this lesson and describe more fully the restoration of God's people to righteous living and glorious worship when He establishes His kingdom.

OPENING INQUIRY (Choose from the questions below)

1. How should God's love for justice motivate believers to address the challenges of injustice? (verse 8a)
2. What is the basis of God's promises to His people? (verse 8d)
3. How should we respond to the gift of salvation? (verse 10)

4. What is the significance of Jerusalem's new name? (Isaiah 62:4)

INSIGHTS

The Bible has much to say about justice and includes God's commands, expectations, and love for it. His love for it is found in both the Old and New Testaments. His love for justice is found in passages like Psalm 33:5 (NIV): "The LORD loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of his unfailing love." There are commands to His children to practice justice (see Israel 1:17; 30:18; Micah 6:8); benefits for obeying the call to do justice (see Psalm 37:27-29; 106:3); and consequences for failing to do so (see Deuteronomy 27:19; Colossians 3:25; Hebrews 10:30). God's love for justice was demonstrated by faithfulness to His covenant with Israel. They received just punishment for their disobedience at the hands of those He chose to discipline them, but He promised that their disciplinarians would be punished. As we observe the rampant injustice that ravishes our communities, our nation, and our world, it is comforting and reassuring to know that God's love for justice ensures that those who sow it will also reap it in kind at His set time.

EXPLORATION

The biblical principle of "what goes around comes around" can be explored by guiding your students to identify passages in both Testaments where it is taught directly and indirectly. Emphasize the importance of recognizing this principle in a positive manner and also with selfish motives and attitudes. Discuss with your students what God's love for justice should motivate them to think, feel, and act as His children. Challenge them to identify a positive way to resist an area of injustice in their community.

ADDITIONAL EXPOSITORY INSIGHTS FOR THE TEACHER

Commentary on Isaiah 61:8-9

KJV

8 For I the LORD love judgment, I hate robbery

for burnt offering; and I will direct their work in truth, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.

9 And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people: all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the seed which the LORD hath blessed.

NIV

8 "For I, the LORD, love justice; I hate robbery and wrongdoing. In my faithfulness I will reward my people and make an everlasting covenant with them.

9 "Their descendants will be known among the nations and their offspring among the peoples. All who see them will acknowledge that they are a people the LORD has blessed."

God's character is the guarantee that He will keep His promises. The certainty of the blessings listed in verses 6-7 are based on God's love for justice, His hatred of robbery, and His faithfulness (verse 8). The people were suffering because He was punishing them; however, because He is the author and epitome of justice, He promised to restore it. Additionally, because the standard of justice is a part of His divine character, He pledges to live up to it and pay the wages of suffering due His people. This promise of restoration and justice will be sealed by an eternal contract (covenant). His everlasting covenant with His people will set them apart as His own unique and blessed people who will be recognized worldwide (verse 9). The promised future glory of Israel that Isaiah describes is based on the eternal attributes of God. He cannot and will not act contrary to who He is. Justice will prevail and injustice will be removed because of His love for justice. He will never abandon those who come to Him in faith because He is faithful to the covenant He made with His people. The specific covenant promises for Israel will be fully realized when Christ the Messiah returns to establish God's just kingdom. Presently, all who have accepted the gift of salvation through Jesus Christ have the same secure promises under the new covenant. Our responsibilities as recipients

of these blessings are to commit to righteous living and stand against injustice.



DISCUSSION STARTERS

(Please review the appropriate student book's related biblical exposition section.)

- **Adult Question:**

Salvation identifies believers as blessed and unique. How can we visibly demonstrate this in a world characterized by injustice?

- **Young Adult Question:**

List and discuss some times when society has wronged the church, and how the church was vindicated in the final outcome.

Commentary on Isaiah 61:10-11

KJV

10 I will greatly *rejoice* in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.

11 For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.

NIV

10 I delight greatly in the LORD; my soul *rejoices* in my God. For he has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of his righteousness, as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

11 For as the soil makes the sprout come up and a garden causes seeds to grow, so the Sovereign LORD will make righteousness and praise spring up before all nations.

The closing verses of chapter 61 include a hymn of praise in anticipation of Israel's future glory. Using

figurative language, Isaiah described Israel's restoration as garments of clothing like those adorning a bridegroom and the jewelry of a bride (verse 10). The nation, defiled by sin, is pictured as being clothed with garments of salvation and robes of righteousness. The beauty and joy of this blessing is like the ornate headgear worn by a bridegroom and the costly jewelry worn by a bride in Near Eastern culture. The righteousness here is the Old Testament image of imputed righteousness. Every repentant sinner who comes to Christ by faith is covered with God's righteousness by His grace. In addition, like the soil of the earth sustains the growth and productivity of plants in spring, the Lord will cause Israel's righteousness and praise to spring up or be known by other nations (verse 11). In light of this, the appropriate response to God's blessings are praise, thanksgiving, and living as visible examples of righteous living. God has promised Israel that the justice and all else that was destroyed by sin will be restored in His everlasting covenant. We too have our own hymn of praise because we have been restored to a right relationship with Him and have been clothed in His righteousness. As Israel was to be recognized by all as God's ambassadors, God's people today have the same assignment and responsibility in this present age.



DISCUSSION STARTERS

(Please review the appropriate student book's related biblical exposition section.)

- **Adult Question:**

What evidence is there that would suggest that the purposes for our being clothed in righteousness are not being fully demonstrated?

- **Young Adult Question:**

As a class, list and discuss godly appearances versus ungodly appearances.

Commentary on Isaiah 62:2-4a

KJV

2 And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by

a new name, which the mouth of the LORD shall name.

3 Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the LORD, and a royal *diadem* in the hand of thy God.

4 Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate.

NIV

2 The nations will see your vindication, and all kings your glory; you will be called by a new name that the mouth of the LORD will bestow.

3 You will be a crown of splendor in the LORD's hand, a royal *diadem* in the hand of your God.

4 No longer will they call you Deserted, or name your land Desolate.

God does not do His work in secret. Even when we can't "see" Him, He is always working to fulfill His will. The people had previously complained that He had not fulfilled His promises to them and had been silent. In view of the promised restoration and future glory for Israel revealed in Isaiah 61, God declared that He would not keep silent, that is, be inactive until He had accomplished His will (verse 1). Like the steady beam of a lighted torch, all nations and their leaders will discern Israel's righteousness and promised glory. This recognition will be accompanied by a new name reflecting this divinely orchestrated reversal in status (verse 2). The Lord promises that Jerusalem's (Zion's; Israel's) current ruined condition will be transformed and appear as the crown adorning Him and resting in His hand (verse 3). The complete fulfillment of this transformation will be the removal of the designation of Jerusalem as "Forsaken" and the land as "Desolate" (verse 4a). Entering a relationship with God requires a spiritual transformation that begins with accepting His plan of salvation by faith in Jesus Christ. As we yield to the filling ministry of the Holy Spirit, we are progressively changed to become more like the image of His Son, Jesus Christ. The forsaken become the accepted and the desolate become the cherished. God's transformative work in the lives of believers is not for their glory, but His.

We are to reflect His righteousness for all to see and be drawn to Him. Reflecting His righteousness is key to resisting injustice, assisting its victims, and exposing those who perpetrate it.



DISCUSSION STARTERS

(Please review the appropriate student book's related biblical exposition section.)

- **Adult Question:**

How should our knowing that God wants to display us to the world affect how we live our daily lives?

- **Young Adult Question:**

Compile two lists of names. The first list should be names that people are labeled while in sin. The second list should be names given once restored.

LIFE APPLICATION

- **Refer to Adult Book**

(See student lesson's "Your Life" section.)

— God loves justice and those who strive to promote it as a result of their relationship with Him. The time when justice will be an eternal reality is future, but each of us can actively resist and challenge injustice by meeting the needs of its victims and by engaging in actions that support just causes.

(See student lesson's "Your World!" section.)

— It is obvious that we live in a world characterized by blatant and intentional acts of injustice. We have God's infallible word that those who promote it will one day reap what they have sown in kind. Our challenge is to demonstrate justice in our daily decisions and actions as we wait for God to move.

- **Refer to Young Adult Book**

(See student lesson's "Your Life" section.)

— In our lives, we all have been wronged in some form, shape, or fashion. However, we know as Christians that our Lord and Savior will renew, rename, and reward us, if we remain faithful unto Him. As God's children, we will be judged and vindicated for our longsuffering.

(See student lesson's "Your World!" section.)

- The world today has an awful appearance of injustice. It is our responsibility as Christians to keep the appearance of righteousness regardless of our location. Sometimes, Christians are all that nonbelievers have through which to see Christ in this dreadful world.

NEXT WEEK'S LESSON

The lesson topic for Sunday, May 3, 2020, is "The Return of Joy." The Devotional Reading is Psalm 47, the Background Scripture is Zephaniah 3, and the Printed Text is Zephaniah 3:14-20.



Closing Prayer

Dear God, it is our desire to see the righteous vindicated and to help those victimized by injustice. We depend on Your promises, power, and presence to help us in our efforts to work with You to make these become a reality. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS

MONDAY , April 27	"God Promises Restoration of Israel's Fortunes"	(Deuteronomy 30:1-6)
TUESDAY , April 28	"God Will Shepherd the People"	(Ezekiel 34:11-16)
WEDNESDAY , April 29	"God Will Strengthen the People"	(Zechariah 10:6-12)
THURSDAY , April 30	"Christ's Forgiveness of Israel's Sins"	(Acts 5:27-32)
FRIDAY , May 1	"Leaders, Priests, and Prophets Don't Listen"	(Zephaniah 3:1-7)
SATURDAY , May 2	"God Will Preserve a Remnant"	(Zephaniah 3:8-13)
SUNDAY , May 3	"Rejoice in God's Glory and Salvation"	(Zephaniah 3:14-20)

INTERACTIVE LEARNING APPROACH

YOUNG ADULT FOCUS

This lesson plan is designed to provide a more interactive approach to the teaching of today's lesson. The focus is on student-teacher involvement. It can be formulated to use with the *Bible Studies for Young Adults* quarterly.

Materials needed:

- The movie *World Trade Center*
- Computers/Speakers
- Wi-Fi

Interaction—Introducing the Lesson (10-15 minutes)

- Introduce today's topic: "What Goes Around Comes Around."
- Have someone read the "Life Happens" section on page **49** aloud and then, as a class, discuss the corresponding questions.
- Share the Unifying Principle: "When people feel helpless and angry, they seek help from others. What hope is there that the conditions of the powerless will be addressed? Solomon's wise decision confirms that God loves justice, and Isaiah affirms that the righteous will be vindicated."

Exploring the Word (25-30 minutes)

- Show the clip "The Goodness" from the movie *World Trade Center*, directed by Oliver Stone. This can be found at www.wingclips.com. Share this: "John McLoughlin reminds us about goodness that the people experienced during the tragedy of 9/11." Discuss how God's character

is revealed even in the face of injustice, through the love and support of others.

- Have someone read Isaiah 61:8-11.
- Discuss the connection between God's love of justice and His desire to reward workers of justice with an everlasting covenant.
- Consider the imagery of verse 10 and discuss how Isaiah's soul rejoiced.
- Create a list of ways that the Sovereign Lord will make righteousness and praise spring up before all nations. Consider how we can participate in making this happen.
- Have someone read Isaiah 62:2-4a.
- Discuss the new name that God gave His people, as well as the significance of having a new name at this point.
- God completely reverses the situation for Zion (62:4). Discuss the truth of God and God's character that this reversal shows about God.

Life Application (10 minutes)

- Read aloud the "Your Life" section on page **53**.

Life Response (5 minutes)

- Read aloud the "Your World!" section on page **53**.
- As a class, compile a list of Scriptures that affirm justice as a part of God's character.
- Close in prayer and remind the students to prepare for next week's lesson.