

Isaiah 60, verses 5-16

Lesson Goals for this lesson:

- a. To explore the interaction between human actions and Divine actions in solving the Jewish people's problems.
- b. To develop skills in breaking down a large prophetic unit into sections and "unpacking" the arguments in each section.
- c. To consider how prophecies of consolation correlate to historical problems.

This unit is designed on two levels: a basic level for students with less textual competence, and an extension unit for students with stronger skills.

The unit is designed to be taught towards the end of the school year, and therefore forms a sort of "capstone" in the students' work on Yeshaya. Much of the lesson consists of independently working through a long prophetic passage. The teacher should instruct students whether they should work only on the unstarred questions or on all questions.

Frontal Teaching: Background

To introduce the lesson, the teacher should review verse 4 and teach verse 5, in order to situate students. I recommend the following:

- a. Begin with the final slide of the last lesson (reproduced as slide 2), noting ways in which the problems of the Jewish people have been solved, and ways in which these have not yet been solved.
- b. Look again at v. 4 (slide 3), translating and asking students "how will Jerusalem react to the new aliyah?". Try to elicit the reactions of joy and shock.
- c. Using slide 4, categorize the reactions in v. 5a into "shock" and "joy" –

Then refer students to the worksheet, which begins in the middle of v. 5 (with the words **כי ייהפך**).

Reviewing the Worksheet:

In reviewing the worksheet, the focus should be on the unstarred verses on which all students worked, viz., 5-6, 9, 13. Furthermore, the key issues are:

- a. How do the nations demonstrate their newfound respect for Jerusalem? (Bringing tribute and returning the Jews)
- b. Why do the nations do this? (Out of respect for God, who has demonstrated His presence in Jerusalem by means of the light described in vv. 1-3)
- c. What is the relationship between divine action and human action here? (The nations are inspired by God to make Jerusalem into a capital city and to bring resources to build the Temple.)

In more detail:

- Review key points from questions 1 and 2. Ask students what is being brought to Jerusalem (2b) , and using the map, demonstrate how verses 5-6 show that wealth is being brought to Jerusalem from the west (sea) and the east (trade route). Review the idea of a royal city as one that receives tribute from all directions, because peoples acknowledge the rule of the king by bringing tribute.
- Unpack verse 9, by reviewing question 5. Ensure that students understand that the nations are bringing not only tribute but also encouraging the return of the Jews, and that they are doing this because they recognize that God has made the Jews "chiefs" (פארך).
- Unpack verse 13, ensuring that students understand that the nations are bringing wood for building the Temple - this will be important later. Despite the use of אכבד in v. 13 and אפאר in v. 7, God is inspiring others to build, He is not building Himself in these verses.

Conclusion: Verses 15-16

After students have read and understood at least verses 5-6, 9, 13, ask them to reflect on the problems of building the Temple in the Return to Zion period, which were discussed in slide 2. How does this prophecy solve all of these problems?

Verse 15 is the overall conclusion to this unit. It describes Jerusalem's transformation. I recommend using slide 5 to teach it frontally, and emphasizing the question: Who is doing the transformation? Here, for the first time, the nations are not mentioned and God is cited as author of the transformation.

Ask students why it matters whether God or the nations build Jerusalem. There are many good answers to this question, but highlight the issue of “hakkarat hattov” – recognizing what God has done for Jerusalem.

Then, teach the second part of verse 16 using slide 6, emphasizing the idea of recognizing that the transformation of Jerusalem is due to Divine Intervention, and ought to lead to appreciation of God generally. I do not recommend trying to teach the first part of verse 16 since the imagery is difficult, especially in high school.

The question of God’s role in the transformation will be explored further in the next unit.