

Isaiah 60, verses 17-20

Part 4, concluding lesson on Isaiah 60

Lesson Goals:

Students will consider the difference between Divine Intervention in the Rebuilding of Jerusalem and Divinely-inspired human actions

Students will consider the goals of Jewish sovereignty over Jerusalem.

Students will develop text skills at reading and interpreting prophetic passages

Frontal Teaching: Introduction

Ask students: What problems have the previous 15 verses solved? Students should recognize that the transformation of Jerusalem into a capital city removes the political and economic problems that prevented the construction of the Temple.

But then ask: What problems have the previous verses CREATED? How is Jerusalem different than any other capital city?

- a. Use slide 2 to expose the problems of every capital, focusing on the tendency of capital cities to attract attacks due to the wealth concentrated in them. Eventually, nearly every capital falls victim to attack.

Have the previous verses addressed this potential problem? Students should appreciate that the divine choice of Jerusalem may deter some nations from attacking.

But the wealth brought to Jerusalem by different nations will still attract attacks. Verses 17 and 18 are designed to eliminate this problem, by emphasizing that the wealth of Jerusalem is no longer the "wealth of nations" (as was suggested by v. 5).

Frontal Teaching verses 17-18

Verses 17a specifically addresses the question of "who provides the wealth for Jerusalem." (The verse itself is not in the powerpoint – please encourage students to see it in their texts.) First, emphasize the subject – God is providing the wealth. Students may suggest that God is doing this indirectly. In response, look at slide 3 – this verse suggests that this is a "new renovation" of Jerusalem, in which the previous repairs will be "booted out" and the new, God-given materials will replace the wood brought by the nations in verse 13. Fill in the blanks in the chart with the students. It is really important that students recognize that this verse supplants verse 13.

Verses 17b and 18a both describe the removal of looting and onerous taxation from Jerusalem, and they are presented in slides 4 and 5. In teaching slide 4 (v 17b), I recommend focusing on

the words, which are difficult, and in teaching slide 5 (18a), I recommend asking: what in God's actions in v. 17 causes the elimination of looting and robbery? Why will other nations no longer want to loot Jerusalem?

The students should realize that while in vv. 5-16, the nations were attracted to Jerusalem (אהבה), here they are also scared of Jerusalem's king (יראה), and therefore they are treating it with "kid gloves."

How does this new reality influence the citizens of Jerusalem? Broach this question and then show slide 6 – students should compare the names for the gates/walls used in v. 18b, and realize that these express gratitude to God, whereas it was much more typical in the ancient Near East for gates to be given names referring to the power of the empire.

This leads to the question: How is Jerusalem supposed to be different than other imperial capitals?

Use the excerpt from Rav Kook's Orot in slides 7 and 8 to conduct a class discussion on the issue: Why do we want political independence? What are the goals of Jerusalem ceasing to be controlled by other empires and becoming independent? These goals are markedly different from those of political Zionism, and it is critical that students reflect on these differences. (The full quote appears on page ט' of the Mosad Ha Rav Kook 1961 edition of Orot, reprinted numerous times. It's in ג עיף ס, המלחמה.)

Key points for students include the rejection of "might makes right," and of power as an end in itself, and the use of ideals as the foundation of the polity. (It is worth engaging in a brief discussion of the debate between Aristotle and Plato on the question of whether virtue is a goal of the *polis* or beyond the ken of the *polis*.) Both Yeshaya and Rav Kook are clearly espousing the Platonic ideal.

Conclusion

The conclusion to this chapter should be the essay described in the worksheet: How does the ideal Jerusalem described in chapter 60 differ from a typical capital city? How do these differences reflect different political ideals?

The class discussion should prepare students to write the essay, and they will also prepare verses 19-20 on their own.

This is a good opportunity to reflect on the book as a whole, on the centrality of the concept of Divine Kingship, and on its practical and ideological meaning.