

## **Isaiah 60 & 61 Discussion Guide**

### **Pray**

Apart from God, we can do nothing. Pray for the Holy Spirit to guide your discussion. Throughout your time together, continue asking God for help.

### **Read Scripture**

Read all of Isaiah chapters 60 & 61 together with special emphasis on 60:1-7 and 61:1-3.

### **Bible Study: The HEAR Method**

The bulk of your time will be spent discussing God's Word together. HEAR is an inductive Bible study method that looks closely at what the Bible says to discover what it means so that we can faithfully apply it to our lives.

**HEAR** stands for:

- **Highlight:** read and observe everything in the passage carefully.
- **Examine:** based on your observations, discover what the passage means in its context.
- **Apply:** determine how the meaning of the passage applies to your life.
- **Respond in prayer:** pray God's Word back to Him.

### **Remember:**

- Walk through the Bible study together using the HEAR method and talk about what stuck out most to you in the passage.
- Make sure you move discussion to the application section of your study.
- Affections, beliefs, and practices: Make sure to apply the passage to all your life.

### **Pray**

- Take time to pray for one another and ask for His grace to apply His Word to our daily lives.

**Open:** Are you naturally a patient person? Why or why not?

**Context:** "Continuing from chapters 56-59, Isaiah writes about the time when exiles will return from Babylon and beyond. He looks to the distant future, speaking of the glory of God that will rise upon his people like a light in darkness (ch. 60) and an anointed one who will bring salvation and judgment (61:1-63:14). God will bring eternal judgment for the rebelliousness and eternal joy for his people, who will worship him in a new creation forever (63:15-66:24). This prophecy provides the motivation to humbly trust in God and await the fulfillment of his promises." (ESV Study Bible)

**The Big Picture:** "Isaiah 60-66 shows us that God will come in glory, bringing eternal judgment for the rebellious and joyful salvation in a new creation for all who trust him." (ESV Study Bible, Drew Hunter)

### **Study:**

- 1) While the world is in darkness upon whom does God's light shine? (see 60:1-2) How do you think the people living in Babylonian exile would have thought about this passage?
- 2) Who would be attracted to join the people (see 60:3-4)? When and how would such a prophecy like this be fulfilled?
- 3) Who would come to this city of light arising out of darkness (see 60:3-5)? What will they bring with them (see 60:6-14)?

- 4) What would come to the people (see 60:5-7)? Do you think that these blessings are literal or symbolic of spiritual blessings? Why do you believe this to be so?

**Background:** “In the Gospels, Jesus never used Isaiah 53 to describe His mission. Instead, He quoted Isaiah 61:1-2 (see Luke 4:16-21). At that time, He did not mention “the day of vengeance of our God (61:2), which would not occur until His second coming.

***The year of the LORD’S favor*** (61:2). The Law of Moses stipulated a Year of Jubilee every fifty years, when servants were set free, debts were suspended, and land reverted to the families who had originally owned it (see Leviticus 25:10). This law was almost never obeyed (see Jeremiah 34:8-22), but it came to symbolize the time when the Lord would liberate and restore all things. (See also Isaiah 49:8; 63:4.)

***Crown...ashes*** (61:3). On occasions of rejoicing, people anointed their heads with oil and wore elaborate headdresses. On occasions of mourning, people shaved their heads and covered them with ashes.

- 5) How does the presence of the Spirit upon the anointed gospel preacher link him with other descriptions of a coming redeemer (compare Isa. 61:1 with 11:1-2; 42:1)? Review 9:6-7; 11:1-5; 42:1-7; and 52:13-53:12. What are the similarities between these descriptions?
- 6) Read Luke 4:16-21. What does Jesus’ quotation of Isaiah 61:1-2 teach us about his identity and mission? Some interpreters have noted that Jesus stopped his quotation mid-sentence, leaving out, “and the day of vengeance of our God” (Isa. 61:2). What does this imply about the difference between the primary agendas of his first and second comings?
- 7) What kinds of people does the Lord’s Servant liberate (see 61:1-3)? What does He enable them to be and do (see 61:4-7)?

**Apply:**

- 8) Considering chapter 60, what can you do to be light in the darkness where you life and work?
- 9) Considering chapter 61, what do these observations say about who we are as Christians and what we are called to do?
- 10) How did Jesus fulfill 61:1-3 for you? (Be as specific as possible)
- 11) Who are the people in your life who need to hear about Jesus’ amazing restoration for the poor, brokenhearted, imprisoned, and mourning? Take time to mention these people by name and pray for them.

**PRAY:**

- Take time thank God the He sent Jesus to rescue us.
- Take time to pray and ask Him to give you a fresh appreciation for His rescue of you.
- Ask God to give you a vision that understands and appreciates the delay of His second coming to be busy proclaiming “*the LORD’S favor*”.
- Ask God for opportunities to share with others God’s love for them through Jesus.

Note: most questions and notes taken from ESV Study Bible and Isaiah LifeChange Book 18.