



Isaiah 61 begins with a continuation of God's proclamation of His people restored. It is a prophesy of the returning exiles, the Savior, and the Eternal New Heaven and Earth. How would 61:1 (and following) comfort the exiles in Babylon? How do they comfort God's people today?

61:6 describes God's people as a nation of priests for the world. Old Testament priests were a special group of people who 1) represented God to the people, 2) offered sacrifices, and 3) went to God on behalf of the people. Pastors today act publicly as priests, but whom does God call priests? (I Peter 2:5,9) How do they carry out the priestly privileges and responsibilities?

61:7-11 speak powerfully of shame, dishonor, and salvation. Shame and dishonor come from sin. Why do God's people no longer need to carry shame? Think of the shame if your secret sin were displayed for the whole congregation. Instead God "clothes you with salvation" (61:10) How do you "delight greatly in the Lord"?

Regarding inheritance, what is the significance of the double portion? What does this mean for you?

61:9 God's people, acting in His love, have an impact on those around them. How is our congregation acting out God's love?

Chapter 62 describes God's people as a crown or diadem. Who are the "watchmen" (61:6)? How are their duties performed faithfully? What can God's people do today to support them?

The promise of 62:8-12 is for the returning exiles. How might the Church today also find instruction in these words (especially 62:10)?

63:1-6 is a picture of the Victorious Lord. (See Revelation 19:11-16) We often prefer Christ as humble and gentle. How is God's wrath righteous? How is God's righteous wrath God News for His people?

63:7-64:12 is a prayer beginning with praise and recalling God's mighty works. Why is it important to begin prayer this way?

The prayer recalls the presence of both God's "angel" (63:9) and the Holy Spirit (63:11). Why is it important to recall the presence of the Trinity throughout the Old Testament?

The prayer asks for God's might and wrath to be shown. Is this a comforting or scary thought/image? Why? How does 64:8-9 help?

As God answers, what does 65:1-2 reveal about God's nature?

What do we need to do when we find ourselves behaving like the people described in 65:2-5?

What is God's promise in 65:8-10? What comfort is that today?

65:11-12 God warns those who give devotion to "Fortune" and "Destiny". How do people worship these false gods today?

Is 65:17-25 a description of the return from exile, the church today, or the Eternal Church?

Compare 66:1-9 with 1:10-17. What makes worship/sacrifice pleasing or displeasing to the Lord?

Read 66:5-6 carefully. What can faithful people expect from unfaithful worshippers? How do we see this in the Church today?

How are 65:22-24 both a comfort and warning?

*The law says "Do this", and it is never done. Grace says, "believe in this" and everything is already done. – Martin Luther*