

Title: Isaiah Session 30: Chapters 60 through 62

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Abstract

This lecture by Dr. John Oswalt covers Isaiah chapters 60 through 62, exploring the theological apex of the book's final division. Dr. Oswalt contrasts the darkness of human self-reliance with the radiant dawn of divine salvation, explaining how the arrival of the Redeemer transforms Jerusalem into a beacon of glory for all nations. The session details the outpouring of the Holy Spirit that enables believers to become rooted 'oaks of righteousness' and a 'royal priesthood' acting as spiritual mediators. Ultimately, the lecture highlights how God's grace-enabled righteousness transforms believers' lifestyles to serve as an everlasting, beautiful testimony of His covenantal love.

Outline

I. Introduction and Structural Context

A. Opening Prayer and Devotion

1. Thanksgiving for the inspiration and work of the prophet Isaiah.
1. Petition to understand God's Word more clearly and apply it to our daily lives.

A. The Chiastic Structure of the Final Section (Chapters 56–66)

1. The beginning and end of the chiasm focus on the ultimate goal: righteous Gentiles coming to see God's glory.
1. Chapters 60–62 sit at the exact apex/center of this chiastic structure, representing the dawning of light and salvation.
1. The theme of God's 'glory' runs like a symphonic thread through the book, from Chapter 6 to Chapter 66.
1. 'Glory' (Kavod) in the Old Testament represents solidity, significance, and true reality, not something fleeting or ephemeral.

A. Overarching Structure of Isaiah

1. Chapters 1–6: The Call to Servanthood.
 - a. Chapters 1–5 present the problem of a sinful, corrupt Israel.

a. Chapter 6 presents the solution: purification through the experience of clean lips.

1. Chapters 7–39: Trust as the Basis of Servanthood.

a. The central synonym for trust is 'waiting' on the Lord.

a. Waiting represents laying aside personal schemes and letting God work in His way.

a. King Hezekiah demonstrated trust during the Assyrian crisis, but he is not the ultimate Messiah.

1. Chapters 40–55: Grace, the Motive and the Means of Servanthood.

a. Motive (Chapters 40–48): Free, unmerited grace that chooses a people in exile.

a. Means (Chapters 49–55): The suffering Servant who gives His life to deal with the effects of sin.

1. Chapters 56–66: Righteousness, the Expected Character of Servanthood.

I. Chapter 60: The Dawn of Light and Glory

A. Contrast of Light and Darkness (60:1–3 vs. 59:9–11)

1. Symmetrical contrast: Chapter 59 depicts blind stumbling in gloom and twilight, while Chapter 60 bursts with 'Arise, shine, for your light has come'.

1. The transition from darkness to light is explained solely by the arrival of the Redeemer/Divine Warrior.

1. The light and glory do not come from within the people; they are a gift of God's presence rising upon them.

1. The danger of self-righteousness: focusing on ourselves instead of letting the light shine out to draw others.

A. The Gathering of Children and Wealth (60:4–14)

1. The nations will come to the light, bringing Jerusalem's exiled sons and daughters back.

1. The wealth of the nations will flow to Zion, used to adorn and glorify God's sanctuary.

1. The ultimate goal matches Chapter 2: nations coming to the house of God to learn His ways.

A. The Holy One of Israel (60:9, 14)

1. The double meaning of the phrase: relational closeness with Israel, and absolute transcendent holiness/character.

1. Tracing the title through the book:

a. Despised and provoked to anger in Chapters 1 and 5.

a. Demanded to be silent in Chapter 30.

a. Blasphemed by Sennacherib in Chapter 37.

a. Proclaiming Himself as Redeemer by grace in Chapter 41.

a. Zion called the city of the Holy One of Israel in Chapter 60.

A. Walls of Salvation and Gates of Praise (60:15–22)

- 1. Salvation provides the secure, static enclosing protection of the city.
- 1. Praise is the dynamic entrance and exit of relational life.
- 1. 'Your people shall all be righteous': Refers to a real, enabled change in lifestyle and behavior, not merely a legal standing or position.
- 1. 'The branch of my planting': The recurring tree metaphor of the book representing growth and divine restoration.

I. Chapter 61: The Anointed Messiah and His Mission

A. The Outpouring of the Spirit (61:1)

- 1. Connecting to Chapter 11: The Spirit lives through the Messiah.
- 1. The Gethsemane and baptism connection: Christ's baptism confirmed Him as the Messiah who fulfills this passage.

A. The Mission of the Anointed One (61:1–3)

- 1. Preaching good news to the poor and contrite who recognize their need for help.
- 1. Healing the brokenhearted and proclaiming liberty to captives.
- 1. Announcing the year of the Lord's favor and the day of vengeance (justice/redemption).
- 1. Providing beauty for ashes, the oil of gladness for mourning, and a garment of praise for a faint spirit.
- 1. The cross as the absorption of all the world's pain, grief, and sorrow.

A. Oaks of Righteousness (61:3)

- 1. The ultimate goal: turning the contrite into stable, rooted, fruitful 'oaks of righteousness' planted by the Lord.
- 1. This is the absolute apex of the book's theological mountain.

A. Rebuilding Ruins and the Nation of Priests (61:4–9)

- 1. Rebuilding ancient ruins and devastated cities.
- 1. Becoming a 'kingdom of priests' and 'ministers of our God' (Exodus 19 parallel).
- 1. The priest acts as a mediator standing between God and the world.

A. Clothed in Garments of Salvation (61:10–11)

- 1. Clothed in a robe of righteousness like a bride and bridegroom.
- 1. Righteousness and praise sprouting up before all nations.

I. Chapter 62: Righteousness as Brightness and the New Name

A. Sincere Vindication and Righteousness (62:1–3)

- 1. The prophet's refusal to be silent until Zion's righteousness shines like a burning torch.
- 1. Righteousness is paired with salvation in Hebrew poetic parallelism.

1. The dynamic link: salvation enables righteousness, and true salvation must manifest as a righteous lifestyle.
- A. The New Names of Zion (62:4–5)**
 1. No longer called Forsaken or Desolate.
 1. Called Hephzibah ('my delight is in her') and Beulah ('married').
 1. The Lord rejoicing over His people as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride.
- A. Building the Highway and Raising the Banner (62:10–12)**
 1. Going through the gates and preparing the way.
 1. Building up the highway and clearing it of stones.
 1. Raising a banner/signal flag for the peoples.
 1. The final declaration: 'Behold, your salvation comes; behold, his reward is with him'.
 1. Called the Holy People, the Redeemed of the Lord, and Sought Out.