

Introduction

[Isaiah 61](#) is an incredibly powerful passage filled with imagery of God's restoration of His people. What's more, it is the passage that Jesus uses to begin His public ministry. In [Luke 4](#) Jesus is at the synagogue in Nazareth and the scroll of Isaiah is given to Him. After reading the opening verses of [Isaiah 61](#) Jesus sat down and said, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

We know that all of Scripture is about Jesus, but we should take special attention to those places where Jesus explicitly tells us that this is about Himself and His ministry.

I want to draw three things from [Isaiah 61](#) this morning:

1. God's Restoration is Greater Than Sin's Devastation (vv. 1-4)
2. God's People Possess Everlasting Joy (vv. 5-9)
3. God's Gifts Are Meant to Be Shared (vv. 10-11)

God's Restoration is Greater Than Sin's Devastation (vv. 1-4)

Throughout Isaiah's prophecy there is this figure of the Anointed One. In the Bible, people are anointed for a task. Priests, judges, kings, and prophets are all anointed for specific tasks. The "Anointed One" in Isaiah, is a figure that is anointed by God's Spirit in a unique way. [Isaiah 11](#) states that the Anointed One will spring up from the cut down stump of Jesse like a new David. Moreover, He will have a *seven-fold anointing of God's Spirit*: "The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord."

In verses 1-2 of our passage, we are shown *the task* of the Anointed One. He is anointed ***“to bring good news to the poor;...to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the year of the LORD’s favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn;”***

The Anointed One’s task is to bring restoration. The way this restoration is described is as “the Year of Jubilee”. [Leviticus 25](#) teaches that the Hebrews were to consecrate the fiftieth year as a year of jubilee. In this year, liberty would be proclaimed throughout the land to all its inhabitants. Everyone who had become a debtor would be released from their debts and they would return to their ancestral property.

Isaiah’s Anointed One will proclaim the year of the LORD’s favor. This means that God is going to show up to restore His people. But whenever God shows up, two things always take place: blessing and judgement. This is the “Day of the Lord” concept I’ve preached about before. God’s people *need* God to show up. But we know that when God shows up everything in opposition to Him will fall. So the Anointed One not only proclaims the “year of the LORD’s favor” but also the “day of vengeance of our God.”

But this passage, and on the Bible, place the emphasis on God’s favor. Look at the times described in verse 2. God’s favor is *for a year* while His vengeance is *for a day*. [Psalm 30:5](#) puts it this way, “For his anger is but for a moment, and his favor is for a lifetime. Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning.”

Verse 2 ends by stating that the Anointed One will comfort all who mourn, and verses 3-4 dive into this theme further.

The morning referred to here specifically refers to mourning over sin. This actually relates back to what I preached about from [Isaiah 40](#) last week. [Isaiah 40](#) speaks of a voice crying *“in the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD.”* We know that this is the ministry of John the Baptizer. He prepares the way for Jesus, the Anointed One. And how does John prepare the way? It’s through a baptism of repentance. In order for the Anointed One to comfort His people who are mourning their sin, they need to confess and mourn their sin.

This is the work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit brings conviction over your sin and the appropriate response is mourning. Mourning for sin is the right and necessary first step for those who would be comforted. When the pharisees asked why Jesus ate with tax collectors and sinners, Jesus responded, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.” ([Mark 2:17](#)) Would you be healed by Jesus? You must first recognize your sickness.

What Isaiah says here is that when Jesus restores you, it is a greater than the devastation of your sin. ***Instead of ashes of mourning on the head, Jesus gives a beautiful headdress and the oil of gladness. Instead of a faint spirit, Jesus gives the garment of praise.***

No longer will God’s people be like a tree stump that has been cut down. They will be called “***oaks of righteousness***” that are planted in the garden of God. Moreover, all the devastation that sin brings upon God’s people shall be repaired, “***They shall build up the ancient ruins; they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.***”

Because of Jesus, the Anointed One, the long-standing & inherited brokenness of humanity can be restored. Jesus brings in the Year of Jubilee. Consider the words from one of the psalms we sing, “Jesus Shall Reign Where’er the Sun”

Where [Jesus] displays His healing pow’r, Death and curse are known no more,
In Him the tribes of Adam boast **More blessings than their father lost.**

Do you mourn your sin this morning. Do not lose heart, Jesus brings comfort and restoration. That is what He was anointed to do for His people!

God’s People Possess Everlasting Joy (vv. 5-9)

The next section lays out what this blessing of restoration looks like.

One of the themes in this section is that the promise given to Abraham will finally be realized. When the Anointed One, Jesus, the Offspring of Abraham, announces the Year of the LORD’s Favor the nations will enter into God’s family

and work in God's household. Abraham was promised that the nations would be blessed through his Offspring. Isaiah says the Anointed One will bring this about.

This teaches us something about what it means to be the Church. Jesus began the restoration process. He announced the gospel of forgiveness restoration. The Church is a living testimony to this gospel as she continues to baptize and disciple the nations. We live in the times between the two advents. The Year of the LORD's Favor has been announced, and the day of God's vengeance is coming. The Church offers forgiveness in Christ **and** proclaims the day of God's vengeance.

The next theme of the restoration is that God's people will be priests and ministers of God. Israel was to be a "kingdom of priests and a holy nation" ([Ex 19:6](#)). They were to mediate God's blessings to the world around them. But they failed in this task. But when God brings His salvation in Christ, God's people begin to embody their calling as a priestly nation. The apostle Peter tells the church that they are "a royal priesthood and a holy nation...that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you." We have been restored by God, which means we've been restored to proclaim God's excellencies to the nations.

Verse 7 stands at the heart of this section to highlight the nature of God's restoration, "***Instead of your shame there shall be a double portion; instead of dishonor they shall rejoice in their lot; therefore in their land they shall possess a double portion; they shall have everlasting joy.***"

God's restoration does not just bring you back to a baseline neutral position. God restores double and gives His people everlasting joy!

What's more, this restoration is fully in line with God's justice. Verse 8 says that God does this because He **loves justice**. God made an everlasting covenant with His people. His faithfulness to His covenant means He will bless His people.

Isaiah's Anointed One is also the Suffering Servant from [Isaiah 53](#). In order for God to save His people, the Suffering Servant will come and suffer for His people, taking their sins upon himself. [Isaiah 53](#) states:

Isaiah 53:4-5 ESV

⁴ Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. ⁵ But he was pierced for our

transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.

God deals with our sins and the gates of glory are opened to us. We receive a double portion because our older brother took our portion upon Himself on the cross.

Brothers and sisters in Christ, when God deals with your sins He adopts you into His family and clothes you in righteousness. It is the story of the Prodigal Son. The Father brings his son all the way back into fellowship and prepares a feast for Him. This is what God does for you in Christ and it is what He is doing for you today as we are about to come to His table!

God's Gifts Are Meant to Be Shared (vv. 10-11)

This brings us to our last section. The words of verses 10-11 are the words of Jesus. But they also apply to His people who He represents.

The Anointed one is ***clothed in the garments of salvation and the robe of righteousness***. You, God's people are clothed in the righteousness of Christ. You wear the garments of salvation.

This is an image of the whole Christ. Jesus is the bridegroom and the Church is His bride. In Christ we are adorned in festive wedding garments because we are invited to the "marriage supper of the Lamb." We are to rejoice with Jesus. As [Revelation 19](#) puts it "*Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready;*" and "*Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.*"

The final verse brings me to the final point, that God's gifts are to be shared.

Verse 11 is garden imagery, "***For as the earth brings forth its sprouts, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to sprout up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to sprout up before all the nations.***"

We are like a trees in God's garden. In [John 15:5](#) Jesus says "I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much

fruit". God causes his people to sprout up with the fruit of praise before all nations.

Fruitfulness is a gift from God. And God's gifts are not *ultimately* for the receiver of the gifts. The fruit of a tree is not meant for the tree. The fruit of the tree is a gift of life to others. As God bears fruit in your life, that fruit of the Spirit is to be shared with the Church and the world so that God may be glorified.

May God make us a fruitful vine so that we might sprout up with praise before the nations and bring glory to God's name.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. AMEN!