

A dark, moody landscape featuring a large, gnarled tree on the right side. The background is filled with silhouettes of other trees and foliage. A faint, multi-colored rainbow arches across the middle ground, partially obscured by the dark tones.

ISAIAH 61

THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
GOOD NEWS,
BLACK HISTORY,
AND GOSPEL UNITY



WHY THIS SERMON MATTERS

THIS IS NOT ABOUT BLAME

THIS IS ABOUT TRUTH, HEALING, AND UNITY

LOVE LISTENS BEFORE IT SPEAKS



★ JACKIE ROBINSON

- Jan 31, 1919 - Oct 24, 1972 (53 years)
- Played Negro League Baseball 1945-1947 for the Kansas City Monarchs
- First Black player in the MLB when he started at first base for the Brooklyn Dodgers on April 15, 1947

He bore injustice without becoming unjust



★ BRANCH RICKEY

He bore injustice without
becoming unjust

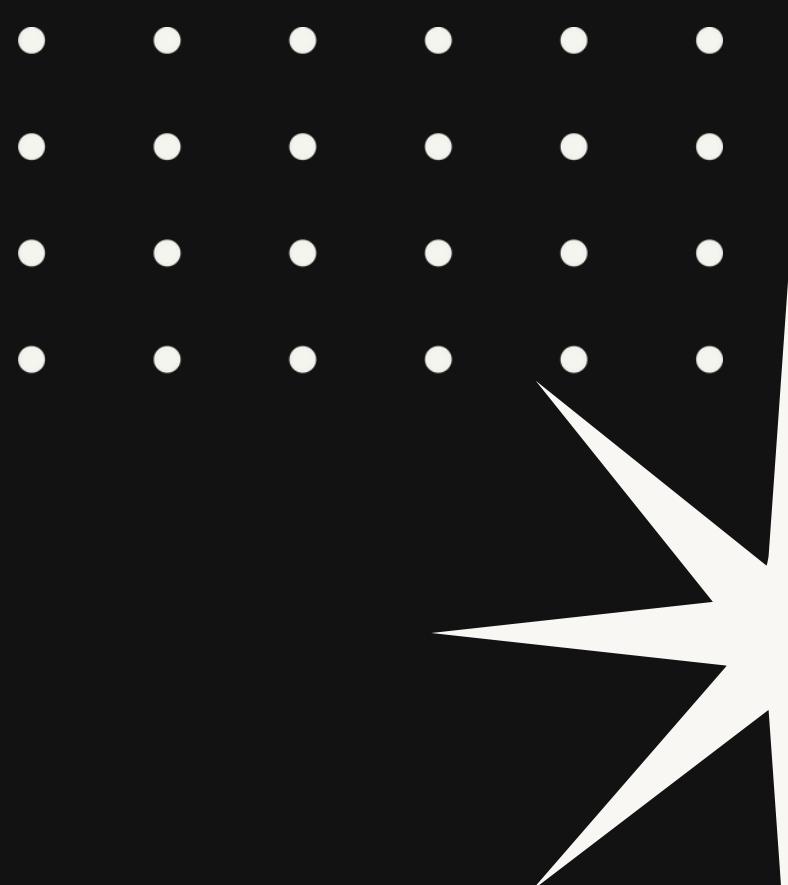
UNDERSTANDING



Racism Is More Than Personal Hatred

- Personal prejudice
- Unequal treatment
- Unrepaired systems of harm

“Sin can live in systems even when people mean well.”



UNDERSTANDING

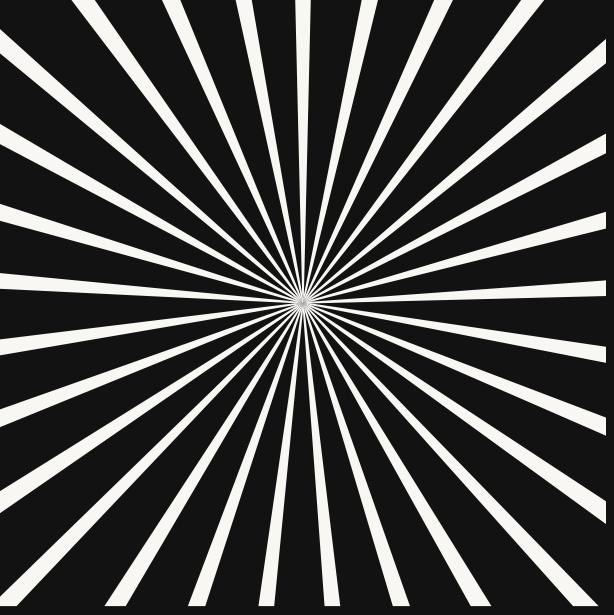
Financial



Blair-Caldwell African
American Research
Library



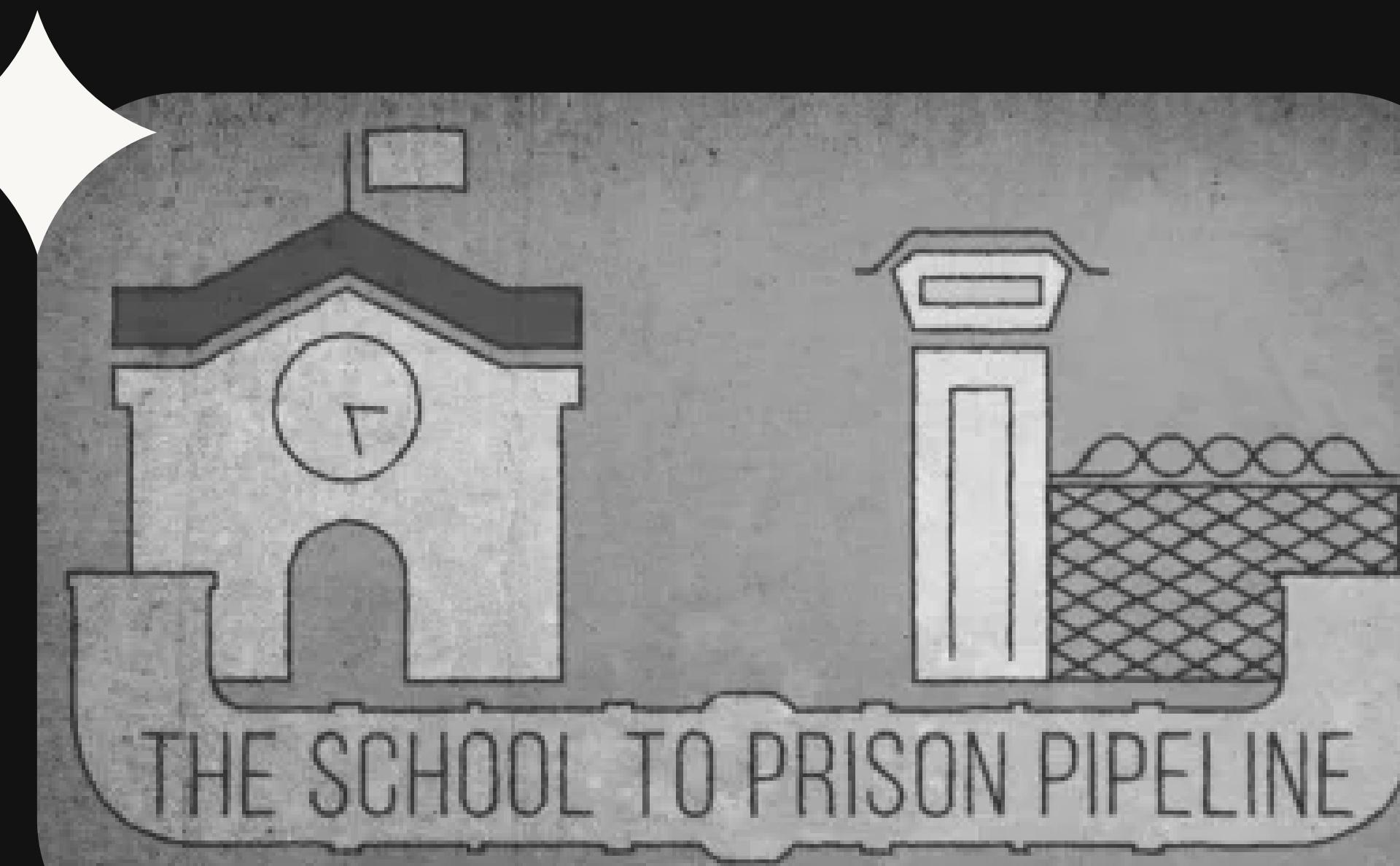
The large lawsuit on Wells Fargo for discrimination in lending practices has been ongoing for several years. The most significant case involved the U.S. Department of Justice filing a lawsuit against the bank, accusing it of systemic discrimination against Black and Hispanic home loan applicants. The lawsuit claimed that between 2015 and 2019, Wells Fargo charged higher mortgage interest rates to over 250,000 minority borrowers compared to similarly qualified white applicants. This case underscored long-standing concerns about racial bias in mortgage lending within the financial sector and raised accountability issues for one of America's largest banks. The lawsuit culminated in a \$75 million settlement in 2023, highlighting the consequences of biased algorithms and discriminatory practices in automated loan pricing systems.

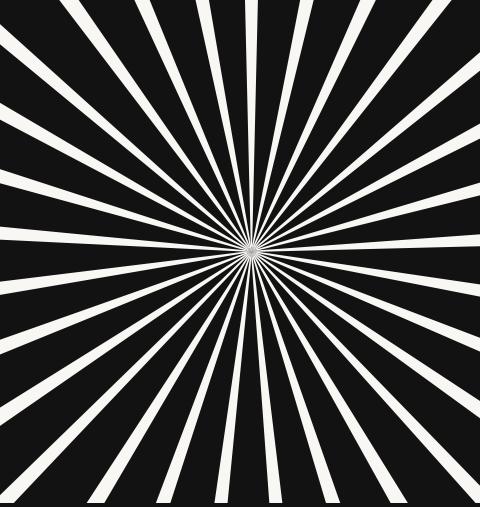


DISPARITIES

Persistent Disparities
Don't Happen by Accident

Wealth
Education
Health
Opportunity





SCHOOL TO PRISION PIPELINE

How Discipline Can Become Destiny

What it is:

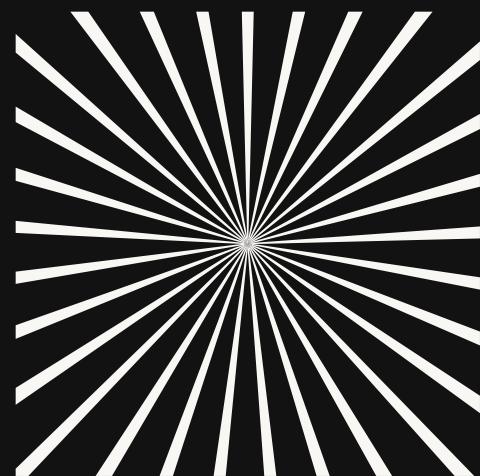
Policies that push students out of classrooms and toward the justice system
Often driven by zero-tolerance discipline, not criminal behavior

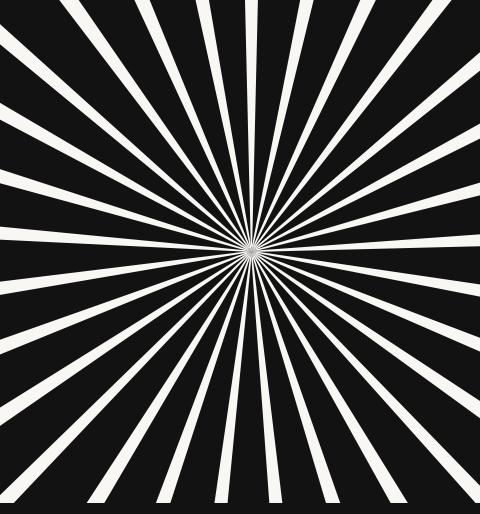
Key Realities:

Black boys are disciplined more harshly for the same behaviors
Suspensions and expulsions increase dropout risk
School removal increases likelihood of arrest and incarceration

Why it Matters:

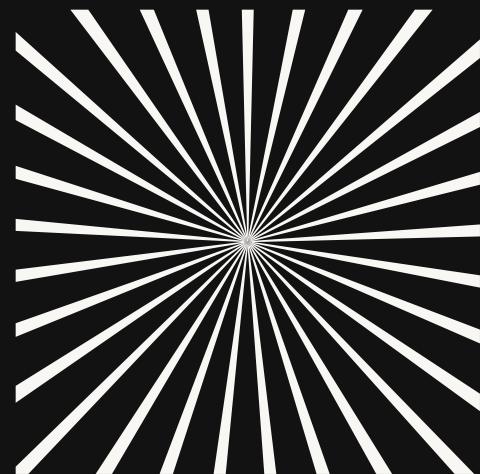
Education is meant to be a pathway
Punitive discipline becomes a trap

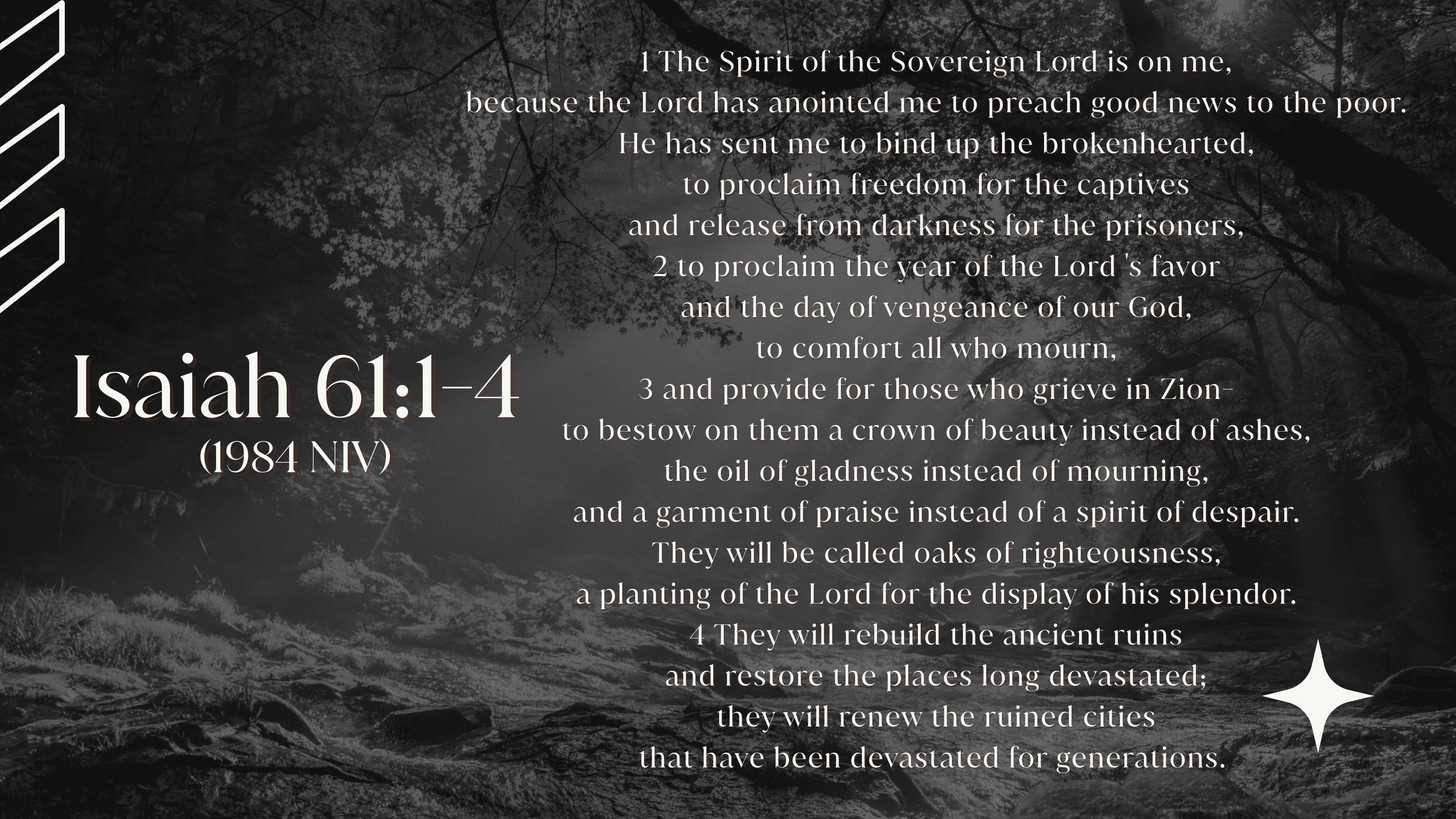




SCHOOL TO PRISION PIPELINE

- Private prisons make billions in revenue annually (e.g., CoreCivic reports billions in annual income).
- They profit by being paid per inmate housed, creating incentives to keep beds filled.
- Private facilities spend less on staffing and services to save money, sometimes at the expense of conditions.
- Corporations spend millions lobbying for laws that can increase incarceration.
- States may save money short-term, but expanded incarceration can strain taxpayers and communities long-term.
- Why it matters:
- A system that “earns” money from locking people up may unintentionally reinforce higher incarceration rather than rehabilitation and healing.





Isaiah 61:1-4 (1984 NIV)

1 The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me,
because the Lord has anointed me to preach good news to the poor.

He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim freedom for the captives

and release from darkness for the prisoners,

2 to proclaim the year of the Lord 's favor

and the day of vengeance of our God,

to comfort all who mourn,

3 and provide for those who grieve in Zion-
to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes,

the oil of gladness instead of mourning,

and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair.

They will be called oaks of righteousness,
a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendor.

4 They will rebuild the ancient ruins

and restore the places long devastated;

they will renew the ruined cities

that have been devastated for generations.



SHOW LOVE

Doug

Protest
The Train
Hiring
Research
Lifestyle
Advocacy
In the Spirit

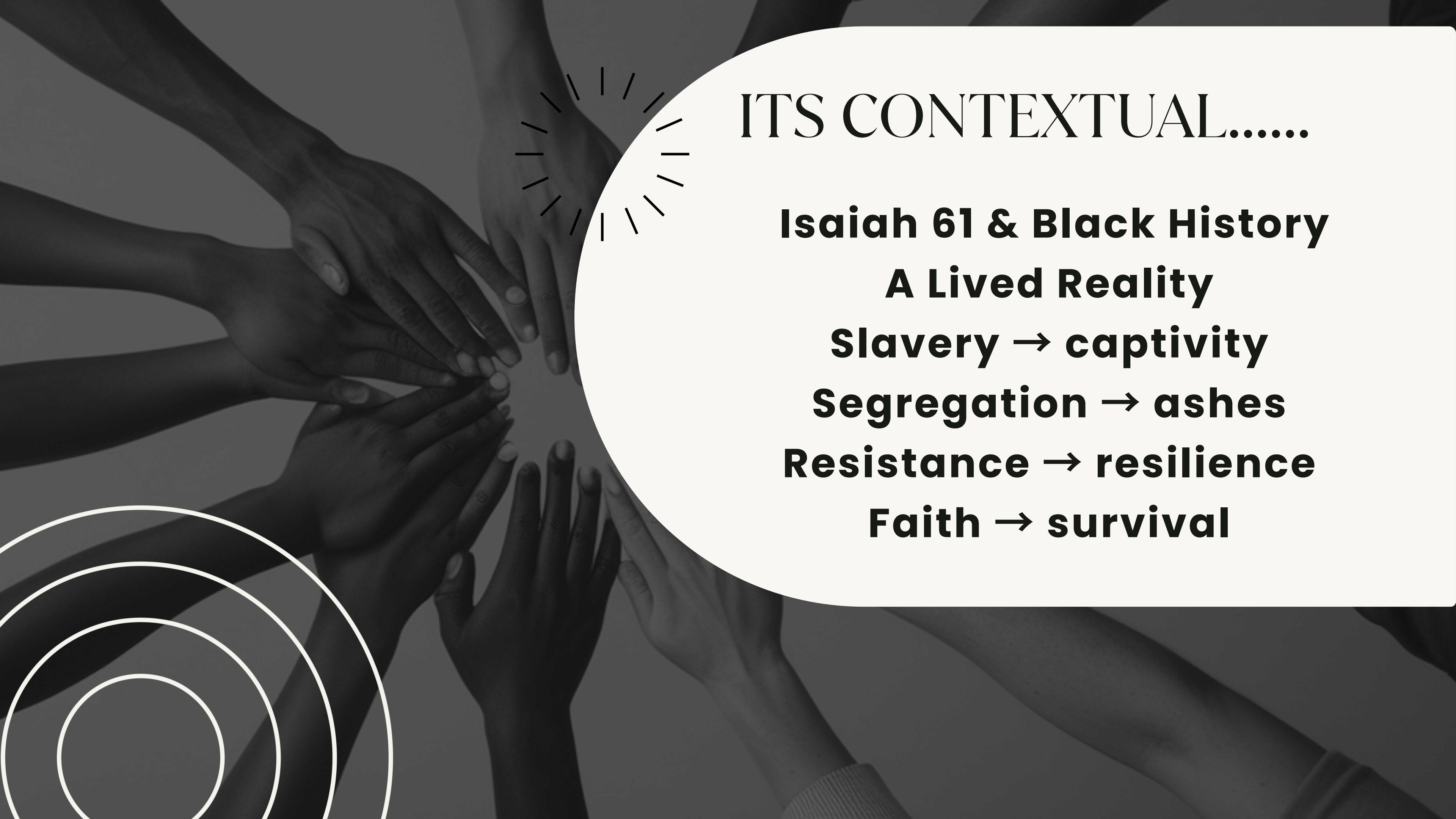


THE POOR





I AM YOUR BROTHER



ITS CONTEXTUAL.....

Isaiah 61 & Black History
A Lived Reality

Slavery → captivity

Segregation → ashes

Resistance → resilience

Faith → survival

“They will **rebuild** the ancient ruins and
restore the places long devastated;
they will **renew** the ruined cities that
have been devastated for
generations.”

Isaiah 61:4

RESTORE. REBUILD. RENEW

THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 2026 AIM

1. Knowledge of Christ
2. Intimacy with Christ
3. Power of Christ



LET US
PRAY

