

Isaiah Chapter 61

Verses 1-3: In this chapter Isaiah introduces the King who will rule in the glorious kingdom he has just described. After Jesus read from this passage (Luke 4:17-21), in the synagogue, He said "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears".

The "me" on whom the "Spirit of the Lord God" rests is Christ, the One who God has "anointed ... to preach good tidings" (good news), and to "proclaim liberty." When Jesus quoted this passage, He stopped at this point, indicating that the "day of vengeance" (final judgment), had not yet come.

Verses 1-2a: "The spirit ... acceptable year of the Lord": The servant of the Lord (42:1), will be the ultimate Preacher and the Redeemer of Israel who rescues them. Jesus speaks of the initial fulfillment of this promise, referring it to His ministry of providing salvation's comfort to the spiritually oppressed (Luke 4:18-19).

He says specifically, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing" (Luke 4:21). The Jews that were saved during Christ's ministry, and those being saved during this church age, still do not fulfill the promise of the salvation of the nation to come in the end time (Zech. 12:10-13:1; Rom. 11:25-27).

Isaiah 61:1 "The spirit of the Lord GOD [is] upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to [them that are] bound;"

"Spirit ... Lord God ... me": The 3 persons of the Holy Trinity function together in this verse (6:8; Matt. 3:16-17). "Liberty to the captives": The "captives" are Israelites remaining in the dispersion following the Babylonian captivity.

We know the Lord spoke these very words from the book of Isaiah, when He proclaimed that He was the fulfillment of this Scripture.

Luke 4:17-21 "And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written," "The Spirit of the Lord [is] upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised," "To preach the acceptable year of the Lord." "And he closed the book, and he gave [it] again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him." "And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears."

The Holy Spirit was on Jesus and in Him, as well. At His baptism, the dove lit on His shoulder. The dove symbolizes the Holy Spirit. He also, was conceived of the Holy Spirit of God as well.

All of the things in the Scripture were fulfilled in Jesus. He did set the captives free; He did preach the good news of the gospel. He did all of the things thus mentioned. Jesus was sanctified long before He was even conceived in the womb of Mary.

He, from the beginning, was God the Word.

Isaiah 61:2 "To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;"

“Acceptable year”: The same as “a day of salvation” (49:8), and “My year of redemption” (63:4). This is where Jesus stopped reading in the synagogue (Luke 4:19), indicating that the subsequent writing in the rest of the chapter (verses 2b to 11), awaited the second coming of Christ.

“Day of vengeance”: As part of His deliverance of Israel, the Lord will pour out wrath on all who oppose Him (59:17-18; Revelation chapters 6-19).

Jesus waited until He was 30 years old to begin His public ministry, because that was the time appointed. The acceptable year of the Lord was a long period of time when salvation would be offered to all mankind.

There would come a day, when it would be too late. Jesus fulfilled the law of sacrifices, and opened a new way to the Father for us. The age of grace is another explanation of this time.

We all regret and mourn the sins we committed in the past. God forgives, when we seek forgiveness in Jesus' name.

Isaiah 61:3 "To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified."

“Appoint ... glorified”: The purpose of the Lord’s consolation of the mourners after centuries of suffering (60:20), will be to glorify Himself (60:21).

"Ashes on the head" was a sign of mourning for sins you had committed. Notice, the word appoint. We had nothing to do with the appointment. God appointed and we accepted the appointment. This, of course, is speaking of salvation.

The "oil of joy" is speaking of the anointing of the Spirit of God working in our life. Sin had caused the heaviness. Now that sin has been atoned for, there is nothing left to do but praise and rejoice.

"Trees of righteousness" would be speaking of trees that are in right standing with God. Jesus is the Tree that we must be grafted into. He is the Branch, He is the Vine. We are grafted into Him. We are to glorify God. Our strength comes from the Tree (Jesus).

Verses 4-11: For all her suffering, Israel is promised a “double” blessing from God. Thus God reaffirms His “everlasting covenant” with them. The chapter concludes with a song of praise to the Lord. The “garments of salvation” and the “robe of righteousness” are synonymous and refer to salvation itself. They are paralleled with the garments of a bridegroom and a bride.

Isaiah 61:4 "And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations."

“Repair”: The rebuilding of Israel’s cities is part of God’s future plan for the nation (49:8; 58:12; 60:10).

This message is two-fold. The destruction of Jerusalem shall be no more. They shall restore it to its former greatness. The cities of Israel shall be restored. This also means the people of God, Jew and Gentile, shall be put back into right relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

Isaiah 61:5 "And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien [shall be] your plowmen and your vinedressers."

The Jews will no more be the captives. They will be the land owner. This looks even further than the natural house of Israel, to the time when the Christians shall reign with Christ.

2 Timothy 2:12 "If we suffer, we shall also reign with [him]: if we deny [him], he also will deny us:"

Revelation 20:6 "Blessed and holy [is] he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."

Isaiah 61:6 "But ye shall be named the Priests of the LORD: [men] shall call you the Ministers of our God: ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves."

“Priests of the Lord”: In fulfillment of (Exodus 19:6), Israel will be a kingdom of priests when Christ establishes His kingdom. In the meantime, Peter applied the same terminology to the church (1 Pet. 2:9).

"The priests in the tabernacle in the wilderness" symbolized the Christians. The physical house of Israel was known as a kingdom of priests. Priests do minister in the temple of God. Christians minister to the rest of the world, as well.

Gentiles in the verse above, is speaking of the non-believers.

Isaiah 61:7 "For your shame [ye shall have] double; and [for] confusion they shall rejoice in their portion: therefore in their land they shall possess the double: everlasting joy shall be unto them."

“Double”: Israel will receive double portions of blessing to replace the double punishment of her exile (40:2).

Shame has been a daily experience with the Jewish people. God will not only take the shame away, but they will get a double portion of blessings for the problems they faced. We know that when faithful Job was restored his losses, it was double what he had before.

This is God's way of saying, I saw your plight, and I appreciate your stand. This also, could be speaking of the small group of Jews, who were given the law, growing into a mighty army of believers in Christ. They were far more than doubled in this. Their joy is without end. They are eternally joyful in heaven.

Isaiah 61:8 "For I the LORD love judgment, I hate robbery for burnt offering; and I will direct their work in truth, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them."

“Everlasting covenant”: This refers to the New Covenant.

God is just in judgment. Not many of us want justice though. We want forgiveness and grace. The everlasting covenant has been in place since Abraham. Look with me, at who receives this. The spiritual covenant is with those of the following verse.

Galatians 3:29 "And if ye [be] Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

The physical covenant was with the nation of Israel.

Isaiah 61:9 "And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people: all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they [are] the seed [which] the LORD hath blessed."

Notice, seed is singular in the verse above. This is speaking of Jesus, the seed. The seed, spoken of, was not through Abraham's son of flesh, but through the son of the spirit (Isaac).

Gentiles again, is speaking of the unsaved world. Look again at the Scripture above from Galatians on the seed. Those who belong to Christ are the seed of Abraham. Jesus is the singular seed, we spring from. He is Christ. We are Christians. We belong to Him. We have even taken on His name.

Isaiah 61:10 "I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh [himself] with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth [herself] with her jewels."

“Clothed me ... covered me”: Here is the Old Testament picture of imputed righteousness, the essential heart of the New Covenant. When a penitent sinner recognizes he can’t achieve his own righteousness by works, and repents and calls on the mercy of God, the Lord covers him with His own divine righteousness by grace through his faith.

Look with me, at who is in the white linen garment of righteousness.

Revelation 7:9 "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;"

Revelation 7:13-14 "And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?" "And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

Salvation is in Jesus. The Christians, both male and female, are the bride of Christ. The bride of a King would wear a crown of jewels. Jesus is the King.

Isaiah 61:11 "For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations."

There is a process of growth in a plant. The bud comes, and then it blooms. This is the way with Christianity. It blossoms out after a long time of being very small.

Righteousness is a gift from God to all who believe. Praise is our sacrifice to God. Being assured of salvation in Jesus is enough to cause praise to burst forth from our lips. One plants the seed, another waters, but God gets the increase.

Isaiah Chapter 61 Questions

1. Where is this Scripture mentioned in the New Testament?
2. Who fulfilled these Scriptures?
3. When did Jesus begin His public ministry?
4. What age is the same time as verse 2?
5. What did putting "ashes on the head" symbolize?
6. What is the "oil of joy" speaking of?
7. What is "trees of righteousness" speaking of?

8. Our strength comes from _____.
9. What are the two messages in verse 4?
10. How are the Jews and Gentiles put back into right relationship with God?
11. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the _____.
12. "The priests in the tabernacle in the wilderness" symbolized whom?
13. Gentiles in verse 6, is speaking of _____.
14. What is God going to give in exchange for their shame?
15. For I the LORD love _____.
16. What type of covenant will God make?
17. Most people do not want justice, they want _____.
18. What does the author say to notice about the word "seed"?
19. What has the LORD clothed the believers in?
20. Where do we find the Scriptures pertaining to the garments of the multitude?
21. Praise is our _____ to God.