

Isaiah 61
June 12, 2022

The mission of the servant of the Lord Isa 61:1-3

1 The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, Because the LORD has anointed me To bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to captives And freedom to prisoners; 2 To proclaim the favorable year of the LORD And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn, 3 To grant those who mourn in Zion, Giving them a garland instead of ashes, The oil of gladness instead of mourning, The mantle of praise instead of a spirit of fainting. So they will be called oaks of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified.

“The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me;”
literally, the Spirit of the Lord Jehovah (Adonai Jehovah) is upon me.

“is upon me”
The speaker (“me” - in 61:1) is not identified, but one can hardly doubt that it is the Servant-Redeemer. These verses should therefore be considered the sixth and last of the Servant poems (Isa 42:1-8; 49:1-12; 50:4-9; 52:13-15; 53:1-12)

This is fulfilled by Jesus Lk 4:18-21

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. He sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are oppressed, 19 to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord.” 20 And He closed the book, gave it back to the attendant and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him. 21 And He began to say to them, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”

Notice: When Jesus read from this passage He stopped in the middle of the sentence, after the word “favor” (Lk 4:18-19). By doing this He was showing that His work would be divided into two advents. In His First Advent He did the things mentioned in Isaiah 61:1-2a; in His Second Advent He will do the things in verses 2b-3. When He returns, He will bring judgment on unbelievers (Mic 5:15; Rev 19:15-20); this will be the day of God’s “vengeance” (Isa 34:8; 35:4; 63:4).

The work (purpose) of the Messiah (anointing)

1. To bring good news to the afflicted;
“To bring good news” = one Hebrew word = the gospel.

“Afflicted” = oppressed, needy, i.e., those tormented and weak and so not able to help themselves, and so be of low status in a society. (this is often a condition of the poor as an oppressed class of persons);

In Luke the word “poor” is used instead of “afflicted”.

2. To bind up the brokenhearted; (Jesus omits this quotation in Luke 4)
“bind up” = “binding” on a bandage, and thus of medicating and healing the wounded. “Binding up” is an ordinary expression in Isaiah’s writings for “healing” (Isa 1:6; 3:7; 30:26).

Ps 34:18 The LORD is near to the brokenhearted And saves those who are crushed in spirit.

Ps 147:3 He heals the brokenhearted And binds up their wounds.

3. To proclaim liberty to the captives
This is the work of the Messiah

Isa 42:6-7 "... I will appoint You as a covenant to the people, As a light to the nations, 7 To open blind eyes, To bring out prisoners from the dungeon And those who dwell in darkness from the prison.

Jn 8:31-32 So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; 32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." [Jn 8:31-36 free from sin]

4. To proclaim freedom to prisoners; Lit opening to those who are bound
Rom 6:18 having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. (Rom 6:7, 22)

Rom 7:22-25 For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man, 23 but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members. 24 Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death? 25 Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin.

5. To proclaim the favorable year of the LORD
The year of jubilee on which "liberty was proclaimed to the captives"

All landed property during that year reverted to its original owner and all who were slaves were set free, and all debts were forgiven (Lev 25:13-54; 27:16-24),

6. To announce the day of vengeance of our God;
2Thes 1:7-9 ... when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, 8 dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. 9 These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,
(Is 34:8; 35:4; 59:17-18; 63:1-6; 66:14; Dt 32:41; Ps 110:5-6; Jer 46:10; Nah 1:2; Mal 4:1-3; Lk 21:22-24; 1Thes 1:10; 2:16; Heb 10:30-31)

7. To comfort all who mourn
Isa 40:1-2 "Comfort, O comfort My people," says your God. 2 "Speak kindly to Jerusalem; And call out to her, that her warfare has ended, That her iniquity has been removed, That she has received of the LORD'S hand Double for all her sins."

2Cor 1:4-5 who comforts us in all our affliction so that we will be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. 5 For just as the sufferings of Christ are ours in abundance, so also our comfort is abundant through Christ.

2Thes 2:16-17 Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, who has loved us and given us eternal comfort and good hope by grace, 17 comfort and strengthen your hearts in every good work and word.

He comforts the mourners giving them:

"A garland instead of ashes;"

Or a crown of glory instead of the ashes of repentance (2Sam 13:19; Es 4:1; Dan 9:3).

Psa 30:11 You have turned for me my mourning into dancing; You have loosed my sackcloth and girded me with gladness,

"The oil of gladness instead of mourning"

Or the anointing of the Spirit instead of tears which belonged to mourners.

Psa 23:5 You have anointed my head with oil; My cup overflows.

“The mantle of praise instead of a spirit of fainting”

Or a glad heart inclined to praise God, instead of a heavy heart inclined to despair.

bright-colored garments, indicative of thankfulness, instead of those that indicate despondency, as sackcloth.

The result of the Messiah’s work in our lives

“So they will be called oaks of righteousness”

or strong and enduring plants in the garden of God.

symbolical of men strong in righteousness, instead of being, as before, bowed down as a reed with sin and calamity (Isa 1:29-30; 42:3; 1Ki 14:15; Psa 1:3; 92:12-14; Jer 17:8).

“So they will be called ... The planting of the LORD”

1Cor 3:6-9 I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth ... For we are God’s fellow workers; you are God’s field, God’s building.

Jn 15:1-2 “I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. 2 “Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit.

“That He may be glorified”.

Rom 11:36 For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.

Psa 115:1 Not to us, O LORD, not to us, But to Your name give glory

God is glorified through us, as we receive the same anointing of His Spirit

Jn 14:12 “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these he will do; because I go to the Father.

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