

In Isaiah 59, we heard of the Anointed Conqueror –
when God himself comes to do what Israel has failed to do!

Now in chapter 61, we hear again of the Anointed Conqueror
who is given the Word and Spirit of God. (Cf Is 59)

“The Spirit of the Lord Yahweh is upon me because Yahweh has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor”

Isaiah 60:15-22 spoke of how Zion’s sorrows would be replaced with joy.

Now we hear that it is the Anointed Conqueror who will do this.

His dual ministry of vengeance and comfort fits nicely with Is 59 as well

1. The Year of the LORD’s Favor Proclaimed in the Coming of the Anointed One (61:1-9)

*The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,
because the LORD has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor;^[a]
he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and the opening of the prison to those who are bound.^[b]*

The Spirit-Anointed Conqueror has been anointed to bring good news to the poor.

Notice the various tasks that this includes:

he is sent to “bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and the opening of the prison to those who are bound.”

This is the language of “restoration from exile” – release from slavery.

If you want to understand this – pay attention to verse 2:

² *to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor,
and the day of vengeance of our God;*

What is he sent to do?

To proclaim liberty

To proclaim the year of favor and the day of vengeance

To comfort those who mourn

To grant new clothes and oil to those who mourn

And all this to the end that God might display his glory/beauty in them

What is the Year of the LORD’s Favor?

Liberty to the captives.

We saw a few weeks ago in the morning service the importance of the sabbatical year.

But there was also the great Jubilee year, every fiftieth year.

At the beginning of the fiftieth year, on the day of atonement, God told Moses:

“you shall consecrate the fiftieth year,
and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants.
It shall be a jubilee for you, when each of you shall return to his property
and each of you shall return to his clan.” (Lev 25)

The jubilee was a once-per generation reminder
of the great restoration that God promised—the eschatological jubilee—
the final year of the LORD’s favor.

And Isaiah utilizes this image of the fiftieth year— (7x7 +1)
that ultimate eighth year—the year when God’s people enter his rest—
in order to speak of the great deliverance
that the Anointed One will bring.

God has a long history of using weak and foolish things to shame the wise and powerful.

In the Exodus, he rescued slaves and gave them a home.
He used a prostitute – Rahab – to give his people the Land.
He took David from tending the sheep and made him king.

In Isaiah 11, the prophet told us that the Spirit of the LORD would rest upon
the one who comes forth from the stump of Jesse,
and that this one would “judge the poor with righteousness,
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth.”

The poor are those who have no advocate – those who have no one to speak for them.
And the Messiah – the Spirit-Anointed Conqueror –
is the one who defend the helpless.

We need to be clear that the “preference for the poor”
does not mean that he helps the poor to oppress the rich!

No, he judges with *equity* for the meek of the earth –
which means that he does what is right and fair.

But it also means that he will *not* put up with those who prefer the rich!

And of course, this is where Jesus starts his ministry.

Jesus quotes Isaiah 61 in Luke 4:16-22.
the year of the Lord’s favor
the day of wrath and vengeance comes later (John 5:22-29)

Year vs. day is quite intentional.

God's favor comes for a year—but his wrath passes in a day.

to comfort all who mourn;
³ *to grant to those who mourn in Zion—
to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit;
that they may be called oaks of righteousness,
the planting of the LORD, that he may be glorified.*^[c]
⁴ *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.*

Instead of mourning, the people of God will rejoice and give praise to God,
to the end that he may be glorified/beautified (v3)
And then, in this great year of the LORD's favor,
they will rebuild the ancient ruins.
“Building up the ancient ruins” uses the language of return from exile
to point forward to the great restoration brought by the Anointed One.

Isaiah even uses four different ways of saying the same thing to draw attention to this.
Ancient ruins, former devastations, ruined cities, the devastations of many generations—
all this shall be rebuilt.
All that was once thought lost will be regained and restored.
The Kingdom of God will be more glorious than ever before!

Verses 5-9 then insert a couple of different voices:
Verses 5-6 speak to “You” plural who will join in the glory of the Anointed One.

⁵ *Strangers shall stand and tend your flocks;
foreigners shall be your plowmen and vinedressers;*
⁶ *but you shall be called the priests of the LORD;
they shall speak of you as the ministers of our God;
you shall eat the wealth of the nations,
and in their glory you shall boast.*

While strangers and foreigners take over the menial tasks,
you will be called priests of Yahweh.
The glory of the nations will be brought into Zion.

Verse 7 then turns to the third person plural—“they shall possess a double portion”

This switch from the second to the third person serves to highlight the statement..

*⁷ 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.*

Verse 8 turns to the first person singular,
as God himself speaks of his covenant faithfulness,

*⁸ For I the LORD love justice;
I hate robbery and wrong;^[d]
I will faithfully give them their recompense,
and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.*

and verse 9 then returns to the third person plural,
speaking of how God's blessing will be known among the nations.

*⁹ Their offspring shall be known among the nations,
and their descendants in the midst of the peoples;
all who see them shall acknowledge them,
that they are an offspring the LORD has blessed.*

Verses 5-9 serve as divine confirmation of what the Messiah has just said.

The focus in verses 5-9 is upon how the nations will recognize and acknowledge Zion.
and how Israel will inherit the double portion (cf. ch 40)

The pivot verse is v7

(Notice all the different "inheritance" words of v7–
"double portion; lot; possess; double portion")

Verses 5-6 lead up to it, reminding us of the influx of the Gentiles.

Yahweh speaks in verse 8 of the "everlasting covenant"

that will result in the blessing of their offspring (v9),

concluding chiastically with the same emphasis on the recognition of the nations
that we see in verses 5-6.

The end of the story will be land – seed – and a blessing to the nations!

2. The Year of the LORD's Favor as the Wedding Feast of the Anointed One (61:10-62:7)

Verse 10 then returns to the voice of the Anointed one,
and we hear the call to a wedding feast.

There are three parts to the Messiah's call:

a) The Joy of the Messiah in the Work of Salvation (61:10-11)

*¹⁰ I will greatly rejoice in the LORD;
my soul shall exult in my God,
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation;
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself like a priest with a beautiful headdress,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.*

I will greatly rejoice in Yahweh; my soul shall exult in my God.

Why?

He has two reasons. (Two “ki’s”)

- 1) for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation
the robe of righteousness
as a bridegroom with a priestly headdress
as a bride with her jewels

This is not the armor of God (ch 59)

That would be clothing for battle.

This is what you wear after the battle,
as you come to the wedding feast!

The second reason is that:

- 2) God will cause righteousness and praise to sprout
(Read v11)

*¹¹ 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.*

The Messiah rejoices because of the fruit of his work.

God will bring righteousness and praise throughout the earth.

And indeed, look at the results of Pentecost!

This is the “joy set before him” (Heb 12:2)

Jesus knew from the scriptures that this was what was in store for him

He read Isaiah 61 in hope,

God gave this passage to Jesus,
so that he might know the reason
for his suffering and humiliation.

And so the Messiah – the Anointed One – declares:

b) The Messiah’s Zealous Love for Zion (62:1-5)

*62 For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,
and for Jerusalem's sake I will not be quiet,
until her righteousness goes forth as brightness,
and her salvation as a burning torch.*

² The nations shall see your righteousness,

*and all the kings your glory,
 and you shall be called by a new name
 that the mouth of the LORD will give.*
³ *You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD,
 and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.*
⁴ *You shall no more be termed Forsaken,^[e]
 and your land shall no more be termed Desolate,^[f]
 but you shall be called My Delight Is in Her,^[g]
 and your land Married;^[h]
 for the LORD delights in you,
 and your land shall be married.*
⁵ *For as a young man marries a young woman,
 so shall your sons marry you,
 and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride,
 so shall your God rejoice over you.*

It is for Zion's sake that he utters two "I wills"
 I will not be silent
 I will not be quiet
 until righteousness and salvation come.
 until her righteousness goes forth as brightness,
 and her salvation as a burning torch.
 Until the light of salvation dawns upon Jerusalem,
 the Anointed One will proclaim his tidings.
 And then the nations shall see your righteousness,
 and all the kings your glory.

And as a result of this there are four "you shalls"
 You shall be called by a new name.
 God will give you a new name.
 You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD.
 Jerusalem?
 You have to remember all of Isaiah's woes and imprecations
 against Jerusalem!
 Jerusalem has been condemned as the city of man!
 It is no better than the pagan cities of the nations!
 And yet God will give to her a new name.
 He will make her a crown of beauty in the hand of Yahweh.
 You shall no more be called forsaken
 Your land shall no more be desolate.
 But you shall be called "My delight is in her,
 and your land "married"

And again there are 2 reasons – two ki's!

1) for the LORD delights in you
Yahweh delights in you!
He rejoices to be your God.

2) for you shall be married
Indeed, this is just the result of the first.
It is perhaps somewhat odd that “your sons marry you,”
until you consider the fact that the Anointed One
is both a son of Zion and her husband!

And yet God rejoices over you as a bridegroom over his bride.
Of course, the Anointed One is both the son of Zion, and the Son of God.

Isaiah may not have realized it (though he would have had to have been pretty dense!)
but the Messiah had to be a divine person.

And so the Messiah – the Anointed One – speaks to Jerusalem:

c) The Messiah’s Call to Prayer (62:6-7)

⁶ *On your walls, O Jerusalem,
I have set watchmen;
all the day and all the night
they shall never be silent.
You who put the LORD in remembrance,
take no rest,
⁷ and give him no rest
until he establishes Jerusalem
and makes it a praise in the earth.*

He sets watchmen on the walls of Jerusalem to look for the coming of the LORD.
Give Yahweh no rest until he makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth.

Again – remember how long it will be?
Isaiah is prophesying around 700 BC.
The return from exile would come around 500 B.C.
The Messiah only comes 500 years later!

“Take no rest – and give him no rest” –
Keep praying!
Keep seeking the LORD!
And teach your children to do the same –
and teach their children –
and keep going for hundreds of years...

Do you see the big picture?
Do you see where the story is going?

Because when you see what God has promised –
then you pray relentlessly!

3. The Year of the LORD's Favor as the Redemption of Zion (62:8-12)

The answer to the prayer of the saints is found in verses 8-12.

Having heard the voice of the Messiah calling us to prayer
in giving God no rest until he establishes his holy city,
we now hear the oath of God himself –
we hear the promise of God:

⁸ *The LORD has sworn by his right hand
and by his mighty arm:
“I will not again give your grain
to be food for your enemies,
and foreigners shall not drink your wine
for which you have labored;
⁹ but those who garner it shall eat it
and praise the LORD,
and those who gather it shall drink it
in the courts of my sanctuary.”*

Never again will the food and wine of the people of God be given to their enemies.
It will be brought into the courts of God, and the feast of Tabernacles will be glorious!

The people of God will partake of bread and wine and praise the LORD!

The doubled verbs of v10 are a familiar Isianic motif:

¹⁰ *Go through, go through the gates;
prepare the way for the people;
build up, build up the highway;
clear it of stones;
lift up a signal over the peoples.*

Again, this is the language of restoration from exile
and building the Highway of the LORD (cf. 57:14 and 40ff)

And this is followed by three beholds in verse 11:

¹¹ *Behold, the LORD has proclaimed
to the end of the earth:
Say to the daughter of Zion,
“Behold, your salvation comes;*

*behold, his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.”*

Behold, the LORD has proclaimed two more beholds!
behold, your salvation comes
behold, his reward is with him
Judgment is coming.
The Anointed One will come, bringing the year of the LORD’s favor.
But the day of vengeance has not yet come.
But it will.
The day of reckoning will come.

*¹² And they shall be called The Holy People,
The Redeemed of the LORD;
and you shall be called Sought Out,
A City Not Forsaken.*

This is where your story is going!
This is where the city of God will be in the end!
A City Not Forsaken!

God himself has sought you out – redeemed you – made you Holy!

4. The Year of the LORD’s Favor as the Victory of the Anointed One (63:1-6)

The watchman is ready (62:6)
The people of God have prepared for the coming of salvation.
And yet they are somewhat startled at what they see.
A single figure marching with strength from Edom,
covered in blood.

*63 Who is this who comes from Edom,
in crimsoned garments from Bozrah,
he who is splendid in his apparel,
marching in the greatness of his strength?
“It is I, speaking in righteousness,
mighty to save.”*

*² Why is your apparel red,
and your garments like his who treads in the winepress?*

*³ “I have trodden the winepress alone,
and from the peoples no one was with me;
I trod them in my anger
and trampled them in my wrath;
their lifeblood^[i] spattered on my garments,*

and stained all my apparel.

⁴ *For the day of vengeance was in my heart,
and my year of redemption^[k] had come.*

⁵ *I looked, but there was no one to help;
I was appalled, but there was no one to uphold;
so my own arm brought me salvation,
and my wrath upheld me.*

⁶ *I trampled down the peoples in my anger;
I made them drunk in my wrath,
and I poured out their lifeblood on the earth.”*

There is a parallel here with chapter 52.

There the watchmen were proclaiming the salvation of our God,
and the great joy over redemption.

And then “behold” the suffering servant.

Likewise here, expectations of glory and majesty are somewhat puzzled by this
“striking figure who comes alone from Edom”

Why from Edom?

Recall that Edom means “red”.

In Hebrew it reads, “who is this who comes from Edom?”

And verse 2, “why is your apparel adom?” (red)

The garments of the Messiah are dripping with the blood of Edom.

And why from Bozrah?

Bozrah sounds like the Hebrew for “vintage”--

fitting for one who has come from treading the winepress!

We heard in 61:10-12 that the Messiah is clothed with the garments of salvation.

We now hear that these are crimsoned garments—splendid in his apparel.

Who is this?

“It is I” the Anointed One replies, “speaking in righteousness, mighty to save.”

He was first identified in 59:20-21 as one who would bring righteousness and truth,
one who would be endowed with the Word and Spirit of God.

And here he declares that he is the one who speaks righteousness—

the one who is mighty to save.

How can you say this?

And why is your apparel red?

It looks like you have been treading in the winepress!

Indeed, “I have trodden in the winepress alone”

The language here echoes the language of Is 59, where it was God who did this

Is 59 makes it clear that God is the one who alone brings salvation.

And yet here in 62-63 it is equally clear that this same one
is the Anointed One.

The reason why he is mighty to save is because he has waged war
single-handedly with the enemies of Israel
(Edom, and its capital, Bozrah, serve as types of the whole hosts of the evil one)
and he has triumphed.

Isaiah makes it clear that the day of salvation is also the day of wrath.
Indeed, there is no salvation without judgment.
The salvation of the people of God is impossible without the destruction of the wicked.
The day of vengeance must accompany the year of redemption.
(Literally, the “year of my redeemed ones”)
There is a verbal parallel between “my redeemed ones” (ge-ulay)
and “stained” garments (eg-al-ti)
Both verbs have an identical root: ga-al
And this parallel is important.
Because his garments are stained (ga-al)
They are redeemed (ga-al)
And just as we saw that the suffering servant must do his work alone,
so also must the Anointed Conqueror.
There was none to help.
He must do the work of salvation alone.
And that includes both the year of the redeemed ones
as well as the day of vengeance.
Because there is no salvation without judgment.

And while Jesus brought the year of salvation in his first coming,
he will bring the day of vengeance in his second.

Revelation speaks of the fulfillment of this:

Rev. 6:15-17

“The wrath of the Lamb”—the great day of their wrath

Rev. 14:17-20

the angel with the sickle, gathering the grapes of the earth
and the winepress of the wrath of God

Rev. 19:15

“He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty”

Some people struggle with the idea of how this idea of vengeance and wrath
fits with the idea of a loving God.

But if you think about it – *love* is not okay with letting misery reign forever!
In order for love and beauty and truth to reign –
there must be an end to wickedness!