



# ISAIAH 61

## MESSIAH'S MISSION ~ MESSIAH'S MINISTERS ~ MESSIAH'S MUSIC

Isaiah 61 reveals that “the Messiah, who ministered salvation at his first coming, will minister comfort for redeemed Israel at his second coming. Jesus read and applied 61:1–2 to his own ministry when he preached in the synagogue at Nazareth (Luke 4:16–21). Jesus did not quote 61:2–3 in the synagogue at Nazareth because they will be fulfilled at his second coming. In the kingdom, redeemed Israel will realize its destiny to be a priestly nation.

In Luke 4:18-19, Jesus says his to “bring good news to the poor”...“to heal the brokenhearted”...“to proclaim liberty and freedom”...and “to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” He stops in mid-sentence, however, after the word “favor,” showing that His work would be in two advents. In His first advent He does the work laid out in verses 1-2a. In His second advent, He will carry out the work mentioned in verses 2b-3, bringing judgment on unbelievers and comfort to Israel.

English Standard (ESV)	Passion Notes	Passion Translation (TPT)
<p>Isaiah 61:1 The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; 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; 2 to proclaim the year of the LORD’s favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn;</p>	<p><b>a</b> 61:1 The Spirit of the Lord Yahweh is viewed by many scholars as a synonymical phrase for the Spirit of Prophecy.</p> <p><b>b</b> 61:1 Or “upon, in, on, over, above, by, for, through, throughout, around, beside.”</p> <p><b>c</b> 61:1 The title of Messiah is taken from the Hebrew verb “to anoint.” Messiah means the Anointed One in both Hebrew (mashiach) and Greek (Christos). Our Lord Jesus quoted this passage in Nazareth (Luke 4:16–21) and introduced his “jubilee” ministry to Israel (Lev. 25). The first three verses of this chapter describe the twofold mission of Jesus: (1) to open the door of the day of grace to the world; (2) to proclaim the day of vengeance coming on sin, darkness, sickness, and eventually, the “goat” nations. As a prophet, he comes to preach the new season of grace; as a priest, he comes to heal; and as a king, he comes to decree and herald peace and freedom to the captives. See Luke 3:21–22; Acts 10:38.</p> <p><b>d</b> 61:1 Or “humble, lowly, depressed.”</p> <p><b>e</b> 61:1 See Rom. 8:21; 2 Cor. 3:17; Gal. 5:1.</p> <p><b>f</b> 61:1 Or “to release “the blind from darkness” (LXX).</p> <p><b>g</b> 61:2 Or “year” – not a literal year but a season of time.</p> <p><b>h</b> 61:2 Or “favor, good pleasure, acceptance.”</p>	<p><b>Messiah’s Mission</b></p> <p>Isaiah 61:1 The mighty Spirit of Lord Yahweh <b>a</b> is wrapped around <b>b</b> me because Yahweh has anointed me, <b>c</b> as a messenger to preach good news to the poor. <b>d</b> He sent me to heal the wounds of the brokenhearted, to tell captives, “You are free,” <b>e</b> and to tell prisoners, “Be free from your darkness.” <b>f</b> 2 I am sent to announce a new season <b>g</b> of Yahweh’s grace <b>h</b> and a time of God’s recompense on his enemies,</p>

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<p><sup>3</sup> 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. <sup>4</sup> 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. <sup>5</sup> Strangers shall stand and tend your flocks; foreigners shall be your plowmen and vinedressers;</p> <p><sup>6</sup> 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.</p> <p><sup>7</sup> 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.</p> <p><sup>8</sup> For I the LORD love justice; I hate robbery and wrong; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. <sup>9</sup> 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.</p> <p><sup>10</sup> 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. <sup>11</sup> 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.</p>	<p><b>i</b> 61:2 Through the cross and the resurrection of Jesus, a time of recompense has come (Col. 2:15) to conquer sin, sickness, Satan, death, demonic power, and injustice—not just vengeance on humanity but on evil wherever it is found.</p> <p><b>j</b> 61:3 Or “beauty for ashes” or “a garland (of flowers) or headdress.” There is an interesting wordplay in the Hebrew text. The word for “beauty” is phe’er, and the word for “ashes” is epher—simply the moving of one letter. God has the power to change and move things around in our lives to make them into something beautiful. See Rom. 8:28.</p> <p><b>k</b> 61:3 Or “joy, gladness.” See Heb.1:9.</p> <p><b>l</b> 61:3 Or “(robes of) mourning.”</p> <p><b>m</b> 61:3 Or “a splendor-garment.”</p> <p><b>n</b> 61:3 Or “the spirit of failure.” The Hebrew word for “heaviness” (keheh) comes from a root word for “dark, dim, obscure, colorless, gloom.”</p> <p><b>o</b> 61:3 The oak, a hardwood tree, was used to make yokes for oxen and symbolizes strength, might (or mighty men), stability, conviction, uprightness, resoluteness. This could be the Quer-cus calliprinos, also known as the Palestine oak. There is a Palestine oak not far from Hebron that has been estimated to be 850 years old. “Oaks of Righteousness” points to a godly, spiritually mature people who will know the righteousness of God and walk in it. Jesus, the Tree of Life, multiplies himself in us so we become trees of righteousness. A Tree became a forest. See Ps. 1:3.</p> <p><b>p</b> 61:3 See Ps. 92:13; 1 Cor. 3:9.</p> <p><b>q</b> 61:4 These desolate places can also point to areas of our lives that are broken and to spiritual truths that have been lost and forgotten for generations, which are now being recovered. See Acts 3:21.</p> <p><b>r</b> 61:6 It has been the desire of God to make all of his people priests (Ex. 19:1–6; 1 Peter 2:1–10; Rev. 5:9–10). This far surpasses the priestly ministry of the Old Covenant (Heb. 8:6).</p> <p><b>s</b> 61:6 Or “glory.”</p> <p><b>t</b> 61:6 Or “admired because of their wealth” (LXX).</p> <p><b>u</b> 61:10 See Rom. 13:11–14; 2 Cor. 5:1–5.</p> <p><b>v</b> 61:10 See Ex. 28:4; Luke 15:22; Rom. 14:17; Rev. 6:11; 7:9–14; 19:7–8.</p> <p><b>w</b> 61:10 Or “ornaments, (priestly) turban, garland.”</p>	<p><b>i</b> to comfort all who are in sorrow, <sup>3</sup> to strengthen those crushed by despair who mourn in Zion—to give them a beautiful bouquet <b>j</b> in the place of ashes, the oil of bliss <b>k</b> instead of tears, <b>l</b> and the mantle of joyous praise <b>m</b> instead of the spirit of heaviness. <b>n</b> Because of this, they will be known as Mighty Oaks <b>o</b> of Righteousness, planted <b>p</b> by Yahweh as a living display of his glory. <sup>4</sup> They will restore ruins from long ago and rebuild what was long devastated. <b>q</b> They will renew ruined cities and desolations of past generations. <sup>5</sup> Foreigners will be appointed to shepherd your many flocks; strangers will cultivate your fields and tend your vines.</p> <p><b>Messiah’s Ministers</b></p> <p><sup>6</sup> But you will be known as Priests of Yahweh, <b>r</b> and called Servants of our God. You will feast on the wealth of nations and revel <b>s</b> in their riches! <b>t</b></p> <p><sup>7</sup> Because you received a double dose of shame and dishonor, you will inherit a double portion of endless joy and everlasting bliss! <sup>8</sup> “For I, Yahweh, love fairness and justice, and I hate stealing and sin. I will rightly repay them because of my faithfulness and enter into an everlasting covenant with them. <sup>9</sup> Their seed will be famous among the nations, and their descendants the center of attention of the people. All who see them will recognize that they are the seed that Yahweh has blessed with favor!”</p> <p><b>Messiah’s Music</b></p> <p><sup>10</sup> I will sing and greatly rejoice in Yahweh! My whole being vibrates with shouts of joy in my God! For he has dressed me with salvation <b>u</b> and wrapped me in the robe of his righteousness! <b>v</b> I appear like a bridegroom on his wedding day, decked out with a beautiful sash, <b>w</b> or like a radiant bride adorned with sparkling jewels. <sup>11</sup> In the same way the earth produces its crops and seeds spring up in a garden, so will the Lord Yahweh cause righteousness and praise to blossom before all the nations!</p>

## Bible Knowledge Commentary

JOHN A. MARTIN

- **The coming of the Messiah** (chap. 61)

- **61:1-3.** In verse 1 all three Persons of the Trinity are mentioned: the Spirit ... the Sovereign LORD, and the Messiah. Three factors indicate that Me refers to the Messiah: (1) The association of the Holy Spirit with the anointing points to Jesus Christ. After being anointed with oil, Israel's first two kings, Saul and David, were blessed with the Spirit's ministry (1 Sam. 10:1, 10; 16:13). Similarly Christ was anointed by the Holy Spirit (Matt. 3:16-17) to be Israel's King. The Hebrew word for Messiah means "the Anointed One," and Christ is the Greek equivalent of *AjylvDm*. (2) Part of this passage (Isa. 61:1-2a) was read by Jesus (Luke 4:18-19) in reference to Himself. (3) The mission of this Anointed One was Jesus' ministry: to preach good news, to heal and free (Isa. 61:1; cf. 42:7), to proclaim ... favor and ... vengeance (61:2), and to comfort (vv. 2-3). When Jesus read from this passage He stopped in the middle of the sentence, after the word "favor" (Luke 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 (Micah 5:15; Rev. 19:15-20); this will be the day of God's "vengeance" (cf. Isa. 34:8; 35:4; 63:4). But the Messiah will also "comfort" Israel, for she will have undergone great persecution, the Great Tribulation, in the preceding years (cf. Dan. 7:21, 24-25; Rev. 12:13-17).
- When the Messiah comes He will change believing Israelites' sadness to joy, a truth Isaiah mentioned frequently. In place of ashes, put on one's head as a sign of mourning (cf. 2 Sam. 13:19; Es. 4:1; Dan 9:3), they will wear a crown. Light olive oil, when applied to one's face and hair, would soothe him and brighten his spirits (cf. Pss. 23:5; 45:7; 104:15; Ecc. 9:8; Matt. 6:17; Heb. 1:9), thus dispelling mourning. Another sign of joy is a bright garment (cf. Ecc. 9:7-8). Israel will be righteous (cf. Isa. 54:14; 58:8; 60:21; 62:1-2) and like stalwart oak trees will display God's splendor (cf. 35:2; 46:13; 49:3; 55:5; 60:9, 21; 62:3).
- **61:4-9.** After the Messiah's Second Advent Israel will rebuild her ruined cities, even those that had been destroyed many years before. Israel will be so revered that Gentiles (aliens and foreigners) will join her (cf. 14:1; 60:10) in her farming and shepherding. As a nation of priests each one will know the LORD, and have access to Him, and mediate on behalf of others, as did the Levitical priests. This was to be one of Israel's functions in the world (Ex. 19:6), but unfortunately she will not fully carry out that responsibility till in the Millennium. Nations will bring their wealth to Israel (see comments on Isa. 60:5, 11). The double portion refers to the inheritance the eldest son in a family would receive from his father's estate (Deut. 21:17). The eldest son was given special honor. Similarly Israel, like the Lord's firstborn (Ex. 4:22), will be honored. Because of these blessings and God's giving Israel an everlasting covenant (the New Covenant; cf. Jer. 32:40; Ezek. 16:60; 37:26; Heb. 13:20), people everywhere will acknowledge that she is indeed God's special people.
- **61:10-11.** In these verses the prophet seems to be speaking for the redeemed remnant who will rejoice (cf. comments on 9:3) in response to God's blessings mentioned in 61:1-9. Salvation and righteousness are pictured as clothes worn by the people (cf. God's "clothes," 59:17). In other words the Israelites are characterized by salvation (God's redeemed people) and righteousness (those who are living by God's standards; cf. 58:8; 60:21). To picture their joy and blessing a bridegroom wore a fancy headgear, like a priest's turban, and the bride wore costly jewelry. God will cause Israel's righteousness to spring up in other nations (cf. 61:11; 62:1-2) much as the soil sustains the growth of plants.

## TONIGHT'S DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. The focus of this chapter seems to pertain almost exclusively to the relationship between the Messiah and the nation of Israel. Pause and think about that for a bit. What is the nature of that relationship today? Could you apply this chapter directly to Israel's return from Babylon, or is it all about a future relationship between Jesus and Israel?
2. What role does today's church (The followers of Jesus) play in encouraging a relationship between Jesus and God's people, Israel? In Romans 9:25, Paul quotes two verses out of Hosea and says this about gentile believers...*"Those who were not my people, I will now call my people. And I will love those whom I did not love before."* Paul goes on to say later in Romans 11:1, *"...has God rejected his own people, the nation of Israel? Of course not!"* Sooooo, God has not stopped loving Israel, even though they have rejected him. He has chosen to love gentile believers, you and I, whom he did not love previously. Where does that leave the relationship between followers of Jesus and God's people, Israel today?
3. It gets worse. Paul says in Romans 11:14, *"I want somehow to make the people of Israel jealous of what you Gentiles have, so I might save some of them."* Though, you know how jealousy sometimes works, right? Those who are inciting jealousy sometimes get a little full of themselves. That's why in Romans 11:19 Paul says, *"you may say, "those branches were broken off to make room for me." Yes, but remember—those branches were broken off because they didn't believe in Christ, and you are there because you do believe. So don't think highly of yourself, but fear what could happen. For if God did not spare the original branches, he won't spare you either."* The question is, do we (you and I) have the kind of relationship with Israel that even has the possibility of inciting jealousy in Israel? What can we do about that?
4. In Romans 11:24 and 26, Paul says that God is *"eager to graft the original branches back into the tree where they belong...Some of the people of Israel have hard hearts, but this will last only until the full number of Gentiles comes to Christ."* So, let's bring this all together. The Jewish branch has been broken off because of unbelief. The gentile branches have been grafted in because they believed and the Jewish branches will be grafted back in when the number of gentile branches reaches its fullness. The question is, what are we to do with our relationship with Israel now? How are we to act towards God that will eventually cause the nation of Israel to want Jesus and be grafted back in?
5. You've all worked really hard tonight, so here's a chill "bonus question" for you to enjoy. How does God want you to feel about his relationship with his people, Israel?