

Isaiah 61 Note: In this chapter, Isaiah claims he was anointed to proclaim “good news to the Poor” as well as the “Year of the Lord.” To the Israelites, this year would signify a Jubilee Year, which the Mosaic Law mandates every 50th year as a means of reversing temporarily the effects of poverty in Israel.

1. In Jesus’ first sermon in the Nazareth synagogue (Luke 4:16-21), he read the same words of Isaiah 61:1-2 and Jesus said, “This passage is fulfilled in your hearing today.” Do you think Jesus was implying that, like Isaiah, he was also anointed for this task? Why or why not?
2. Isaiah also uses the expression *good news*. (Is 61:1)
 - a. What *good news* does Jesus proclaim? (Matt 5:2-12)
 - b. How well does it reflect Isaiah’s “good news?”
 - c. What does the word “gospel” literally mean?
3. Isaiah envisioned the Israelites during their exile in Babylon as brokenhearted captives. Contrast the images Isaiah uses to describe the captives, first, as brokenhearted and, second, as set free. (Is 61:3 & 7)
4. Isaiah says the returning captives will be called “priests.” (Is 61:6)
 - a. What would this title mean to the returning captives, since in Babylon there were no liturgical priests, for to exist and function as priests, they needed a temple in which to offer sacrifice?
 - b. St. Peter called Christians “a royal priesthood.” (1 Peter 2:9) What are some of the differences between the Jewish and Christian understanding of priesthood? (CCC 901)
5. Isaiah 61:10-11 is a song of praise. How is it like Mary’s song of praise in her *Magnificat*? (Luke 1:46-47)

Isaiah 62 Note: Isaiah’s divine mission as a prophet was to predict the destruction of Jerusalem, Israelite captivity, the eventual return of the captives, and the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the Temple. Remember, he was given this mission 100 years before it all happened.

6. How eager is Isaiah to carry out his mission, especially the fulfillment of the prophecy? (Is 62:1)
7. Show how Isaiah envisions constant prayers for the fulfillment of his vision of a rebuilt Jerusalem. ((Is 62:6-7)
8. What important promise does the Lord make in Isaiah 62:8-9, and what does it imply for the rebuilt Israelite nation?
9. As in chapter 61, Isaiah ends the poem with a song of praise, giving the rebuilt city of Jerusalem several new names. (Is 62:12)
 - a. What are the new names?
 - b. Which is your personal favorite?