

St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Muskego, Wisconsin
December 17, 2017

What the World Needs Now: Deliverance

1. The Anointed Servant promises deliverance
2. The anointed believer celebrates deliverance

Isaiah 61:1-3, 10, 11

*The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me,
because the LORD has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim freedom for the captives
and release from darkness for the prisoners,
² to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor
and the day of vengeance of our God,
to comfort all who mourn,
³ and provide for those who grieve in Zion—
to bestow on them a crown of beauty
instead of ashes,
the oil of joy
instead of mourning,
and a garment of praise
instead of a spirit of despair.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
a planting of the LORD
for the display of his splendor.*

¹⁰ *I delight greatly in the LORD;
my soul rejoices in my God.
For he has clothed me with garments of salvation
and arrayed me in a robe of his righteousness,
as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.*

¹¹ *For as the soil makes the sprout come up
and a garden causes seeds to grow,
so the Sovereign LORD will make righteousness
and praise spring up before all nations.*

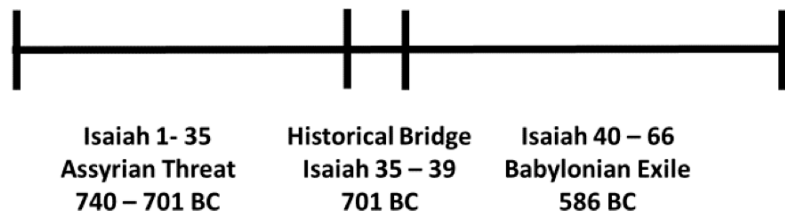
Have you ever played Monopoly? Most of us probably have not only played but been in the situation pictured here. You have about one dollar left (I hand out \$1 Monopoly money to a few people up front), and your opponent has every monopoly and a hotel on every property.



At that moment, you are ready to quit. There is no sense going on. But your opponent wants to play it out and see you bankrupt.

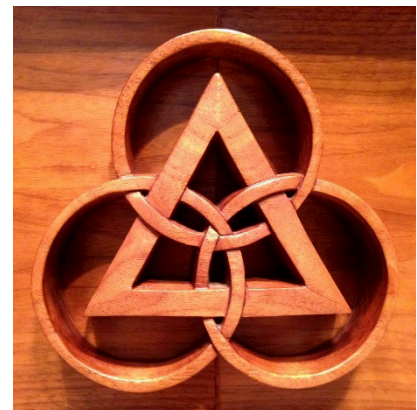
That's the picture that helps me remember this section from Isaiah 61. Isaiah's first audience was a people who felt like the entire game was stacked against them. They were ready to give up, but their opponent wanted to play it out to the bitter end.

Remember how Isaiah's prophecy is unique. In the first 35 chapters, he speaks to his own generation and the threat that the Assyrian army posed. Then in the historical bridge (Isaiah 36-39), Isaiah relates King Hezekiah's prayers for deliverance and God's answers.



The section closes with Hezekiah seeking an alliance with the Babylonians, and Isaiah foretelling that Judah and Jerusalem would be destroyed by the Babylonians. From that point on, Isaiah 40 - 66, the prophet speaks to a generation that had yet to be born, a generation that was to experience that destruction and exile in Babylon.

In Isaiah 61, the Son of God speaks through Isaiah, announcing "The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me to proclaim good news to the poor." Note how all three persons of the Trinity are mentioned in this verse. The Lord who sends the Spirit is the Father. The Spirit is sent. And the Son is the one who receives this anointing at his baptism when the Spirit came down on him in the form of a dove. Jesus quotes this passage in Luke 4 when he is in the synagogue in Nazareth and announced, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." The Spirit anointed Jesus to bring good news.



But good news to whom? Good news to the poor, the broken-hearted, those who mourn. The people in exile... they were certainly the poor and afflicted. They mourned for what they lost. They were so defeated they just wanted to give up.

But it was not only to that generation. Ours is also a generation of the poor and afflicted, the broken-hearted who mourn. Let me share one twenty-four-hour period that I experienced.

I spoke with a family whose loved one appears to be dying. I spoke with a family whose child has made some life-changing, sinful decisions and seems to be stuck. And I spoke with a man whose marriage appears to be ending.

Where is the Christmas joy for these families? They may put on the Christmas joyful front, but inside... they are poor and afflicted, filled with mourning.

It seems like they have received one Monopoly dollar. All their property is mortgaged. The game is lost. They just want to give up. But the opponent won't let them stop the game.

But the Son of God, speaking through the prophet, speaks of the Year of the Lord's Favor. This is almost certainly a reference to the Year of Jubilee that God commanded his people in the Old Testament.

Then have the trumpet sounded everywhere on the tenth day of the seventh month; on the Day of Atonement sound the trumpet throughout your land. ¹⁰ Consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you; each of you is to return to your family property and to your own clan (Leviticus 25:9-10).

The Year of Jubilee was when God would speak this good news to the poor. "Looks like you have only one Monopoly dollar left and you are losing the game. Let's reset the game back to beginning." It is like someone saying, just before you lose in Monopoly.... Let's go back so that everyone has \$2000, all the hotels and property goes back to the bank, and let's start all over again.

That was good news to the Israelites... The Year of Jubilee. We'll go back to our homes. And it is good news for us. The Year of Jubilee. We revert back to the beginning. That's the good news that the Spirit has anointed Jesus to proclaim to us too. We revert back to the beginning. Adam and Eve had perfect obedience to offer to God. They were holy. If this is the Year of the Lord's Favor, the Year of Jubilee, we go back to that home in Paradise.

It is no wonder that the Advent Candle for today is the candle of joy! Let's rejoice! We have freedom from our sins. It is the year of the Lord's favor.

Yet, we don't see that victory. The prophet Isaiah could proclaim good news for the exiles. They got to go back to the beginning, to their homes again. When Jesus came to this earth, he proclaimed good news for us. We go back to Eden and see that God is at peace with us and is willing to come and walk with us.

But there is still so much broken in our world. That's why the Church, even after Jesus came once, has not stopped praying, "Even so, come quickly Lord Jesus." When Jesus comes back on the last day, we shall see that we are rescued from defeat and have a reset into the Paradise that Adam and Eve lost. Listen to what is awaiting us in Revelation 22:1-5:

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ² down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. ³ No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. ⁴ They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. ⁵ There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.

Even so, come quickly, Lord Jesus.

In faith the anointed believer celebrates the deliverance in their new wedding gown or tux!

*¹⁰ I delight greatly in the LORD;
my soul rejoices in my God.
For he has clothed me with garments of salvation
and arrayed me in a robe of his righteousness,
as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.*

If you were married, do you remember your wedding gown? Do you remember the tux or suit that you wore? That's a picture of what we have now because Jesus has come and announced deliverance... that the "game" has been started over.

We can't see these beautiful wedding garments. But as an "anointed" believer, you can be sure they are yours. Just as Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit as his baptism, so you have been anointed by the Holy Spirit in your baptism. And in that anointing, we receive a promise of incredible new garments of salvation.

So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ (Galatians 3:26,27).

Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless (Ephesians 5:25-27).

My dear brothers and sisters, you are clothed in Christ himself. God looks at you and sees not a spot or stain of sin. And he is so proud of you that he puts you on display, like in a fashion show. At the end of the first part of this lesson we are called "oaks of righteousness, a planting of the LORD for the display of his splendor." God puts us on display so that his glorious grace is to be praised. That's how the chapter ends as well.

*¹¹ For as the soil makes the sprout come up
and a garden causes seeds to grow,*

*so the Sovereign LORD will make righteousness
and praise spring up before all nations.*

Our God will make righteousness and praise spring up before the nations. We will be put on display as evidence of his incredible grace. That's the message throughout the New Testament as well. Look carefully at what the Apostle Peter wrote:

⁶In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. [He says too that there are going to be lots of times when you just want to give up!] ⁷These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—**may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed** (1 Peter 1:3-7).

When Jesus comes back, we will receive praise and glory... not for ourselves but for the Fashion Designer who has clothed us in garments of salvation. That picture is in Revelation 19 as well where the wedding of the Jesus, the Lamb of God, to His Church is depicted. I'm using a translation from Siegbert Becker's *Revelation: The Distant Triumph Song*.

*“Alleluia! For Lord, our God, the Almighty One reigns. Let us be glad and rejoice and let us give praise to him, for the wedding of the Lamb has come and his wife has made herself ready, and she was given clean, bright fine linen to wear, for the fine linen is the ‘not guilty’ verdicts pronounced on the saints”
(Revelation 19:6-8).*

We don't see these beautiful clothes now. People around us don't see us clothed for God's Fashion Show. Now, the world still sees us as losers... so defeated we might just as well give up. But by faith we know that there is a great reset that has already taken place. We have experienced the Year of the Lord's Favor. We have been clothed in beautiful wedding garments.

And so we join with the ancient believers who longed for the return from exile, we join with the believers in ancient Israel longing for the Messiah's birth, we long for the day all the world will see our wedding garments and praise the God who has given us the victory. So we pray, “Even so, come quickly, Lord Jesus. Amen.”

Prepared by Pastor Peter Panitzke
414-422-0320, ext. 122
ppanitzke@stpaulmuskego.org

Prepare for Christmas

Enjoy these pictures of your Savior provided by Isaiah.

- Read Isaiah 7 – Jesus is Immanuel, God with us.
- Read Isaiah 9 – Jesus is the Child born to us.
- Read Isaiah 11 – Jesus is the shoot from Jesse's family.
- Read Isaiah 35 – Jesus strengthens feeble hands.
- Read Isaiah 49 – Jesus brings light to the nations.
- Read Isaiah 53 – Jesus is our substitute.