

## Praying Isaiah 61

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(This week's readings from Sunday to Saturday: Isaiah 58–64)

### Isaiah 61 (ESV)

- Is. 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;
- 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.
- 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.
- Is. 61:5**      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.

**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.

**Is. 61:8** 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.

**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.

**Is. 61:10** 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.

**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.

## Adoration

Isaiah 61 is a beautiful reminder of the faithfulness of our God. These promises of blessing and redemption are rooted in God's goodness and character. He has good news for the poor, the captive, and the brokenhearted. In God's goodness and faithfulness, he has made a way, through Jesus Christ, for us to be redeemed from our captivity to sin. Though we are poor and have nothing to offer, Jesus died in our place, and by faith, freely gives us his righteousness.

Spend some time adoring God for his faithfulness to you. Confess that God is good no matter what your circumstances look like.

[Pray for 25 seconds.]

Isaiah 61:1 says, “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.” Adore God right now for his character that cares for the poor and oppressed, and also his power to set the captive free.

[Pray for 25 seconds.]

Isaiah 61:2 tells us that God comforts those who mourn. The good news of this verse is that God is with us throughout *both* the best and worst that we face in life. Take a moment right now and adore God, because he meets us in our times of need to comfort us.

[Pray for 30 seconds.]

God, with the Psalmist we declare that in Christ our hearts are glad, and we rejoice today because we dwell secure in your goodness and faithfulness to us.<sup>1</sup> We declare that the path of life is found in you, and in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore. We confess now that no matter what our circumstances say, we have all we need in Christ. We possess all things, not because of anything in ourselves, but because of your goodness to your people.

## Confession

Isaiah 61:8 says, “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.” Chapter 61 is a declaration of God’s desire to redeem his people from captivity, yet he sent them to captivity because of their idolatry and disobedience. In the same way, our sin grieves the heart of God. The good news of chapter 61 is a response to the bad news of captivity, and a call to live a life of faithfulness and obedience. Spend some time right now and ask God to give you a heart that mourns your sin and loves holiness.

[Pray for 30 seconds.]

Isaiah 61:7 says, “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.” As we walk in confession we no longer walk in the shame and condemnation of our sins. Even though we still struggle, God can redeem our brokenness and turn it to everlasting joy. What areas of brokenness, secret sin, pride, and struggle do you need

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<sup>1</sup> Ps 16:9.

to confess? Maybe ask God to search your heart right now. Spend some time reflecting and confessing to our faithful and merciful God.

[Pray for 30 seconds.]

God we believe your word when it says, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). So, we confess our sin to you right now, knowing that it breaks your heart and ruins our lives. God we ask that you would give us a mind and heart that hates sin and loves holiness. We ask right now for a heart that longs for more of you, and the self-control to deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow you no matter what the cost.<sup>2</sup> We declare that you are the fountain of life, and that you satisfy us so much more than the “broken cisterns” that we often seek that never satisfy.<sup>3</sup> For the areas of our life you have revealed to us, help us walk in repentance and obedience today. By your grace and for your glory, help us put our sin to death.

## Thanksgiving

Isaiah 61:10, “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.” As God’s people, we have so many reasons to “greatly rejoice in the Lord.” Spend some time right now thanking God for his goodness and faithfulness to you.

[Pray for 25 seconds.]

Specifically, Isaiah 61:10 tells us that we have been clothed with garments of salvation, and that we’ve been covered me with the robe of righteousness! Just a couple of chapters later, Isaiah 63:7 says, “I will recount the steadfast love of the LORD, the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD has granted us, and the great goodness to the house of Israel that he has granted them according to his compassion, according to the abundance of his steadfast love.” Spend some more time right now thanking God and recounting the steadfast love and compassion of the Lord in your life, who has clothed you with garments of salvation and covered you with a robe of righteousness.

[Pray for 20 seconds.]

## Supplication

Chapter 61 verse 11 tells us that, “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.” One thing that is clear from Scripture is that God is committed

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<sup>2</sup> Matt 16:24.

<sup>3</sup> Jer 2:13.

to his glory being known among all the nations. Pray that God will grow your desire to know him, and grow your love for righteousness and holiness.

[Pray for 10 seconds.]

Pray for people you know that are not Christians, that God will cause the seed of the gospel to grow on fertile soil in their life.

[Pray for 10 seconds.]

Pray for international missionaries, that God will protect and bless them; that they will see “righteousness and praise to sprout up before all the nations.”

[Pray for 10 seconds.]

In the same way pray that God will allow you to see righteousness and praise to sprout up before all the nations in your city.

[Pray for 10 seconds.]

Pray for any need you have in your life, trusting that our God is a good Father that gives good gifts to his children.

[Pray for 10 seconds.]

## Benediction

God we pray that as a garden causes what is sown in it to sprout up, so also you will cause righteousness and praise to sprout up in our hearts. We know that you are our greatest good, so we pray that you will grow our love and affection for you. We also pray that you will grow the seed of the gospel in the hearts of those we know that are far from you. Your word says that the gospel is the power of God for Salvation,<sup>4</sup> so we pray that you will move powerfully in our friends, family, neighbors, and co-workers. God we also pray for our church, that we would be a people who love you above all other things, and that you will guide us and give us wisdom to walk in righteousness and holiness before you. Use us as the aroma of Christ in our community, that our church would be a refuge to many in our city. Thank you, God, for all that you are doing in us and in our churches. We ask that you would continue to move in us and through us, that righteousness and praise might sprout up before all nations.

AMEN.

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<sup>4</sup> Rom 1:16.

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