

## Isaiah 61: The Model of YOUR New Life

I was learning secrets about how Paul ministered: 1 Corinthians 2, 14, Ephesians 3, 4, etc., and asked God why was there so insight like this into how Jesus ministered, since his ministry was obviously on a higher level?

Around this time many people were getting sick in our church and they asked me to write a prayer to pass around to pray. I said I don't write prayers but will ask Jesus what to do and he quickly told me, "Such prayers won't work. There are strongholds that have to be dealt with first."

I knew people talked about 'strongholds' but I wanted Jesus to explain to me himself, so I asked him to teach me. He first led me to Luke where Jesus began ministering:

### **Luke 4:16-21,**

*<sup>16</sup>He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. And he stood up to read.*

*<sup>17</sup>"The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:*

*<sup>18</sup>"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed,*

*<sup>19</sup>"to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.'*

*<sup>20</sup>Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him,*

*<sup>21</sup>"and he began by saying to them, 'Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.'"*

I knew it was a reference to Isaiah 61 and turned there but it make no sense to me. So I sat quietly in his presence

and asked him to explain this verse to me and I soon began to hear him talk to show me visions and talk to me.

When he finished I was so blown away by the ideas he taught me that I exclaimed excitedly, "This verse is the model of your ministry!"

"No," he said, "this verse is the model of YOUR NEW LIFE."

Let's first read the verse:

*1"The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach 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, <sup>2</sup>to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn,*

*<sup>3</sup>and provide for those who grieve in Zion — to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness 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.*

*<sup>4</sup>They will rebuild the ancient ruins and restore the places long devastated; they will renew the ruined cities that have been devastated for generations.*

*<sup>5</sup>Aliens will shepherd your flocks; foreigners will work your fields and vineyards.*

*<sup>6</sup>And you will be called priests of the LORD, you will be named ministers of our God. You will feed on the wealth of nations, and in their riches you will boast.*

*<sup>7</sup>Instead of their shame my people will receive a double portion, and instead of disgrace they will rejoice in their inheritance; and so they will inherit a double portion in their land, and everlasting joy will be theirs.*

*8“For I, the LORD, love justice; I hate robbery and iniquity. In my faithfulness I will reward them and make an everlasting covenant with them.*

*9“Their descendants will be known among the nations and their offspring among the peoples. All who see them will acknowledge that they are a people the LORD has blessed.’*

*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 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.”*

What an amazing promise! What a blessing ... What does it all mean? When he explained it I recognized three main sections. First, it begins with the commissioning and empowerment of Jesus’ ministry, then second, the types of ministries he engaged into accomplish his task, and then, third, the exciting part is the EFFECT this has on the people who are restored by. Let’s take it section by section.

## **First Section : Commission & Empowerment**

*1“The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor...”*

So Isaiah 61 starts by attributing who has sent and empowered Messiah to minister, which is actually the term “Adonai YHWH” — a very specific attribution as to who has anointed or spiritually empowered him.

What is the purpose of this empowerment? To preach the ‘good news’ to the ‘poor,’ or to the ‘humble’ (JPS), ‘afflicted’ (NASB), or ‘oppressed’ (Rotherham).

First notice what Jesus required to be able to ‘preach’ or some say ‘proclaim’ the good news was not merely a loud voice, people skills, or a title in the religious hierarchy ... but POWER—it is the ‘anointing’ that is required! His preaching was not always done with words—but he was always DEMONSTRATING the Kingdom—the life of a person in union with the Holy Spirit. So I prefer the term ‘proclaim’ the good news over ‘preach’ because spreading the Kingdom is so much more than teaching a doctrine in a sermon, and yes power is always needed to do this; the Kingdom of God is not a matter of talk, memory verses or a bible study! It is a matter of Power—the demonstration of the Holy Spirit basically.

## The Gospel ... of the Kingdom

Second, he is preaching GOOD NEWS. This is a general term that we made very specific calling it the ‘Gospel’ but there were several versions of ‘good news,’ one ‘gospel’ was preached to the Israelites in Egypt. (Hebrew 4:2)

We saw how John preached the gospel of repentance for salvation, but Jesus had a greater message, a greater ‘gospel,’ which Jesus called the gospel of the Kingdom. That is what he is about to explain, but notice who he is sent to preach to, and it is not who you may think.

This ‘good news’ is only preached to a certain category of people—the POOR! Who are they? They have no money? No, this is basically an idiom meaning ‘the repentant’ ... so basically it is those who received the ministry of John the Baptist, repented and got saved.

This also echoes the Sermon on the Mount and the Beatitudes from **Matthew 5**, which begins: “*Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the Kingdom of God.*” These are the people Jesus is sent to reveal the Kingdom to, the God-fearing, repentant, water-baptised community of his day.

And this is exactly what happened in Luke 7!

**Luke 7:28-30,** <sup>28</sup> *I tell you, among those born of women none is greater than John. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."*

<sup>29</sup> *And all the people when they heard, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John.* <sup>30</sup> *But the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected for themselves the counsel of God, being not baptized of him.*

It sounds funny but in a way Jesus was only sent to preach the Kingdom ... to those already 'saved.' We don't call it that, it's confusing, but there needed to be a foundation or understanding to his message—people needed to know God was real, that he loved them, that there was a coming Messiah, etc. Without this basic foundation already in place, what can the righteous do?

Not much. So much effort was spend top PREPARE a community of people for their God. That is what John was doing, and likewise what a LOT OF CHURCHES are also doing still. MOST churches are in fact doing ministry very similar in purpose and method to John, and so are more like disciples of John than Jesus. He told me that the way most people minister in Church will NEVER produce the Kingdom, and this is one reason why. They don't even believe there IS a kingdom, they only preach and minister a gospel of salvation with water baptism as the main event in their lives, after this it all gets very fuzzy.

So are they wrong? Well, not exactly, they are teaching the bible, teaching salvation in Jesus' name, and in a way they are preparing people to hear a greater message, yes all good .... only they themselves are not spreading the knowledge or experience of the Kingdom of God that Jesus did. Their entire ministry is finished by the end of verse 1 and Jesus has not even gotten started yet.

So there are entire communities of Unwise Virgins—in Matt 25 when Christ returns it is HALF the Body after all.

So there needs to be a foundation to understand the higher wisdom, and entering into the next level is entering

out of the church of man in a way and finally into the Kingdom of God. So there is something like a step one and a step two but God told me, "Don't call it a second step—it's the KINGDOM."

## A Seven-fold Blessing

So the second section in Isaiah 61 has a description of the ministry Jesus will use to 'proclaim' his 'good news'; I see seven main parts. It reads:

*<sup>1b</sup>"He has sent me to **bind up the brokenhearted**, to proclaim **freedom for the captives** and **release from darkness** for the prisoners,*

*<sup>2</sup>"to proclaim the **year of the LORD's favor** and the **day of vengeance of our God**, to comfort all who mourn,*

*<sup>3</sup>"and **provide for those who grieve in Zion**—to bestow on them a **crown of beauty** instead of ashes, the **oil of gladness** instead of mourning, and a **garment of praise** instead of a spirit of despair..."*

Just for clarity I'll number these as:

1. bind up the brokenhearted,
2. proclaim freedom for the captives, and
3. release from darkness for the prisoners,

4. to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor and

5. the day of vengeance of our God,

6. to comfort all who mourn, and

& 7. provide for those who grieve in Zion—to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair..."

These are the main keys Jesus explained to me in some detail and please take note **this is not merely a doctrine.**

Being healed of a disease is not a doctrine. Having a demon cast out of you is not a doctrine. Having the Holy Spirit heal your broken heart so you can be freed of the pain and fear that is still locked inside your heart is not a doctrine.

There are doctrines about these things, but these are experiences. Jesus is not a doctrine, neither is the Holy Spirit. There are doctrines about them but neither one is a doctrine.

So have we here. There is an explanation of the ministry Jesus was empowered to do, but these ministers are not doctrines, they are experiences we can receive, experiences we can minister and experiences which will transform us into the eternal, unblemished image, the likeness of Christ.

## **1. Bind up (bandage) the brokenhearted.**

I asked him to explain this and I soon saw a vision of a weak, sick heart that was shrivelled and pale like a turnip. It was not fat and round and healthy like a normal heart but sick and wounded and skinny—but he began to wrap a bandage around it healing it! He will literally bind up/bandage a broken, sickly heart.

We had been very active in the inner healing ministry at this time so he did not need to explain it more to me.

Laying hands on a person asking for help. Seeking God's prophetic insight to understand what is wrong and what to do about it, and then binding, loosing, proclaiming, breaking, healing, creating, whatever ministry the Holy Spirit leads you to do.

People carry wounds in their hearts from childhood even, and these hurt places become anchors to sin, the source of all kinds of bad behaviors! Counseling, incarceration, vain pursuits cannot remove the wound, they can only help people deal with their symptoms really. But the Holy Spirit can! You can do more good to a person by laying on hands and letting the Holy Spirit flow to heal a broken heart than you can do with a million dollars of professional counseling.

And Jesus told me, yes, it is painful to face these problems buried in the heart, but when facing them with the Holy Spirit the pain only lasts a moment while the freedom you gain is eternal.

SO MUCH can be explained and shared on Inner Healing ministry but I will leave that for another time. That's just part one.

## 2. Proclaim freedom for captives

I had also been learning about deliverance, casting demons out, breaking spiritual chains and bondages off of people in prayer, which is always closely linked to inner healing, so I had some context for this.

But when I read, "to proclaim freedom for the captives," Jesus said, we are being sent to free the people. To free them from what? I asked. He said, "Free them FROM ANYTHING that binds them!" I have a lot to share on this topic as well but I will have to leave that for another time.

But just consider what do people need freedom from? Whatever has captured them. So this runs the gamut from deliverance, casting demons out, addiction and curse breaking, but it is also habits, hobbies, passions, careers, car, toys, games, fashion, music, friends, facebook, fantasies, lifestyles and even political views.

People get so bound they can't even help themselves to be set free. And you can't free them by these chains with a discussion or argument. Arguments are like flicking a lightswitch he said, they only work to change surface thinking but they lack the power to fix any underlying reason they are deceived. The Holy Spirit however CAN change the root causes for thinking in the deep heart and that's why Paul said.

*2 Corinthians 10:3-6; <sup>3</sup> For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. <sup>4</sup> For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh **but have divine power to destroy strongholds.** <sup>5</sup> We*



*destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ, <sup>6</sup> being ready to punish every disobedience, when your obedience is complete.*

We accomplish this not by arguing, but by laying on hands. And there is an entire realm of ministry and entire books are written on each aspect of this broad topic as well. This again, this is not some fringe interest for weird people, it is the core pathway to freedom and maturity to all who are in Christ and want to become transformed into his image.

If people do not directly engage the strongholds in their lives with decisive and powerful prayer ministry to break them off their lives, they will simply never find freedom and such people will simply never mature into proper saints.

People seem to think they will outgrow the abuse they suffered as a child if they just grow old enough, it will just go away in the sweet by and by, and yes, if you die in Christ all this is washed away, but you can't help people on earth any longer if you're already gone onto your heavenly rewards. But what heavenly rewards will you get if you left all your work on earth undone because you were too bitter, angry, tempted, selfish, greedy, vain and unfocused to help anyone?

People can DIE at 99 years old still carrying the wounded bitterness from childhood with the bondage and spiritual blindness this has caused them. Add to this the effect a broken heart has in being a kind of anchor for sin and unforgiveness and you can see the destructive cumulative effect these two areas of need have on people which is very strong!

So these strongholds MUST BE PURPOSEFULLY and SYSTEMATICALLY BROKEN. The Promised Land, Jesus told me, has walled cities in all the best places. Conquering the land of Canaan within our hearts is not accomplished

passively or by accident or just by and by ... it must be taken consciously by force! The Kingdom of God advances by VIOLENCE the bible says. What violence? The violence of faith that WILL NOT BE DENIED Jesus told me.

So freedom from bondage is released by faith. It is not “automatic!” It needs to be personally experienced, and should be intentionally ministered, actively sought out, applied with purpose, and received with eagerness.

So you must TAKE possession of the promises God has given you. You must take them by faith, by force, by prayer and fasting. They are offered to you freely but to possess them you may need to fight, wrestle and combat many principalities in the heavenly realm!

We are in fact at war. Don't be a casualty!

### 3. Release from darkness for the prisoners.

Then I asked him what the third point is, “release from darkness for the prisoners” and he said this is about sight. Insight really. Revelation. Enlightenment. I asked Jesus, oh, you mean like having prophecies and visions. And he said not really, “It's not *revelations*—it's THE Revelation ... of WHO GOD IS.” Wow!

Now some versions mix up this phrase and say it is to ‘release from darkness’ or release the prisons who are in darkness, but that the same thing. It is enlightenment of God's reality and his goodness to you personally. It's seeing God as he is—not only by reading books and learning from man about what they say about God—it's actually having personal spiritual interactions with God and yes meeting him personally—This is what changes people the most, the deepest and the fastest.

This is actually what we are trying to achieve in guided fellowship in the Spirit that we call Communion.

And this is why we ask people in ‘communion’ to focus on asking God first, “Who are you?” and to let him explain himself in a personal way to you. Then to ask, “Who am I?” and to listen to how he talks about you, the version

of YOU he sees, the New You, the Eternal You. The YOU that he sees as his companion in eternity. You see your past from the Earth; he knows this but what he sees in you is the Future in Eternity. Third, we ask people to ask Jesus plainly, "But do you love me?" for obvious reasons and with extraordinary results.

We are trying to help people have deep personal interactive fellowship with the Lord in Spirit and it ALWAYS changes the people into the image they are beholding, from glory to glory.

So this third **phase of Jesus' ministry (and ours in his stead) is to open spiritual eyes so people can see, perceive and understand spiritual truths.** What is the greatest spiritual truth people can now see? **God's reality, his character, and to personally know His love is real.**

## These three Ministries are Interrelated

Also notice the progression of ministries so far because they are written in this order for a reason.

Suppose you meet a person who is very angry and bitter, smokes incessantly, has other bad vices, and just does not believe God is good. You talk to them and find out they had an alcoholic or abusive father and carry the burden and shame of many years of abuse to this very day! What Jesus will do is first heal their broken heart. **These inner wounds are the original source of pain and sin and the root of many of the problems we see on the surface.**

When this root is healed, the things it triggers also begin to fade away. The second ministry, releasing captives from strongholds and curses, comes next because most often these "fortresses" of sin and vice are rooted and grounded in the wounds of the heart. When the wounds are healed these strongholds lose their foundations and may even instantly crumble. **"The curse that has no cause shall not come," Proverbs 26:2** so if you remove the cause, you can also stop the curse! You can also minister by releasing the

Blood of Christ directly, by directly ‘forgiving their sin’ which we have power on earth to do, and other insightful ministry methods, gifts and mantles the Holy Spirit will give people doing this work.

Extra ministry is often needed to break a bondage after initial healing or forgiveness is released, but since the root is already gone, bondages are much weaker now than they were before, and after prayer vices drop off, smoking stops, sin stops, and they can finally admit that yes, God is Good.

And you may even find people with this exact testimony: they were hurt, angry, bound in sin and firm unbelievers ... until somehow the Holy Spirit came and healed them, the vices and addictions collapsed and all of a sudden, like scales falling from their eyes, they just suddenly believed, and now they *know* God is real, they *know* He is good. They KNOW He loves them.... *Voila!*

So this is clearly WHY the ministry of Jesus is not just talk, talk, talk—but to *demonstrate* the Spirit and the Power of God to ACTUALLY heal the broken hearted, release the captives and give sight to the blind. This is how the Kingdom is advanced, it is by the Spirit! **So yes, the Kingdom is not a matter of talk, but of power.**

#### **4. To proclaim the year of the LORD's favor.**

I had no idea what this meant and so I was asking God to explain it to me and He said **this is a time when He basically answers our prayers more because we are not longer so much a part of the problem as before.** Think about it, the sinful behavior, woundedness and unbelief we had in our hearts was driving God's blessings away!

Now that we are well on the path to wholeness, God's favor falls on us in a way previously interrupted by our disobedience, unforgiveness and un-confessed sin.

Most modern Christians don't believe this, and blindly claim that since they are saved by 'grace,' which they think means 'free forgiveness,' that their ongoing intentional sins don't really count. But that is untrue on several levels.

Grace in fact is power given to us to stop sinning, not God's blindness to our willful sins. In fact if you know what is sin and keep on doing it, no more sacrifice remains for you. (Hebrews 10:26) We can't keep sinning since we are saved by God's imparted righteousness, thinking it is a license to sin. Paul said this plainly in Romans 6:15.

Sin is real, and even if we are in Christ sin still interferes with our relationship with God. It interferes with our Faith (confidence towards God) and our Conscience.

Many Christians are in for a rude awakening some day, and many will argue with God, "But God we ministered in your name, prophesied in your name!!" And you know what He will tell them.

If 'grace' means what people think it means, there would be no hell, and no one, not even the Pharisees, would be rejected by God. Unfortunately our understanding of the gospel and salvation and the path of righteousness, by and large, has been woefully incomplete—which is what this book is all about!

Anyway, back to the point.

So once we've had our broken hearts healed, our bondages broken and sight enlightened to God's true nature we can begin to really enjoy the year of his favor.

But when I realized this I suddenly looked at the calendar and said, oh no! When did the year start? Is it over yet? Is it just a year! That's so short! Oh no!

But the Lord calmed me down and reassuringly said, "No, it is not that kind of year just think of it as a **very long time.**"

So this 'year' in fact should last for decades! Amen!

## 5. The day of our God's vengeance.

After the Year of Favor, when I read the Day of Vengeance. I first read this verse as the 'Day of Wrath,' and that confused me. So I asked Him cautiously, "Who are you angry at?" I was afraid what the answer might be.

But He said, **"Your enemies."** He said it was all the people who hurt me. I started feeling better! I now realize that the better translation of this term is not 'wrath' but 'revenge' or 'vengeance.' Basically, it's PAY BACK TIME!

But then I wondered why was it a YEAR of favor but only a DAY of revenge, isn't that unfair? His favor lasts but his revenge—OUR revenge— is so short lived? And this is what He told me—I will NEVER forget it. It gives me chills to recall the way He spoke. He said:

**"It is only a Day because WHEN I GET ANGRY AND DECIDE TO ACT .... NOTHING CAN STOP ME!"**

The tone of His voice reflecting His ABSOLUTE POWER totally freaked me out! I was scared. I sensed ... I am still feeling it right now ... I feel the charge of electricity of *the Fear of the Lord*.

Boy, all I can say is **Don't get God mad!** That's it!

And I began to feel, can I say 'sorry' for the enemy? Not sorry in a theological sense, but I became aware in this moment of revelation ... *that Satan is gonna get it!* God is gonna put the *hurt* on him! The Devil is gonna be SORRY he EVER messed with JEHOVAH SEBAOTH, the God of Armies.... WHACK!!

When God does this, punishing the Enemies, it is going to be so scary to watch that I don't think we will even be able to! We'll shield our eyes. It will be AWFUL, in every sense of that word! Awe-full!

So part of the Good News is that God will himself avenge us for the pain and suffering the enemy afflicted on us when we were subject to his cruelty because of our sin.

God WILL avenge! So we really need to let Him!

## 6 & 7 Comfort and Provide

Quickly the next section he did not explain much about.

So 6 & 7:

*... 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 gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair.*

All I think of this is the Fruit of the Spirit. But yes, he said the comfort and provision also means what you think it means: health, money, beauty, blessings, food, jewelery, children, wives, husbands ... all the things we ask for that are the fruit of a blessed life with the Lord taking care of you.

However, I note that the only people who get this are those who live in a certain geographic location: Zion.

What then is Zion? Is the rent affordable? Is there a long commute to work? Well, you're in for a surprise, because Zion is the spiritual Mountain of the Knowledge of the Lord. It's not so much heaven as it is the Kingdom of God. It's the Promised Land, which is our heart when the Holy Spirit lives in it with 100% unrestricted freedom. It is within us, IF ...

## The Restoration of Heaven on Earth

Eventually God will relocate the City in Heaven to the Earth, but if God DWELLS in our hearts we don't have to wait 1,000 years to enjoy this. This experience of Christ's ministry in causes an internal change of our characters and emotional makeup which causes us to rise up into the spiritual realm of His Kingdom, well, it makes us stop sinking back down to the carnal realm. When we abide up here, in this reality ... our life's meaning begins to take on a

new nature, a new direction, a new purpose.

This is the gospel of the Kingdom, the restoration of things on earth, for all those in restored relationship or communion with God. It is the path of our wholeness or 'shalom,' our 'rest' or 'Sabbath,' and I can actually summarize the entire experience in a single word. Immanuel.

So Zion is not so much a place as it is the restoration of "God with Us"—if we let Christ ABIDE in our hearts, all these blessings and more will flow—IN us.

But what matters is not merely a doctrine, belief, theory or theology of it ... but *the experience* of what happens when the travesty of the Fall of Man is reversed by spiritual interaction, connection, Communion with God. The breach that sin caused between Man and God is undone and all the things that have been lost to Man are restored. This gospel is the *experience* of Heaven on Earth for those who seek and then embrace it. So it is the experience of Immanuel. Where is God, if you are his temple, right here!

So the effect of *believing* in this ministry is not very great. But the effect of *DOING* it—the effect of experiencing it IS!

**This one point is the lynchpin of the whole matter: the nature of this 'good news' that Jesus preached is not what is spoken about, but what is experienced; it has to be DONE to be received.** That is why as James says, "hearers only deceive themselves but the DOERS are blessed."

**That is why this message is not just a message, but an experience, something DONE, something MINISTERED, something RECEIVED ... something EXPERIENCED.**

## Part Three ... The EFFECT this has on people

The third section is the rest of the verse and he didn't explain this in much detail at that time, but notice how the pronouns change. First it was why God anointed Jesus; it was for "Him" to do things for 'them.'



But now we see the shift in emphasis where we see what “they become...” Who are ‘they’? ‘They’ are obviously the people who received the experience of the good news from Jesus’ ministry and were transformed! This is why he told this verse **is the model of your new life!**

He didn’t explain much to me at this point, I was already blown away, but there are some very key revelations here that follow on from people having experienced the restoration of the Kingdom—they basically TURN THE WORLD UPSIDE DOWN.

*In **Matthew 3:10** John said, “The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.”*

Another time also in **Matthew 15:11-20**, Jesus was arguing with the Pharisees and said this:

*<sup>12b</sup> ... Do you know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this?’*

*<sup>13</sup>“He replied, ‘Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be pulled up by the roots. <sup>14</sup>Leave them; they are blind guides. If a blind man leads a blind man, both will fall into a pit.’*

Well too bad, because HERE are the TREES God DID Plant! And they are HUGE, GLORIOUS and STRONG.

*<sup>3b</sup>“They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the LORD for the display of his splendor.*

An oak is a very strong, long-lived tree, and it is a symbol of the stability of a person’s life who is being strengthened and established by the Lord’s empowering grace.

The fact that they are called “the planting of the Lord” is very significant as well. This is Psalm 1 of course. What is

the man like who delights in God's ways? *"He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers."*

This BLESSED LIFE is a REFLECTION of the Lord and people who see them see God's Splendor Displayed. Don't we all want to be displays of God's splendor? Well any of us CAN BE, if we only allow God to transform us, WE WILL BE! This is the imagery here.

And there's more. What would happen if you released such people back into the dying world?

*<sup>4</sup>"They will **rebuild the ancient ruins and restore the places long devastated; they will renew the ruined cities that have been devastated for generations.**"*

There are curses that run generation to generation and RUIN whole societies, war, alcoholism, sexual sin, witchcraft ... but *these people* can bring the antidote and overturn the devastation Satan is inflicting upon these cities year after tear after year.

So literally THESE PEOPLE are now the Hope of the Nations, because CHRIST is IN them! And that's why, *<sup>6</sup>"And you will be **called priests of the LORD, you will be named ministers of our God.**"*

So the people who receive the gospel restoration from Jesus' ministry become 'Priests' and 'Ministers.' This is an open invitation to ALL WHO MATURE, not just a small class of people who are mysteriously 'called' because they have spiritual gifts. Paul said for all of us to pray for spiritual gifts, especially prophecy. Why? Because God will give it to us! Anyone can serve God if they decide to and put in the effort! ALL who mature will be called Priests and Ministers of God!

Wow, there are more blessings are mentioned than I can explain: double portion, no more shame, everlasting joy, an everlasting covenant, but here's one I will mention:

***<sup>9</sup>Their descendants will be known among the nations and their offspring among the peoples. All who see them will acknowledge that they are a people the LORD has blessed.'***

Only the word 'a people' is not quite right, CJB reads:

***<sup>9</sup> Their descendants will be known among the nations, their offspring among the peoples; all who see them will acknowledge that they are the seed Adonai has blessed.***

Now wait! The promise to Abraham was to his SEED. This is the one who will receive a blessing from God so important it's been the theme of Scripture for thousands of years. Everyone is looking for the blessing of the Seed of Abraham, but how's this! These people, even their children WILL BE OPENLY KNOWN and ALL WHO SEE THEM WILL ACKNOWLEDGE that THEY ARE THE SEED GOD HAS BLESSED. They don't know how you got, BUT YOU GOT IT!! You possess the promise of Abraham ... How did you get that?! Well, now you have their attention, and you can tell them! Or rather SHOW them!

So again, Jesus is the 'seed' in the singular sense, but obviously because Jesus died on earth and passed his entire estate onto his spiritual children as an inheritance, we inherited his seed-ship, and we can walk in it if we but reach maturity in Him.

And like the vision in Daniel 2 the glorious riches of this Kingdom experience will spread far beyond the borders of Israel because specific mention is made here that it will 'spring up before all nations.' It is a global phenomenon. Hallelujah!

## Consider the Implications

There are many important implications in this chapter for how we 'do church'!

1.) We now can understand a GOAL beyond merely preaching baptism for repentance unto salvation—but total restoration of people into Christlikeness is possible.

2.) This clearly explains the key ministries of Jesus that bring people into the EXPERIENCE of restoration of life—inner healing, curse breaking, removing spiritual strongholds, revelatory enlightenment in meeting God in Spirit and in Truth. These ministries can be and should be incorporated into your weekly ministry, small group ministry, at least prayer teams after service, but also to provide more time for real ministry and less time devoted to just talk!

3.) Finally it shows THE EFFECT THIS RESTORATION HAS ON US in that we become a planting of the Lord, displaying his splendor, and are empowered to restore generational ruins, and serve mankind as priests and ministers—and the open invitation for everyone to serve God in real Kingdom ministry—if only they mature.

4.) We clearly see that as ministers we are not to just express the ideas, theory, doctrines or WORDS of these things, BUT TO DO THEM, to help others RECEIVE them, and WALK in them since the Kingdom is not a matter of talk, but of power—it is to be *experienced*. And praise God for it!

- The Gospel of the Kingdom is the EXPERIENCE of restoration, not just the theories and doctrines of it.

- The key ministries that release the experience of the Kingdom are: Inner healing, deliverance, curse breaking and spiritual impartation of understanding. These are done by prayer and laying on hands more than just preaching.

- The result of experiencing the gospel is manifold blessings such as restoring generational ruins, becoming a priest, a minister, and getting a double portion of inheritance. Amen!