

THE GREAT EXCHANGE

The prophet Isaiah gives a beautiful picture of the divine transaction that happens between God and his covenant people.

¹ The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, Because the LORD anointed me to bring good news to the humble; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, To proclaim release to captives and freedom to prisoners;

² To proclaim the favorable year of the LORD and the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn,

³ To grant those who mourn in Zion, Giving them a garland instead of ashes,

The oil of gladness instead of mourning, The cloak of praise instead of a disheartened spirit.

So they will be called oaks of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified.

Isaiah 61:1-3 (NASB)

In Luke 4:14-23 Jesus reads this same scripture from Isaiah 61 in the synagogue and confirms that he is the Messiah. Isaiah 61:1-2 is His mission statement and the foundation of His ministry.

The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me because the Lord anointed Me

- Jesus received the blessing of his Father's voice from heaven and the Spirit of the Lord God (the Holy Spirit), descending on Him like a dove at His baptism.
- Jesus confirms He is the "Anointed One" when he says, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

To bring good news to the humble. To preach good tidings to the poor. (NKJV)

- Jesus' message is to the poor, the humble of spirit, not the proud who are self-righteous, like the pharisees. We must be humble in spirit to receive the good news of the gospel.
"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Matt 5:3 (NASB)

He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted. He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted. (NKJV)

- Jesus brings healing to our heart (our soul and emotions) and enables us to hope again.
- Binding up pulls together the broken pieces of our soul and repairs the breaks.

To proclaim release to captives and freedom to prisoners. To proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to those who are bound. (NKJV)

³⁴ Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly I say to you, everyone who commits sin is a slave of sin. ³⁵ Now the slave does not remain in the house forever; the son does remain forever. ³⁶ So if the Son sets you free, you really will be free. John 8:36 (NASB)

"Jesus announces that He is here to heal the damage that sin brings. Sin has done great damage, so there needs to be a great work of redemption. Because sin breaks hearts, He will heal the brokenhearted. Because sin makes captives, He will proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound. Because sin oppresses, He will proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."
David Guzik

To proclaim the favorable year of the LORD and the day of vengeance of our God.

- Jesus ended his reading of this passage with “To proclaim the favorable year of the Lord” because His first advent or coming brings the favorable year of the Lord. The day of vengeance of our God is His second coming.
- The Favorable year of the Lord is a reference to the Year of Jubilee the 50th year, where debts are cancelled and slaves released. In Christ all of our sins are cancelled.

To comfort all who mourn, to grant those who mourn in Zion, Giving them a garland instead of ashes. *To give them beauty for ashes.* (NKJV)

“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.” Matt. 5:4

- Ashes is a place of despair, where everything has gone wrong.
- Ashes symbolized you were in deep mourning and serious about something; you were laying before God everything and pleading for his mercy, pleading for his help. In mourning, ashes would be placed on the head.
- A garland is a beautiful headdress or crown. The ashes are replaced with a beautiful crown.

The oil of gladness instead of mourning, *The oil of joy for mourning.* (NKJV)

- The oil of joy is the oil of the Holy Spirit.
“Righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.” Romans 14:17

The cloak of praise instead of a disheartened spirit. *The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness*

- In Christ we are given a robe of righteousness because “we have become the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus.”
- Praise & worship brings us into God’s presence and releases us from heaviness and fear.

The Great exchange: In Christ; the brokenhearted receive healing, the captives are set free, those who mourn receive comfort, beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning and the garment of praise for a spirit of heaviness.

We need righteousness to be acceptable to God. But we don’t have it. What we have is sin. So, God has what we need and don’t deserve — righteousness; and we have what God hates and rejects — sin. What is God’s answer to this situation?

His answer is Jesus Christ, the Son of God who died in our place and bore our condemnation. God lays our sins on Christ and punishes them in him. And in Christ’s obedient death, God fulfills and vindicates his righteousness and imputes (credits) it to us. Our sin on Christ; his righteousness on us.

This is the gospel — the good news that our sins are laid on Christ and his righteousness is laid on us, and that this great exchange becomes ours not by works but by faith alone. “By grace you have been saved *through faith*. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast”

Here is the good news that lifts burdens and gives joy and makes strong.

John Piper