

ISAIAH, PART 2 (COMFORT FOR HIS PEOPLE)
PROGRAM 38 (#911153)
WEEK 8 (#911331) (Guest Teacher David Arthur)
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SERIES: Isaiah, Part 2 (Comfort For His People)
TITLE: Program 38 – A New Identity
(Guest Teacher David Arthur)

WEDNESDAY

INTRO

Kay: Don't you love this portion of Isaiah? Comfort ye, comfort ye My people. I have been so comforted to have a man that come along side me and teach with me precepts for life and have the audience be blessed. Enjoy our son David Arthur. He has a Masters in Theological Studies from Reformed Seminary and he is a man who loves the Word and loves teaching you.

OPEN

David: In the Old Testament we read about Christians who are wearing robes of righteousness. What is a robe of righteousness? Who gets to wear the robe? What is it like? Today we're gonna unpack together the meaning of the "robes of righteousness" that adorn those who are followers of God. Come join me as we study the book of Isaiah together. (See Isaiah 61:10)

PART ONE

David: Our text today is Isaiah chapter 61, beginning in verse 10 and we'll study our way through chapter 62, verse 5. Let's look at the text together. God says: **"I will rejoice greatly in the LORD, my soul will exult in my God; for He has clothed me with garments of salvation, [and] He has wrapped me with a robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with jewels. For as the earth [springs] forth its sprouts, and as a garden causes the things sown in it to spring up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all...nations."** (Isaiah 61:10-11) Chapter 62, verse 1, **"For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not keep quiet, until her righteousness goes forth like brightness, and her salvation like a torch that is burning. The nations will see your righteousness, and all [the] kings your glory; and you will be called by a new name which the mouth of the LORD will designate. You will also be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God."** (Isaiah 62:1-3) Verse 4 says **"It will no longer be said to you, 'Forsaken,' nor to your land will it any longer be said, 'Desolate'; but you will be called, 'My delight is in her,' and your land, 'Married'; for the LORD delights in you, and to Him you land will be married. For as a young man marries a virgin, so your sons will marry you; and as [a] bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so your God will rejoice over you."** (Isaiah 62:4-5) Now we pick up in verses 10 all the way through the end of verse 5 of chapter 62. We pick up this idea of a husband and a wife getting married. A bride and a groom, or here described as a bridegroom. But did you notice it's not on the bride as much as it is on the bridegroom? Let's look at it again. Look at verse 10. He says **"I will rejoice greatly in the LORD, [and] my soul will exult in...God...."** (Isaiah 61:10) Why? What is the cause for joy and exultation? He tells us in verse 10. Here's why: **"...For he has clothed me with garments of**

salvation....” Described another way, **“...He has wrapped me with a robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.” (Isaiah 61:10)** The imagery we have for us in Isaiah 61 is a wedding day. You know a wedding day? That’s when the husband and the wife have been planning and working on it for months, perhaps years, getting ready for this special day where they’ll become one. And they dress themselves to the very best they can. They present themselves in the most beautiful or the most handsome appearance that they can muster. And here they come together. He says [My soul rejoices in God.] (PARAPHRASE Isaiah 61:10) Why? It’s the wedding day and He has clothed me in such beautiful garments. These garments, though, are not made out of silk or out of satin, but rather they’re garments of salvation. They’re “robes of righteousness”. The Bible does this. It often describes clothing and ties them to theology. For example, if we were to go to the very end of the Bible to Revelation chapter 19, we see an image of the saints being clothed. Look at Revelation chapter 19. Look at verse 8. Here we have the final climax of history and God coming in His restoration and His victory, and He says the people are shouting **“...‘Hallelujah!’ For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready.” (Revelation 19:6-7)** Here’s that marriage imagery again. And look how it describes, in verse 8, it says **“[And] it was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean....”** But it defines this. **“...For the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.” (Revelation 19:8)** These garments are not just physical garments to be worn, but rather they’re garments of salvation, robes of righteousness. We see also that the Bible describes, oftentimes, clothing as a means of identity. As a means of communicating what God is doing for His people. Here we find out that the bride and the bridegroom are being dressed for their wedding day. But they’re being dressed not in just garments of clothing, but they’re

being dressed in garments of salvation and a robe of righteousness.” It’s interesting, isn’t it that God describes our relationship with Him as one of changing robes, as one of changing what we’re wearing? And there’s a sense in which, and the Bible tells us the way it works with Jesus is— that we are to, Paul tells us in Romans 13, verse 14. That we are to **“...put on the Lord Jesus Christ....” (Romans 13:14)** I want to read you a story out of a book called “Of Whom the World Was Not Worthy”. This is a true story back in the Slavic countries and it’s between a man named Jakob who was a Christian evangelist and an old bitter man named Cimarron. The Cimarron approaches this man named Jakob and he tells him “Look, you preach to us a God of love, but have you seen the priesthood in this city? They’re horrible.” And he goes on and describes how they take people and they tie them to a tree and they torture them and they beat them because they will not receive the sacraments of this church. He then gets very personal and he says, “These men of the cloth tortured and killed my own nephew before my eyes. Here before you is his widow, a child in the bloom of life and with a babe in her arms. I saw them torture her husband and saw him die in his own blood and then I watched the killers calmly genuflect before the main altars of the church crossing themselves with holy water. And you preach to me a God of love?” Jakob didn’t give up. The evangelist didn’t give up on old Cimarron. He came week after week. He would walk miles and miles to Cimarron’s village and he would not only preach the gospel, but he would live it out and demonstrate it in acts of kindness. This went on and on, and one day they had an argument about it, and the argument went this way: Jakob said, “Tell me Cimarron, if I put your coat on my back and if I put my feet into your boots and I go out onto the streets and tell the people that I am you, will I be Cimarron or will I be Jakob?” And he responded, of course, “You will not change. You will be yourself.” He says, “But what if I then go and I rob the store and the police see me coming out of the store in the midst of the robbery and they see your coat and they see your boots? Won’t they say,

‘That’s Cimarron?’ Won’t they come after you?” Well time passed and Jakob continued to love Cimarron; continued to demonstrate the gospel before him. And finally it broke. It says this. “Every week for a year Jakob walked ten kilometers to Cimarron’s little cottage, to see him and visit him and talk with him about the Lord Jesus Christ. And then on a clear winter morning Cimarron wagged his head back and forth, his white hair shining in the morning light and he said, “Jakob, you have convinced me. Your God is real. Your God is God.” And then he said this: “You wear the coat well.” You see if we are followers of Jesus Christ we wear His robe; His robe of righteousness. And He gave us that robe by making an exchange. He took our sins, our filthy rags and he placed them on His back and then He gave us this great robe to wear, this perfect robe of righteousness. The prophecy of Isaiah, chapter 61 says, “...**My soul** [exults greatly]...,”” why? “...**For He has clothed me with...a robe of righteousness....**” (Isaiah 61:10) He has given me “...**garments of salvation....**” (Isaiah 61:10) He has adorned me in His beauty. What will that look like? Well it makes us a new creation, in a sense. It makes us— it gives us a new identity and so we will see that God brings this righteousness and He will spring it up on all nations. And He will show it and demonstrate it to the world by the clothing that He has placed upon us. If we are followers of this God of Isaiah, the truth is real for us as well. We are wearing the robes of righteousness. Why? Because the bridegroom is coming for us. The bridegroom is coming to take us back to His heavenly Father. For if we are followers of Christ, we are surely His bride; His bride who are dressed in garments of salvation waiting for the bridegroom to come.

PART TWO

David: One of the reasons for exulting and shouting out the glory and the praises to God in Isaiah 61 is, that we have been clothed with “robes of righteousness”, given “garments of salvation”. (See Isaiah 61:10) But there’s

even more reason to exult and to praise God, we see it chapter 62. Let's look again at verse 1. **"For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not keep quiet, until her righteousness goes forth like brightness, and her salvation like a torch that is burning. The nations will see your righteousness, and all kings your glory; and you will be called by a new name which the mouth of the LORD will designate."** (Isaiah 62:1-2) Ah, so we're not only given new robes and new garments and a new appearance, which he now elaborates in verse 1 of 62 to say: we'll be shining like a torch that will have brightness that will not find its end, will not be extinguished, but will brighten up the whole world. But more than that he says we will be "called by a new name;" look at this new name. He goes on to say in verse 4: **"It will no longer be said to you, [quote] 'Forsaken,' nor to your land will it any longer be said...,** quote, **"... 'Desolate'; but you will be called...."** (Isaiah 62:4) So we're gonna go from one name to another. We're going from "forsaken" and "desolate" to look at verse 4. **"...But you will be called...,** quote, **"... 'My delight is in her,' and your land, 'Married'; for the LORD delights in you, and to Him your land will be married."** (Isaiah 62:4) Look at this name change that's going on here. The name change goes from "forsaken" and "desolate"; need to say anything more about that? No. That's completely descriptive of the condition "forsaken" and "desolate" but it's transferred or it's changed to a new name. And the new name is this, **"... 'My delight is in her,' and your land [is], 'Married'...."** (Isaiah 62:4) There is an identity change with a name change. Names are used throughout the Bible to describe character. They're used to describe condition. I want to show you a couple just in Isaiah itself. Look at Isaiah chapter 7; Isaiah chapter 7. We have Isaiah being told to go give a prophecy to King Ahaz and he says this: "I want you to take your son. I want you to take your son with them and this is your son's name." It's in Isaiah chapter 7, verse 3. **"Then the LORD said to Isaiah, 'Go out now to meet Ahaz...and your son Shear-jashub, at the end of**

the conduit of the upper pool, on the highway to the fuller's field.”

(Isaiah 7:3) “Shear-jashub” that’s a Hebrew name that means simply this “only a remnant shall return.” Interesting, he’s about to bring a message in Isaiah chapter 7 to King Ahaz, and King Ahaz is gonna be offered a sign from God. But Ahaz is going to reject that sign because he is going to purchase his own protection from the king of Assyria. This name though speaks a lot. Go out with your son. Take your little boy by the hand. His name is: “only a remnant shall return”. There’s a, a message in the name of his son. He does it again in chapter 8. Verse 3, he says: **“So I approached the prophetess, and she conceived and gave birth to a son. [And] then the LORD said to me, ‘Name him Maher-shalal-hash-baz,’”** **(Isaiah 8:3)** which means “swift is the booty, speedy is the prey”. Now he’s about to deliver a prophecy in chapter 8 where he’s gonna describe the wrath of God coming, it’s gonna be described as Emmanuel, but it’s not Emmanuel like good ’ol Christmas fuzzy Emmanuel, but the judgment of God amongst His people Emmanuel—God with us. The point is that in both places he describes in Isaiah 7 He uses a name to teach. He uses a name to communicate a message to him. All right, so let’s look at this a little bit more. If we have God using marriage customs to communicate who He is and who they are and the dynamics between them, what does He mean when He says, “I’m going to rename you”? “I’m going to give you a new name.” I have a brother-in-law named Joe who has Down Syndrome. Joe’s 50 years old, he’s just a great guy, has the mentality of about a three year old. We often wondered though, he’s so sharp in so many areas. When we were getting married, my wife and I were getting married—her name is Margaret, he kept saying around the wedding, “Margaret’s name is David. Margaret’s name is David”. And people began to correct Joe and say, “Joe that’s not true. Margaret’s name is Margaret”. You know, “Why, why are you saying that?” He just kept saying it over and over again. “Margaret’s name is David.” And then it dawned on us: he understands. Margaret McGowan is

now becoming Margaret Arthur. Because of the marriage with me she gets a new name. God is saying to His people, I have given you a new name. Now it's not like going from Margaret McGowan to Margaret Arthur, but rather it's going from "forsaken" and "desolate" to **"...My delight is in her..." (Isaiah 62:4)** and she is **"...Married..."** Look at verse 5, Isaiah 62:5 says **"For as a young man marries a virgin, so your sons will marry you; and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so your God will rejoice over you." (Isaiah 62:5)** Isn't that a beautiful picture, My Friend? God is described here as One who is delighting in His bride, much like a bridegroom, much like one who says, "Listen, I'm so crazy in love with you that I, I just want to make you mine. And in order to do so I want to call you something different. I want to rename you." And in the Old Testament biblical context that meant that character came with that name. The character name here is, "no longer are you one who is outside, who is forsaken and who is desolate, but now you're one in whom I'm crazy about. You're one in whom I delight in." We get this picture also in another prophecy in Zephaniah chapter 3, verse 17 God is described as one who stands up over His, His bride and up over His people and with arms raised He says, [I shout for joy over My bride.] (PARAPHRASE Zephaniah 3:17) I don't know about you, but if you've been married and you've walked down that aisle and you've seen your bride come down that aisle, you know that feeling. They said of me when I was waiting for my wife to come down that seemingly mile-long aisle way, that my hands were flapping on my sides and my heels were up off the ground in anticipation of this beautiful woman coming down in her dress, to come and receive my name. My Friend, God describes His people that way. He says, "Listen, it's like a bridegroom taking on a bride. I'm gonna clothe you. I'm going to give you robes of righteousness." And we know now, that came at a great cost to our God, didn't it? It came from Him having to take His robes of righteousness and place them on us. In exchange, receive our sin, our clothing of rebellion, of

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hatred, of anger towards God. He took that from us. And not only did He reclothe us, but He gave us a new identity. He says “You are now My delight. You are the one in whom I cherish, in whom I, with My hands raised, rejoice and exult and shout over you, for I have made you to be Mine. I have taken you from the depths of the prison that you have been in, and I’ve brought you from a kingdom of darkness into a kingdom of light.” Just like a bridegroom marries a bride, so our heavenly Father reaches out to us and He says, “I want to delight in you. Will you be My bride?” It’s a great picture of salvation. It’s a great invitation from a powerful and loving God who wishes to delight in you, My Friend.