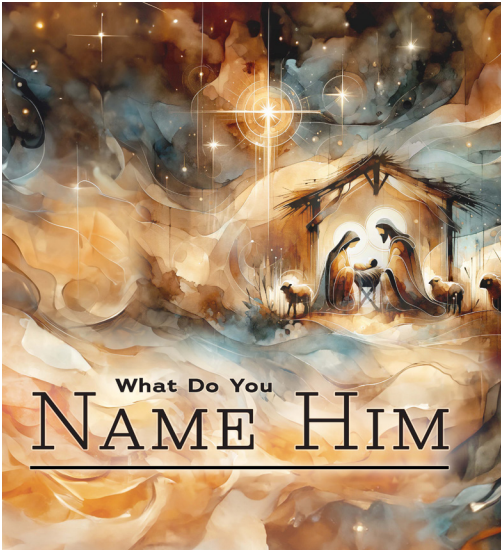


What Do You
NAME HIM

Sermon Growth Guide

December 29, 2024

We Are Renamed



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What Do You Name Him - We Are Renamed

Isaiah 62:1-7, 10-12

Key Verse: "The nations will see your vindication, and all kings your glory; you will be called by a new name that the mouth of the Lord will bestow." Isaiah 62:2

Big Idea: The Lord continues to redeem, rename, and give us reasons to rejoice.

Foundations

Isaiah 62 is contained within Third Isaiah, which begins, "...for my salvation is close at hand and my righteousness will soon be revealed." (Isa 56:1). Isaiah 56-66 contain words of comfort, warnings of judgment, and a clear message of hope for the exiled Israelites. What does their future look like? Who are they going to become once they return home? For what—or for whom—are they waiting?

Leading up to these questions are Isaiah's four Servant Songs. Isaiah writes of the Servant who brings justice (Isa 42:1-4); the Servant who is a light to the nations (Isa 42:1-4); the Servant who suffers (Isa 50:4-9); and the Servant who will sacrifice his life for the sake of humankind (Isa 52:13-53:12). This is the Messiah, the fulfillment of God's promises. But when will this fulfillment come?

Turn back one chapter and you'll read the description of The Year of the Lord's Favor (Isa 61). Jesus uses these words to declare Himself as the fulfillment of Scripture (Luke 4:14-21). He is their hope. He is the prophesied Servant, the Messiah for the poor, the captive, and for all nations.

In Chapter 62, the Lord calls those who love Him to hold fast to the covenant. Recently returned from Babylonian captivity, God's people needed these words of encouragement and hope. Through a description of Jerusalem's restoration and future glory, they know a rebuilt and renamed city and a will signify God's special favor upon them. Zion's vindication will shine forth.

Understanding God's Word

Read together Isaiah 62:1-7, 10-12. At the heart of today's passage is God's act of renaming of Zion/Jerusalem. In the Old Testament, renaming was a significant event that marked a new identity, a new purpose, or even a new covenant with God. It said to the person, or in this case, the city: your story is about to change. Consider Abram, Sarai and Jacob; and in the New Testament, Simon and "the Sons of Thunder."

In v.4, God promises Jerusalem the names Deserted or Desolate will be changed to Hephzibah, which means "my delight is in her," and Beulah, which means "married." This chapter concludes: "and you will be called Sought After, the City No Longer Deserted." You also see here Zion called Daughter, and a marriage metaphor, which signifies a change in relationship.

Applying God's Word

God promises to restore, rename, and even rejoice over Zion. He does this for us and for the world in and through his Son, Jesus Christ. In your faith journey, how have you experienced restoration? What causes you to rejoice? How have you accepted your new identity in Christ? How does Isaiah 62 show God's love and commitment to his people?

Witnessing God's Word

Who in your life needs to hear about the restoration Christ offers? What false identity about yourself needs to be renamed? God delights in you and rejoices over you! How can you demonstrate to others that you believe in God's covenant promises?

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During this Advent Season, we have been studying the names of Jesus in Isaiah chapter 9: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father and Prince of Peace. On Christmas Eve, we revisited the story of the angel giving instructions to Joseph, and it had to do with the Child's name. For the moment Joseph and Mary named their child Jesus, the prophet Isaiah's words were fulfilled.

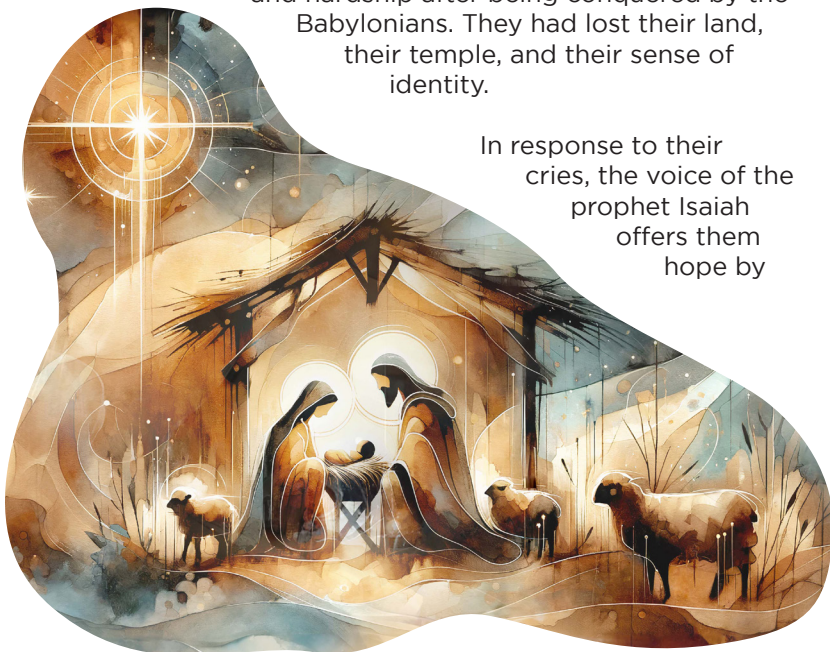
Today, we continue asking What Do You Name Him as we move 53 chapters forward to Isaiah 62. This is one of Isaiah's beautiful declarations: words that give hope to God's people through a message of love, restoration, and rejoicing...but even more profoundly, through the symbolic act of giving them a new name.

When you read the book of Isaiah, you'll see that this prophet spoke primarily to the leaders of Jerusalem and Judah, repeatedly warning them about the cost of their rebellion, especially their oppression of the poor and the worship of idols. But along with this message of judgment came a message of hope. Isaiah reminded them of God's covenant promises, promises that would one day be fulfilled through the king from David's line that God would send to establish His Kingdom on Earth. God's blessing would flow outward to all nations -- just as God had promised to Abraham. This message of Messianic hope compelled him to speak out against corruption while also speaking of the unrelenting covenant love of Yahweh.

The last section of Isaiah, chapters 56-66, is focused on Hope -- all because of the one Isaiah calls God's "Servant." Chapter 62 is one of three poems that describe how the Servant (with a capital S) will announce the good news of God's Kingdom. The new Jerusalem will be the epicenter of God's justice and mercy flowing out to the nations.

At this point in history, God's people longed for good news. They were in exile, facing desolation and hardship after being conquered by the Babylonians. They had lost their land, their temple, and their sense of identity.

In response to their cries, the voice of the prophet Isaiah offers them hope by



promising a future restoration where Jerusalem would be rebuilt. Zion would be renamed. Note that Zion was an actual physical hilltop in Jerusalem but also, symbolically, a representation of God's relationship with his people.

Read Isaiah 62:1-2a and Isaiah 62:6-7. God's people needed to hear this because God needed to hear from them. Isaiah assures protection -- while he simultaneously calls on them to hold God to His promises. And remember, the prophet's reassurance came at a time when their reality was far from glorious. Consider what they were imagining they would be going to go back to: the desolation of a plundered city, barren farmland, no milk or honey in sight. Yes, they longed to return, but to what? Their hardship was going to continue. What about what God had promised? Was this really a part of God's plan?

God watches over us -- and God needs to hear from us, especially when we are in situations that are far from ideal. If you have ever found yourself in a situation where you were wondering how what you pictured, or what you had been promised was far from what you were staring at...are those are the moments when it's easiest to shut down, pull away, and look elsewhere for hope? When you find yourself arriving in a hospital room or a courtroom, comforting your grieving family or shuffling through piles of bills. Isn't this when restoration seems so far away? In those moments it can be hard to imagine the future because things like loss, betrayal, and disappointment are front and center, staring right back at you.

This is how the story of the Israelites parallels with our stories today. We also have times when we need to cry out / ask God if He is really going to come through for us. Isaiah knows that God's people need to be reassured that He is with them and He has a plan for them. We cannot forget that reassurance, either. The NAME of the Christ Child is Immanuel, God With Us. He is the same Servant, the same Messianic King Isaiah prophecies about! Isaiah foreshadows Jesus as our Restorer who was born to complete a restorative act of mercy for all of humanity.

To understand how this restoration works, just look to the metaphor of renovating a building, or, in the case of Zion, a city. I often just go right to HGTV for visuals of restoration. This network has over 3 dozen different restoration

shows – like “Don’t Hate Your House,” “Fixer to Fabulous,” or “Restore and Revive.” The show descriptions actually include phrases like “fixing issues,” “bringing it back to life,” “quirky can be beautiful” and “promise of a breathtaking transformation.”

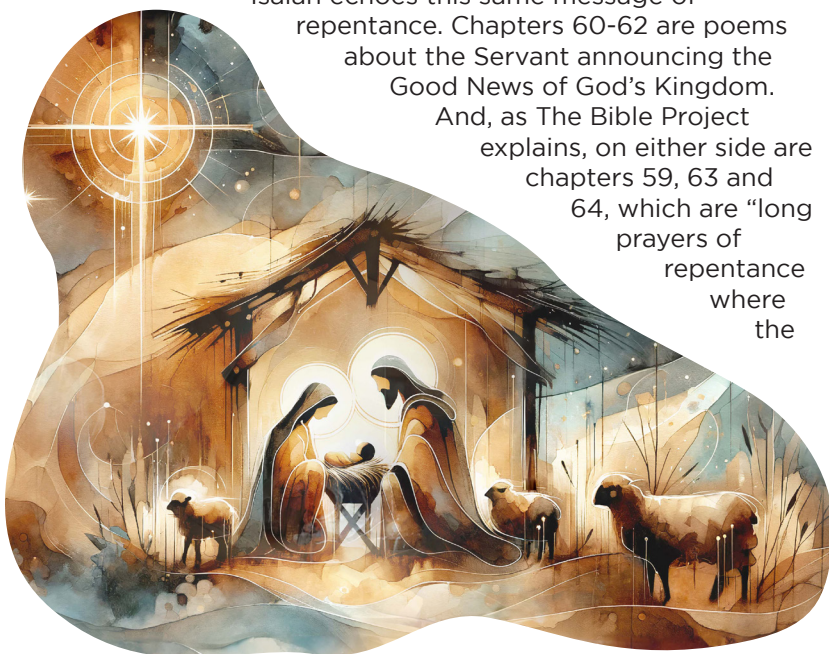
I would argue that these are also pretty accurate descriptions of what happens when we commit our life to the Restorer, Jesus Christ. No matter where you are in life – no matter the mistakes you have made, the shame you carry, or the exhaustion of a current family crisis, hear these promises of restoration in Jesus. Paul writes, “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!” (2 Corinthians 5:17) It’s true that restoration can be messy, it is hard work, and it is often costly. But Isaiah calls us to believe in what God is making new, and to not rest until we see God’s restorative work in all people -- in all the church – and in all of creation.

And what rejoicing we will see when this happens! In today’s text, you’ll notice that there is a lot of rejoicing – and God’s people are not the only ones singing praise. God himself is rejoicing over us! We see this in verse 5: “...as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride, so will your God rejoice over you.” (Isaiah 62: 5b).

We also hear an invitation to prepare for the future restoration. Isaiah writes, “Pass through, pass through the gates! Prepare the way for the people. Build up, build up the highway! Remove the stones. Raise a banner for the nations.” (Isaiah 62:10) He instructs God’s people to remove any and all obstacles; to make the path accessible for all; to signal to the world that salvation is coming. This same call happens in Isaiah 40, where he writes, “A voice of one calling: ‘In the wilderness prepare the way for the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.’”

In history, this voice was the person of John the Baptist, who came before Jesus, preaching in the wilderness a message of repentance.

Isaiah echoes this same message of repentance. Chapters 60-62 are poems about the Servant announcing the Good News of God’s Kingdom. And, as The Bible Project explains, on either side are chapters 59, 63 and 64, which are “long prayers of repentance where the



servants confess Israel’s sin, and they grieve over all of the evil they see in the world around them – so they ask God to forgive them and that His Kingdom would come here on earth as it is in heaven.”

Repentance is a key part of the preparation. We also grieve over the evil we see in the world around us, yes? But are we only praying for what we need, what we want, what we are thankful for? I have been praying with a group of friends every Tuesday morning for 4 years now – we pray for a different country of the world and a different unreached people group. We pray for the government, the church, for God to send workers into the field. But what I have also learned in this prayer time is that we must also, on behalf of all God’s people, ask for forgiveness. My friend Rhonda often prays, “Lord, forgive us for where our prayers have fallen short. Forgive us for what we have neglected to see or do or change.”

Throughout the book of Isaiah, there are actually images of a festal highway that exists for returning exiles and global pilgrims. Isaiah knew: when word got out that the Savior was coming, the nations were going to flock to Jerusalem...because these promises were not just for them, for their city. Isaiah said prepare for the people - get ready to welcome ALL who were also seeking the blessings of Zion’s God.

We cannot keep the Good News to ourselves. How are we preparing the way for the nations to know the hope of the Messiah? Isaiah says: start with confession. We were created to worship our creator, a Creator who rejoices over us as we rejoice in Him. When sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ, our purpose is to ultimately reach a day where “every knee will bow, and every tongue will confess Jesus Christ as Lord,” signifying a universal acknowledgment of Christ’s authority and Lordship, a restored creation, and never-ending worship. That’s a reason to rejoice.

So we’ve looked at restoration and rejoicing, but now we come to the heart of today’s chapter. The act of renaming. Read Isaiah 62:2b-4a. The act of renaming in the Old Testament was a significant event that marked a new identity, a new purpose, or even a new covenant with God. It said to the person, or in this case, the city: your story is about to change. Pastor W. Carter Lester explains, “Here in Isaiah 62 the name change does not just

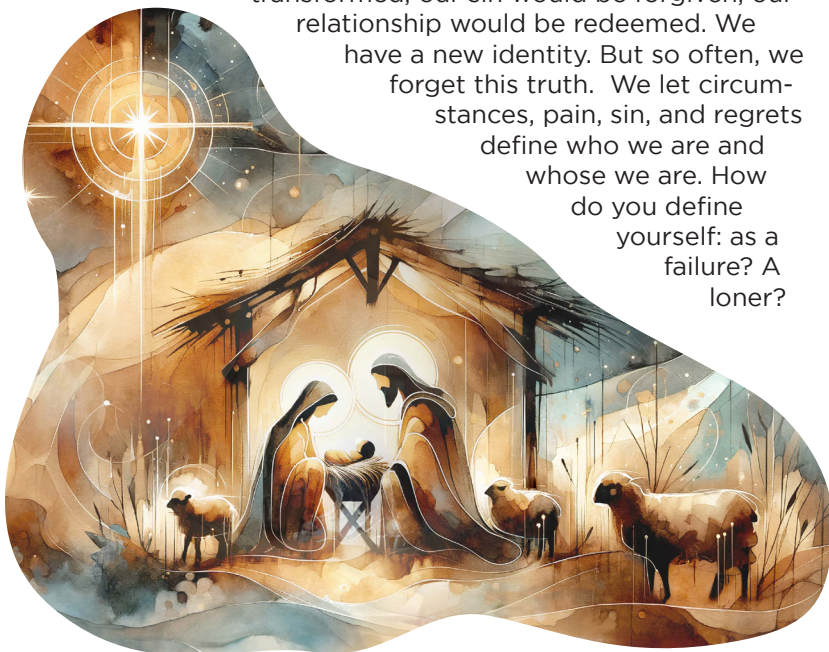
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describe the change in Israel's character; it also describes the change in God's relationship with Israel and in Israel's future." - W. Carter Lester, Feasting on the Word, Year C

The names Deserted or Desolate will be changed to: Hephzibah, which means "my delight is in her," and Beulah, which means "married." These new names are about commitment. Covenant. Love and provision. These new names change the relationship between God and God's people. But why does he speak of marriage? Well, with marriage comes a name change, symbolizing the new relationship and the new future for the couple. Isaiah writes, "for the Lord will take delight in you, and your land will be married. As a young man marries a maiden, so will your God rejoice over you" (Isaiah 62: 4b-5a). This draws a direct line to the covenant relationship the Lord has refused to abandon. But notice, the Lord isn't just restoring and renaming Zion, He is actually pursuing her. Because of this, Zion's renewed relationship will stand in contrast to what it has been. This chapter concludes: "and you will be called Sought After, the City No Longer Deserted." (Isaiah 62: 12b)

In the midst of heartache, change, or seasons of desolation, we all need to hear these words of love: that the Lord of the Universe doesn't just love you, he pursues a relationship with you. In 2023, I had the opportunity to attend the Asbury Revival in Kentucky. When I walked through the threshold and entered the chapel, I immediately felt the presence of the Holy Spirit. It's an experience that is hard to describe. A few hours into the worship, we began singing the song "Goodness of God" which includes the lyrics: "Your goodness is running after, it's running after me." I found myself soaking in that truth - in the goodness of God - and in the realization that Jesus does this not just for me but for the nations. He is constantly working, healing, rebuilding, running after the hearts of billions of people.

God promises to rename not only his beloved city, but each and every one of his beloved children. God sent his Son for us so that our nature would be transformed, our sin would be forgiven, our relationship would be redeemed. We have a new identity. But so often, we forget this truth. We let circumstances, pain, sin, and regrets define who we are and whose we are. How do you define yourself: as a failure? A loner?



A bad parent or a party girl? Maybe you've always been known as the one who can't quite get life figured out? Or perhaps your identity is found in what you strive for: being a successful CEO, a supermom or the person who always does the right thing. The prophet Isaiah spoke to people who also defined themselves by worldly standards. And He said God sees you, and He renames you! You are beloved, beautiful, desired and delightful.

I stopped the other day to look at one of the bulletin boards where people have put on cards what they name Jesus. I encourage you to do the same. I saw "Waymaker" "Abba" "Best Friend," and even "My Life Raft." How we name God is also a part of our renaming...and Isaiah actually tells us the same thing. All of Scripture does! What you name God changes you... because in Jesus you are renamed. You call Him Provider? That means you are renamed: Provided For. You name Him El-Roi? Your new name is: "Seen by the Lord." When you think of the Lord, do you call Him your Alpha and Omega? Then your new name is "One who personally knows my beginning and my end."

God promised, all the way back in Isaiah, that the Lord lovingly renames us as an indication of the hope we have in His covenant promises, exemplified in the Servant who came for all. And chapter 62 speaks to restoration, rejoicing, and the act of God renaming us. He says be reassured and he instructs us to repent. But He also says receive ---receive the promised Messiah.

If you have not received Christ into your heart, hear these words today: He knows you, He loves you, He wishes to restore your brokenness and fill your heart with everlasting joy. If you have already received Christ into your heart, how does Isaiah's message challenge you to believe in God's promises with a new hope today; to remember you are renamed, and that all things are made new in Christ Jesus our Lord.

So let's ask ourselves today: How do our new names compel us to display Christ's love and mercy all God's children? Because the nations are watching. And they, too, need to see the banners - see the light - receive the news of a righteous, redeeming, resurrected Lord who loves them and calls them by name.

To God be the Glory forever and ever.