

BIBLE STUDY
January 10, 2022

THE SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Isaiah 62: 1-5

John 2: 1-11

1 Corinthians 12: 4-11

1. Isaiah 62: 1-5

- As we have seen, the Book of Isaiah is actually composed by three authors. The first Isaiah, who is the historical Isaiah, consists of chapters 1-39. The second Isaiah who was a poet/prophet, schooled in the spirit and teachings of the first Isaiah, who encouraged the people toward the end of the Babylonian exile. The second Isaiah composed the famous Servant Songs. The third Isaiah is found in chapters 56-66. These verses were written after the end of the exile and continue Isaiah's prophecies of God restoring the covenant with his people.
- **V. 1:** God is reversing the fortunes of Israel by returning the exiles to their homes. God will make a worldwide announcement of the rehabilitation of Israel. Their new status will be like the light of the sun breaking forth at dawn or like the light of a burning torch.
- **V. 2:** Every king and every power on earth will know that Israel has been restored to its former glory. God himself will give them a new name---a new reputation. No longer shall they be a small nation at the mercy of the super-powers.
- **V. 3:** They shall be a crown and a diadem in the hand of the Lord. The crown and diadem are signs of power, prestige, and dignity.
- **V. 4:** The old names of Israel could have been "forsaken" or "desolate," now God gives them new names which describe the love that God has for them. God "delights" in them. They are his own. He loves them so much he will marry them. They are engaged. Soon to be married.
- **V. 5:** Just as a young man and woman fall in love and get married. So God has fallen in love with his people and will marry them.

2. John 2: 1-11

- The story of the Marriage Feast at Cana and the Changing of Water into Wine is a very symbolic story. Contrast it to the revelation of the glory of God on Mt. Sinai (Exodus 19: 3-25). On Sinai, God reveals himself in terrifying signs of smoke, thunder, loud blasts of the shofar, and fire. The people tremble at the nearness of God. In John, the glory of God is revealed at a simple wedding feast in a small village of Galilee. This is the reality of the Word made flesh. God has come close to his people without fear and trembling but as a guest.
- **V. 1:** It happens on the "third day." In the Scriptures, God's glory is often revealed on the third day.
- **V. 2-4:** The mother of Jesus is prominent in this story. It seems as if she is the invited guest and Jesus and his disciples have accompanied her.

Jesus addresses her as “woman.” In John’s Gospel Jesus also calls the Samaritan woman at the well and Mary Magdalene woman. But it is an odd way to speak to one’s mother. Jesus may be associating her with Eve who was called “woman” because she was the mother of all the living. At the foot of the cross, Jesus still gives his mother to John the disciple and him to her. She will become the mother of all who are reborn in Christ.

- V. 4-5: Jesus expresses a lack of concern or even a negative response when his mother tells him that the wine has run out. There is a tension throughout John’s Gospel of Jesus’ revealing who he truly is in response to human need or according to God’s plan. There often seems to be a concession to human need which points to the full glory that will be revealed on the Cross. Jesus frequently refers to his “hour,” which is God’s appointed time for his plan to be accomplished.
- V. 6-7: The water in the jars symbolizes the Law of Moses. Water played an important role in the Mosaic Law because it was the means of ritual purification. That the old wine has run out is a sign that the Law has lost its power to save. Jesus’ death will reveal the new means of salvation which is sacrificial love and total obedience to the plan of God exhibited by Jesus.
- V. 8-10: The head waiter says that the bridegroom has saved the best wine until last. God has saved the best to last in Jesus. Remember what it says in the Prologue: The law came through Moses but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.
- V. 11: In reality, there are two bridegrooms at the wedding. The man of Cana who celebration it is, but also Jesus, who has come to bring about the marriage of God and his people. Recall the first reading from Isaiah in which the vindication of Israel is symbolized by God marrying his people and rejoicing in them as a groom rejoices in his bride.
- The changing of water into wine is the beginning of the signs (miracles) that Jesus performed. The signs are not simply miraculous occurrences for the relief of human need and suffering, but they point to the deeper reality that God has come to dwell among his people and give them the fullness of abundant life. In John’s Gospel, there are two kinds of faith: immature and mature. Immature faith stops at the physical benefit of the sign. Mature faith goes deeper and perceives the deeper reality of God presence to bring about the union between God and humanity.
- V. 12: In John’s Gospel there is a mingling of Jesus’ blood family and his adopted family of disciples. Both the blood family and the disciple family go together to Capernaum. This fact seems to point to the reality of our being adopted into the family of God. We stand side by side with his blood family. We are one because God has given us the power to become sons and daughters of God.

3. 1 Corinthians 12: 4-11

- The church at Corinth was a deeply divided community. There were cliques among the people with some members feeling that they were

superior to others. Some Corinthian Christians felt that they were more spiritually advanced and had a more sophisticated understanding of the faith. They sought out spiritual gifts that they felt proved their holiness and progress in the faith like the gifts of prophecy and speaking in tongues. Paul is teaching them that there are many gifts and that one is not superior to the other or inferior. They are given by the Spirit as the Spirit wills and are harmonized and coordinated for the good of the community.

- V. 4-5: There is a great variety of spiritual gifts, ministries, and roles in the community but they are all given by one God, one Lord and one Spirit.
- V. 6: Gifts and ministries are not given for the personal benefit or social standing of the recipient but for the building up of the community. Gifts are given for service not prestige.
- V. 8-10: Paul lists the various gifts present in the community: those persons who have wisdom, knowledge and faith; healing; mighty deeds; prophecy; discernment of spirits; speaking in tongues; interpretation of the tongues.
- V. 11: But all these gifts come from the one Spirit who distributes them to individuals according to the Spirit's will.