EXPERIENCING THE LORD'S FAVOR THROUGH CHRIST: LUKE 4:14-21

Dr. Brendon R. Witte

THE IMPORTANCE OF ISAIAH 61:1-2A

Jesus's citation of Isaiah 61:1-2a in Luke 4:18-19 provides the interpretive key for at least Luke chapters 3 to 9, if not the whole of the book of Luke. It reveals …

1. The nature of Jesus as the Messiah; and,
2. The nature of Jesus's mission as the Messiah.

Jesus does not cite Isaiah 61 to provide a commentary on Scripture;
Jesus cites Scripture to allow it to provide commentary on him!

LUKE 4:14-17

“And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report about him went out through all the surrounding country. And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all. And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read. And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, . . .”

LUKE 4:18-21

“‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.’ And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. And he began to say to them, ‘Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.’”

ANOINTING IN ANCIENT JEWISH THOUGHT

Anointing a king with oil at his coronation was symbolic of his anointing by the Holy Spirit. An anointed king was called an "anointed one," which is "messiah" (*mashiakh*) in Hebrew or "christ" (*christos*) in Greek.

Anointed One, Messiah, Christ, and Davidic King (Son of David) were often used interchangeably.

SABBATH AND JUBILEE YEARS (LEV 25; 26)

During Sabbatical years (once every seven years), Israelites were not allowed to do certain things:

- No planting or sowing
- No harvesting for long-term storage or profit
- No claiming ownership to land (picking produce from any field)

. . . and they had to:

- Release the debts of their fellow Israelites

SABBATH AND JUBILEE YEARS (LEV 25; 26)

The Jubilee year (once every seven Sabbatical years [7x7 years = 49 years]) required additional observances:

- All fields and the homes built on the fields reverted to their ancestral ownership based on the division of land among the Twelve Tribes as recorded in Scripture; and,
- All Jewish servant-slaves owned in Israel were set free (the Jubilee year became known as “the year of the Lord’s favor” that was displayed in the release of captives from their oppression).

490 (70 X 7) YEARS OF REBELLION

“He [Nebuchadnezzar] took into exile in Babylon those who had escaped from the sword, and they became servants to him and to his sons until the establishment of the kingdom of Persia, to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed its Sabbaths. All the days that it lay desolate it kept Sabbath, to fulfill seventy years” (2 Chron 36:20-21).

490 (70 X 7) YEARS OF REBELLION

70 years of exile paid back 70 Sabbath years and 10 Jubilees the Israelites stole from the LAND. But it did not pay back what they owed GOD!

Four times in Leviticus 26 (vv. 18, 21, 24, 28), God said that he would demand back from Israel sevenfold if they wronged him. That's 70 x 7 = 490 years of curse!

490 (70 X 7) YEARS OF CURSE

“From the days of our fathers to this day we have been in great guilt. And for our iniquities we, our kings, and our priests have been given into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity, to plundering, and to utter shame, as it is today” (Ezra 9:7).

“Behold, we are slaves this day; in the land that you gave to our fathers to enjoy its fruit and its good gifts, behold, we are slaves” (Nehemiah 9:36).

DANIEL'S 490 YEARS (70 X 7 WEEKS OF YEARS)

1. 7 Weeks of 7 Years = 49 years: From a decree "to restore and build Jerusalem" (Artaxerxes' Decree in 457 BC) to the completion of the project (408 BC).
2. 62 Weeks of 7 Years = 434 years: From the end of the building project (408 BC) to the coming of "an anointed one, a prince."
3. A 70th week of seven years = 7 years: A "super Jubilee," rounding off the 490 years of curse, where God brings restoration through the "anointed one."

THE JUBILEE OF THE ANOINTED ONE

Daniel 9:24 says that when "the anointed one, a prince" arrives, he will . . .

- finish the transgression
- put an end to sin
- atone for iniquity
- bring in everlasting righteousness
- seal both vision and prophet
- anoint a most holy place

JESUS AND THE JUBILEE

7 weeks of years (49 years) + 62 weeks of years (434 years) = 483 years

---

Working ahead 483 years from Artaxerxes' decree in 457 BC, recognizing there is no 0 AD, we arrive at 27 AD, the year most scholars believe Jesus was baptized.

At Jesus's baptism (Luke 3:21-22), the Spirit descended on Jesus like a dove, and the Father from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased,"

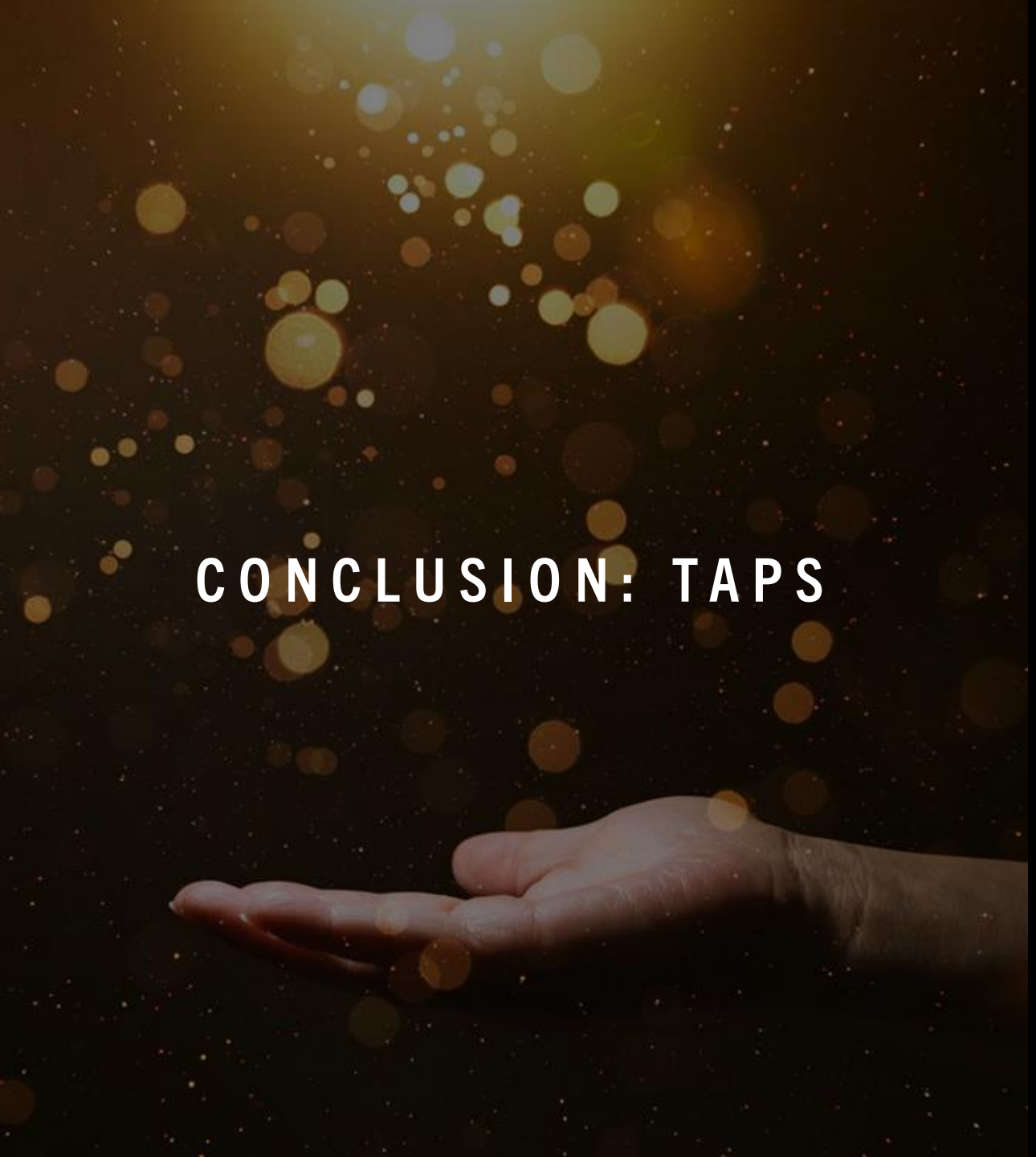
a citation of Psalm 2:7, the coronation Psalm!

LUKE 4:14-17

“And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report about him went out through all the surrounding country. And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all. And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read. And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, . . .”

LUKE 4:18-21

“‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty (*aphesis*) to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty (*aphesis*) those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.’ And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. And he began to say to them, ‘Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.’”



CONCLUSION: TAPS

1. Glorify God for his sovereign hand that guides history.
2. Repent! Christ has offered forgiveness, so repent!