



## OAKS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

by Whitney Davis

*“The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor and the day of vengeance of our God to comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve in Zion—to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendor.”* Isaiah 61:1-3 NIV

The oak tree symbolizes longevity, strength, endurance, stability, power, and resilience. This passage in Isaiah proclaims that we can be oaks of righteousness planted of the Lord. As we continue to explore how we can

flourish this year as women, let’s look at how these scriptures can speak to us today.

The first part of the book of Isaiah speaks of the Lord’s judgment on a people but then shifts in later chapters to begin to proclaim the coming Messiah, the anointed One. Chapter 61 is perhaps the peak of this prophetic message. We need to realize that it is Jesus speaking here in the Old Testament. We know this because, in Luke 4, Jesus asks for the scroll of the prophet Isaiah to be read. This particular passage is read, showing up in the New Testament, and Jesus proclaims that this prophecy has been fulfilled.

It’s a powerful moment. We realize that we are a people who are poor, brokenhearted, sinful, and captive, who need a Savior. But Jesus Christ came to the earth

fully man, lived a perfect, sinless life, died for us, was buried, rose again, and ascended to sit at the right hand of the Father, all to provide life for us, a beautiful exchange. This exchange means that instead of ashes, we wear beauty; instead of mourning, we have joy, and instead of despair, we wear praise. We are living in the year of the favor of our Lord. It is Christ who plants us. And why does he plant us? To display His glory and splendor. So, what does this mean for us? the pain of loss.

Walk confidently as an oak of righteousness, set free from your captivity, adorned with beauty, joy, and praise, to radiate the glory of the Lord right where He has you.

### **1.) JUST AS THE SPIRIT OF THE SOVEREIGN LORD WAS ON JESUS, THIS SAME SPIRIT LIVES IN US TODAY.**

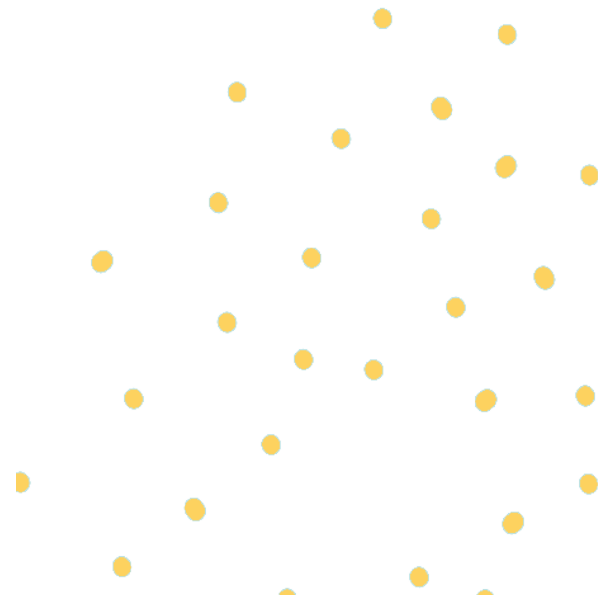
Because Jesus set us free, His Spirit now lives in us. We are living in the year of the Lord's favor. We don't have to walk around brokenhearted, bound, captive, and poor. Jesus Christ has made a way out for us, and the Holy Spirit comforts and provides for us.

### **2.) JESUS PROVIDES THE GREAT EXCHANGE.**

He exchanged the death that we deserve with the gift of life everlasting. The crown of thorns he bore paved the way for the crown of beauty that adorns us as His followers. Instead of sackcloth, ashes, and defeat, we get to walk and operate in the oil of joy! We need not despair; we only must put on the garment of praise that He's given.

### **3.) WE ARE MADE RIGHTEOUS.**

Jesus plants us as strong, sturdy, resilient oaks of righteousness. Why does He do this? It's certainly not for our selfish gain, but all for HIS GLORY. Where has he planted you? What family, neighborhood, job, or community are you a part of? It's not by chance that you are where you are. You are a planting of the Lord, an oak of righteousness designed to draw others to Christ by displaying His glory. Your life should proclaim the good news, the year of the Lord's favor, to the world around you.





### CONVERSATION STARTERS:

- 1.) In what ways has the Lord given you beauty for ashes?
- 2.) How do we put on the garment of praise? What does this look like for you?
- 3.) Where has the Lord planted you, and how can you display His glory there?
- 4.) What is an oak of righteousness?

### CALL TO ACTION:

- 1.) Think about where the Lord has planted you. Spend time in prayer this week asking the Lord to reveal how you can display His glory in those places.
- 2.) Journal the ways the Lord has provided divine exchanges for you. (ex: hope for hopelessness, life for death)

**Be confident and strong as an oak of righteousness, planted of the Lord, to radiate His splendor.**

**MEMORIZE:** “They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendor.  
Isaiah 61:3

