



# Daily Devotions

## The 7 Arrows of Bible Reading



### Day 1

Isaiah 61:1-7

Unlike political leaders, the Messiah alone can speak into existence the dynamics of the new creation (vv. 1-3). Nonetheless, the Messiah Himself graciously opts to employ His people as instruments to bring about blessing and redemption to the world (vv. 4-7). We serve as a team of ambassadors for the Lord's anointed, seeing that His campaign promises come to fruition in the transformed lives of flesh-and-blood people.

God's people were always meant to live as a royal priesthood and holy nation who communicates knowledge of His grace to the world around them (Ex. 19:5-6; 1 Pet. 2:9). As followers of Jesus, we are indwelt with the same Spirit who anointed Him and are charged to proclaim the same good news that He made into reality through His life, death, and resurrection. We represent the One who can uniquely deliver on His promise for a better tomorrow.

- **How does reading Isaiah's description of the Messiah and His mission deepen your hope for the future that Jesus purchased for His people?**

### Day 2

Isaiah 61:8-11

Every human has an innate sense of justice, that our actions matter and that good should be rewarded and evil punished. However, this innate sense and perceived entitlement to justice does not in itself guarantee we will experience justice. In other words, the mere desire for justice does not necessarily mean that we will see it carried out. Yet, we, as God's people, can have confidence that in the end we will see justice for all. Why? Because of the unchanging character of God and His unwavering promises.

After promising to bring about restoration and redemption through His anointed servant in verses 1-7, Isaiah 61 then puts forward the assured grounding of these promises: "For I the Lord love justice; I hate robbery and injustice; I will faithfully reward my people and make a permanent covenant with them" (v. 8, CSB). God made creation and made it good, and in the end, it will be good again. He will settle for nothing less.

- **How can someone's innate desire for justice play a role in our evangelism and in defending our beliefs to others?**

### Day 3

Luke 4:16-22

It's called "the mic drop," when a speaker makes a declarative statement so compelling that it requires a prolonged pause or stage exit for full effect. Dropping the mic, whether physically or figuratively, adds a dramatic stamp to the bold or shocking words. In the synagogue of His hometown, Jesus begins a worship gathering with nothing short of a mic drop (or perhaps more accurately, a "scroll roll").

Imagine how presumptuous, pretentious, and potentially blasphemous Jesus' claim in verse 21 must have sounded to the folks with whom He grew up. Yet, as Luke records, initially this claim alone was not enough to raise their temper to the maximum, a reaction we will see in verses 28-30. Regardless of people's attitudes, Jesus nonetheless proceeded to "drop the mic" in applying Isaiah's messianic prophecy to Himself: "Today as you listen, this Scripture has been fulfilled" (v. 21).

- **How can we avoid committing superficial "mic drops" when it comes to speaking to people about the gospel and its serious implications for their lives?**

### Day 4

Luke 4:23-27

After Jesus' apparent "mic drop", the people's confused and perhaps antagonistic response led Him wisely to point out the basis for their resistance. Jesus was not taken aback at all. Indeed, He proceeded to force the issue by citing an example from redemptive history when Israel previously rejected its own prophets, Elijah and Elisha.

Because of Israel's failure to recognize God's messenger at a given time, He has extended His grace elsewhere, such as in the cases of the widow at Zarephath and Naaman the Syrian. Those of Israelite descent cannot, in other words, presume on God's grace; they are not entitled to it by birth and culture. They must receive God's message with attentive ears and repentant hearts. Likewise, we who are involved in the church today should not presume anything either. We must be careful to heed God's Word whenever it is being proclaimed.

- **What are some illegitimate reasons that sometimes make you hesitant to respond in faith and obedience to God's Word?**

### Day 5

Luke 4:28-31

It takes a village to raise a child. And apparently it takes the same village to carry out a would-be public execution of this same child once He is grown.

Despite knowing what their unbelief would lead them to do (Luke 5:22; 6:8; 9:47; 11:17), Jesus did not hold back in His pronouncements about His messianic identity or about the crowd's capacity to behave as their rebellious ancestors had. Jesus entrusted Himself to the Father's plan for Him, recognizing that He would not die until the appointed time (Luke 22:53; John 7:30). Here, we see God's preservation of Jesus' earthly life helping Him to evade the mob seeking to throw Him from a cliff: "He passed right through the crowd and went on his way" (v. 30, CSB).

We then see Jesus' steadfast trust in the Father evidenced further in verse 31, which mentions almost casually how He continued onward in His ministry. Likewise, we too can trust in God to complete His plans knowing that no harm will come to us unless He permits it (Luke 12:4-7).

- **How does this passage speak to your biggest fear when it comes to telling others about Jesus?**