Beauty for Ashes
Introduction

Isaiah 61:1-3

- The Hebrew word here for beauty is "pe'êr"
- "Pe'êr meaning: fancy head-dress; ornament; turban
- We would probably describe it as a crown
- So God gives us a crown of beauty for ashes.

* Ashes has diffrent meanings in scripture, it either speaks of a heartfelt sorrow for a loss of someone or a heartfelt sorrow for sin, an acknowledgement or a deep humility before God = mourn or mourning
* Mourning refers to a "Penitent Spirit"
  ↳ Matthew 5:4; James 4:9; 2 Corinthians 7:9-11

* Penitent describes feeling or expressing sorrow or regret for sins, wrongdoing or mistakes.
* But with a heartfelt desire to make amends
* To repent and confess with heartfelt sincerity.

- Figuratively speaking ashes is what is left after burning or offering something.
- As believers under the new covenant, we are to "offer" our bodies a living and holy sacrifice. (Romans 12:1)
- What is left after the offering of ourselves to God as a sacrifice is ashes.
- And for this divine exchange to take place we must be able or willing to have ashes to exchange it for beauty. . . . a crown of beauty.

If we are willing to live as living sacrifices, God is able to give us beauty for ashes

Beauty for Ashes
Do you believe?

Isaiah 61:3

- Here in Isaiah God promises that He will exchange mourning, despair and brokenness for joy, praise and beauty.
- It signifies God's ability to transform the ruins of life into santhing beautiful and purposeful
- But do we believe God is able to, or do we believe that God is willing to even?
- That He is able to bring about a Divine Exchange!

- **God is Faithful**

1 Corinthians 1:9 | Deuteronomy 7:9 | 2 Timothy 2:13

↳ God is faithful, and everything we have is because of His grace & faithfulness to the covenant.
↳ God is faithful and He loves to bless His obedient children.
↳ God is faithful even when we are not!!

- **God is Able**

Ephesians 3:20

↳ God is able to do far more
↳ According to the power that is working in us
↳ God is able, but do we believe He is
↳ Are we like plants opening up their pores to recieve the dew & rain or are we rocks?
↳ You cannot get much life and beauty from a rock.

If we start believing that God is faithful & able, He will do exceedingly, above that for us. He will Divinely exchange our ashes for His beauty

Beauty for Ashes
Surrender

- If we believe that God is faithful & He is able, what is it that we believe He is able to do?
- He is able to give us mercy and grace when we approach Him.

2 Corinthians 9:8 | Hebrews 4:16

↳ No matter who you are, you need God's mercy. This is the first thing when approaching the throne. We need pardon, we need forgiveness
↳ And God gives us grace - favor, strength, help, counsel, direction and support to keep us from sin and aid us in everyday life.

- But a lot of christians are commited to God but not surrendered to Him.
- We should fully surrender and then commit

↳ Commitment centers on what you choose to do for God
* Surrender centers on what God wants to do through you.

↳ Commitment you are in charge. You decide the timing, methods and extent of your dedication
* Surrender. God is in charge. It is an unconditional yielding of your rights and agenda, similar to lifting your hands in surrender

↳ Commitment relies on human effort, and can wane when trials arise or when it conflicts with personal desires.
* Surrender is foundational, rather than just adding Jesus to your life, you lay everything down to let Christ lead!!

Galatians 2:20

mourning, grief, repentance, ruin

We cannot hold both, we have to letgo

Beauty for Ashes
Fire & Ashes

Isaiah 61:3

- When we approach the Throne of Grace in full surrender, God bestows mercy and grace upon us
- Also when we go to God with our ashes, He doesn't take it away, sweep it away, He exchanges it for beauty
- The ashes representing our past, shame, brokeness and when we bring those things to God, He exchanges it for a crown/beauty

↳ Why does God allow ashes?
↳ Why does a Good God allow things to burn?

Ashes means something has died, has burned, it is beyond repair

- God often works through the fire
- Throughout scripture fire is used in two key ways:
  1. To consume and judge
  2. To purify and refine
- But every fire has one thing in common, it leaves behind ashes (Malachi 3:2-3)
- God is not a careless flame, He is a Refiner
- He knows exactly how much heat you can handle
- He doesn't set your life ablaze to destroy you
- He allows fire to refine what should stay and burn away what should go

So if your life feels like it's in the fire, your not being destroyed, your being prepared, purified and refined

* Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego walked into the fire not to be burned, but to reveal the fourth Man in the fire!
* The burning bush wasn't consumed, but was used by God to call Moses into purpose
* Elijah called down fire on mount Carmel not to destroy Israel but to reveal the true God!!
* At Pentecost tongues of fire descended, not to harm but to empower the church!

Beauty for Ashes
Healing for Ashes

- So many christians live with pain, sickness and disease
- we believe the report of the world, that cirtain things can not be healed.
- Therefore we accept it and supress the symptoms with medication, and learn to live with it.
- What if Jesus wants to heal us, like completely heal us spirit, soul & body?
- I don't have anything against the medical field/medicine but ultimately I believe God wants to heal, and are able to heal!!

Luke 4:40 | Matthew 9:35 | Matthew 14:14 | Mark 5:34

- Jesus always healed all the sick people
- He also healed those who came to Him in faith
- He is still able and willing to heal us.
- God still wants to heal His people, for the punishment of our peace was upon Jesus (Isaiah 53:5) (Jeremiah 33:6)

How does God heal?

↳ God heals by means of medicine and help the body fix itself, He created us with an immune system.
↳ God heals by the Power of Prayer, anoint, lay hands on sick
↳ God heals emotionally & spiritually. He heals unseen wounds, hurt, grief, pain. He heals the broken heart.
↳ God heals through His Word - like medicine for the soul.
↳ God heals through sudden, instant miracles

He wants to heal us, bring Him your ashes and allow Him to heal you

Beauty for Ashes
Sacrifice & Ashes

- The kind of altars and sacrifices we read about in the Old Testament are no longer necessary today.
- As the sacrifices was made yearly, it was like a memorial being raised up for past sins
- So Jesus Christ came and gave Himself as the one perfect sacrifice on our behalf to wash away all our sins (Hebrews 10:12)

↳ So we are no longer in need of the sacrifice of rams and bulls. Jesus does not need to shed His blood again & again.
↳ That one sacrifice, one time is more than enough
↳ What God requires from us, is to give ourselves totally to Him. (Mark 12:33)
↳ And then to do what pleases Him! (Hebrews 13:15-16)

- Sacrifices took place on an altar. What is your altar?
- Where do you draw strength from?
- Its not a physical place but a place of praise, worship, prayer, meditation, devotion or study of the Word.
- So when you come to that altar, is it always clean or full of ashes (Numbers 4:13)

↳ Our sins are the ashes, ashes are the solid remains of a fire
↳ But the ashes should never be left there
↳ Because it will make it almost impossible to light another fire.
↳ Those ashes could be anger, bitterness, jealousy, strife, fornication, adultery, wickedness ect.
↳ This interfere with us having a deeper relationship with God.

Beauty for Ashes
Restoration for Ashes

- For us to be restored or experience restoration in any area of our lives, we must believe that God is able and willing to restore us.
- Then He can restore to us, and restore us.

What are those area's God can restore?

- God can restore wealth and physical blessings/possesions
  - ↳ The story of Job is a great example of material and physical restoration (Job 42:10)
  - ↳ God rested his wealth, blessing him with twice as much as he had before

- God can restore the harvest and lost years
  - ↳ In the book of Joel God promises to restore the years the locust has eaten (Joel 2:25-26)
  - ↳ God is able to redeem and replenish and restore periods of life that were destroyed.

- God can restore individually and personally
  - ↳ After King David messed up and sinned, he wrote pleading with God to restore him (Psalm 51:12)

- God can restore spiritually
  - ↳ The parable of the Prodigal son shows God's grace to restore a wayward son
  - ↳ When the son return home in repentance, his father does not punish him, but instead restores his sonship. (Luke 15:20-24)

He wants to restore us, bring him your ashes and let him restore you!

Beauty for Ashes
Conclusion

Isaiah 61:3

- In this series we have seen that we can exchange our ashes for a Crown of Beauty.
- God wants to exchange our mourning, hurt, sorrow for His beauty.
- But this starts of with believing that He can & wants to.
- Our believe/Faith should lead us into a surrendered life
  - ↳ a Surrendered life will always produce fire
  - ↳ the fire always falls on the altar
  - ↳ and in the N/T we are the living sacrifice (Rom 12:1-2)
  - ↳ a sacrifice will always leave ashes behind.

- This is the ashes that we take to the Lord
- The ashes of a surrendered, sacrificed life
- The Lord exchanges these ashes - heals & restores us
- And He exchanges it for a crown of beauty.
- This crown of beauty symbolizes a complete transformation from broken, shameful and loss to victory and celebration

You are

Chosen and Favored = Crown of Beauty (1 Peter 2:9)

Heirs of the Promises = Oil of Joy (Galatians 3:29, Romans 8:16-17)

Clothed in Righteousness = Garment of Praise (Isaiah 61:10, Ephesians 6:14)

God wants to give us all of this so that we might be Trees of Righteousness