

**Read: Isaiah 61:1-6**

## "Good News" Messengers

### **Isaiah 61:1-2**

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.

*In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

Amelia and her grandma enjoyed spending time together. They went for walks, put puzzles together, and baked cookies. So, one day when Amelia's parents told her that grandma was ill, Amelia became sad and quiet. She was sitting on her bed alone in her room when her dad came in and saw her sad face.

"Oh, Amelia! Are you sad about Grandma?" he asked. Amelia nodded. "It's just that... Oh Dad," she sobbed, "what can I do? Grandma was always so happy and excited to spend time with me and others she loved. But now she's sick and can't do any of it."

Amelia's dad wrapped his arms around her. "Sweetie, let's make Grandma a card, reminding her how much God loves her and will take care of her. I have a feeling it will lift Grandma's spirits, and it will do your heart good too." As Amelia began to write in the card, she grew excited that she could bring her grandma the good news of God's love.

By the time of our Scripture reading, God's people, the Israelites, had already spent years in a cycle of loving and obeying God, then turning against him and doing what their sinful hearts wanted instead. God gave them many warnings. He even caused enemy armies to conquer and defeat them. In a way, you could say the Israelites were really sick. They weren't ill in their body like Amelia's grandma, but their souls were darkened by sin. God wanted the Israelites to come back to him. In his mercy, God promised to comfort them. He gave these words of prophecy about Jesus, the promised Savior.

Jesus wouldn't be born for another 700 years, but God would not leave his people alone in a sin-darkened world. He sent Isaiah to warn his people, but also to be a messenger of good news for his people. Jesus is this good news. He heals broken hearts and souls. He comforts those who are sad. He frees people from behind the prison bars of sin.

Just like Amelia's grandma needed a messenger to bring her good news and lift her spirits, people today need the good news of salvation to lift their spirits. Listen to God's words, and

then, just as Amelia shared God's love with her grandma, you too can be a messenger and share it with others.

*The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.*

### **Questions for the Younger Children**

- Amelia was sad her grandma was sick. What did she do for her grandma that made her excited?
- Name two people who proclaim the good news about Jesus to you.

### **Questions for Elementary Age Children**

- Why did God send a messenger to the Israelites?
- How can you be God's messenger?

### **Questions for Middle School and Above**

- Evaluate and discuss this statement: We are like the Israelites.
- Name someone in your life who really needs to hear God's comforting message. Discuss as a family how you can share it with them.

### **Closing Prayer:**

Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for sending Jesus to be our Savior from sin. Help us turn from sin. Send your Holy Spirit to comfort us with your gospel and give us courage to be your messengers. Amen.