

Isaiah Chapters 54-55 – A Perpetual Covenant of Peace; An Invitation to Abundant Life!

Monday 7:00pm, H 112 (1st floor, backside of the High School, facing Mac Arthur, near the east corner, adjacent to the High School office), Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – Phil Twente, cell #714 425 9221; email – ptwente@gmail.com For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: www.ptwente.com Click on “Bible Studies” on the left column. References include commentaries by numerous pastor/teachers.

OBSERVATION

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Jesus Shall Reign Where're the Sun – I. Watts; J. Hatton-Hustad Chorale

*Jesus shall reign where'er the sun Does his successive journeys run,
His kingdom stretch from shore to shore Till moons shall wax and wane no more.
For Him shall endless prayer be made, And endless praises crown His head;
His name, like sweet perfume, shall rise With every morning sacrifice.
Let every creature rise and bring Peculiar honors to our King;
Angels descend with songs again, And earth repeat the loud Amen. Amen*

GENERAL OUTLINE OF ISAIAH: Referred to as the “Fifth Gospel” since the third century!

*Possible date of kings reign” - Uzziah, - 792-740; Jotham, - 750-736; Ahaz, - 735-720 Northern Kingdom of Israel falls to Assyria in 722BC; Hezekiah, - 715-699/686; Manasseh – 687-642
Isaiah’s time of prophecy - About a minimum of 40 years and possibly more than 60 years!
In the tenth year of Nabopolassar (616 BC) the Babylonians defeated the Assyrian army.
Cyrus takes Babylon. In October (539 BC), the Persian king Cyrus took Babylon.*

ISAIAH 40:1-66:24

The prophecies of chapters 1-39 addressed Judah in her situation during Isaiah's ministry (739 B.C. until c. 686 B.C.). The prophecies of chapters 40-66 address Judah as though the prophesied Babylonian captivity (Isa 39:5-7) were already a present reality, though that captivity did not begin until 605-586 B.C. The words "There is no peace," says the Lord, 'for the wicked'" (Isa 48:22; Isa 57:21) signal the divisions of this section into three parts: chapters 40-48 (Comfort of Jehovah), chapters 49-57 (Salvation of Jehovah) and chapters 58-66 (Glory of Jehovah). Four Messianic Prophecies-Songs of the Suffering Servant: #1 Chapter 42:1-9 -Servant of Jehovah-Jesus; #2 Chapter 49:1-13-Servant of God; Savior of the World; #3 Chapter 50:4-9-Jehovah Adonai-Humility of Rejected Prophet; #4 Chapter 52:13-53:12-Suffering Servant-Jehovah’s Servant-Sin Bearer.

ISAIAH 54 – This chapter is about when God once again takes Israel back as His bride. Israel that has been barren for so many years. Israel that has been forsaken by God is going to again, be accepted and received by God, and come into a marvelous glory, when Jesus, the Messiah returns, and establishes His kingdom. Jerusalem once again becomes the center of the earth, and the rejoicing of the world. This chapter deals with God returning again His favor, His blessings on Israel, the wife that was set aside, but is now received back again. (Micah 4:1-3)

ISAIAH 55 - As we go into chapter fifty-five, we are continuing in this glorious kingdom age! – An invitation to receive the glory of the LORD’s restoration.

Isaiah – Bible Timeline

739 BC	Isaiah Complains of Zion's Corruption	Isaiah 1 - 5
739 BC	Isaiah's Vision and Commission	Isaiah 6
735 BC	Isaiah's Prophecy of Immanuel	Isaiah 7
734 BC	Uriah/Zechariah Verification	Isaiah 8
730 BC	Isaiah Prophecies a Child Is Born	Isaiah 9
730 BC	Isaiah Prophecies Judgments Upon Israel	Isaiah 9:8
730 BC	Isaiah Prophecies Judgment on Assyria	Isaiah 10
730 BC	Isaiah Prophecies The Root of Jesse	Isaiah 11
730 BC	Isaiah's Joyful Thanksgiving	Isaiah 12
725 BC	Isaiah Prophecies against the Nations	Isaiah 13 - 22
725 BC	Isaiah's Valley of Vision	Isaiah 22
725 BC	Isaiah's Burden of Tyre	Isaiah 23
725 BC	Devastation on the Earth	Isaiah 24
725 BC	Isaiah's Songs of Praise	Isaiah 25 - 27
725 BC	Isaiah's Further Warnings	Isaiah 28 - 32
725 BC	Isaiah Prophecies a King Shall Reign	Isaiah 32
725 BC	Isaiah Declares God's Judgments	Isaiah 33, 34
725 BC	Isaiah Declares the Joyful Will Flourish in Zion	Isaiah 35
712 BC	Hezekiah's Illness and Healing	2 Kings 20, Isaiah 38
711 BC	Hezekiah Shows Treasures	2 Kings 20:12, Isaiah 39
711 BC	Isaiah Prophecies Captivity and Restoration	Isaiah 40 - 66
701 BC	Sennacherib Threatens Jerusalem	2 Kings 18, Isaiah 36, 2 Chron. 32
701 BC	Hezekiah's Prayer	2 Kings 19, Isaiah 37

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OBSERVATION

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

The Eternal Covenant of Peace – He Shall See His Seed; The Great Growth of Restored Israel:

Isa 54:1 "Sing, O barren, (Israel's future glory!) *You who have not borne! Break forth into singing, and cry aloud, You who have not labored with child! For more are the children of the desolate Than the children of the married woman," says the LORD.*

Isa 54:2 "Enlarge the place of your tent, And let them stretch out the curtains of your dwellings (constancy, prosperity, expansion); *Do not spare; Lengthen your cords, And strengthen your stakes.*

Isa 54:3 *For you shall expand to the right and to the left, And your descendants will inherit the nations (goy, Gentile nations), And make the desolate cities inhabited.*

The Fear, Shame, Reproach, and Confusion Taken Away:

Isa 54:4 "Do not fear, for you will not be ashamed; Neither be disgraced, for you will not be put to shame; For you will forget the shame of your youth, And will not remember the reproach of your " widowhood anymore.

Isa 54:5 *For your Maker is your husband, The LORD of hosts is His name; And your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel; He is called the God of the whole earth.*

Isa 54:6 *For the LORD has called you Like a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, Like a youthful wife when you were refused," Says your God.*

vs. 1-3: Speaking to Israel as His wife, the LORD says, Israel will be restored like a barren woman who bears many children. *Sing, O barren, you who have not borne:* In ancient Israel, the *barren* woman carried an enormous load of shame and disgrace. Here, the LORD likens captive Israel to a *barren* woman who can now *sing* - because now *more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married woman*. The Babylonian exile and captivity meant not only oppression for Israel, but it meant shame, disgrace, and humiliation. God promises a glorious release from the exile and captivity, as well as from the shame, disgrace, and humiliation. The Apostle Paul quotes this in Gal 4:24-31, of two *Jerusalems* – that *which now is* and *the Jerusalem above is free*- and with reference to the miraculous “birth” of those under the New Covenant. Paul likely intended the phrase *more are the children* to also indicate that the New Covenant children would outnumber the Old Covenant children. *Enlarge the place of your tent:* The curse and shame of barrenness would be so broken, that fruitful Israel would have to expand their living space. This would be comforting and strengthening to the returning Babylonian exiles, who felt themselves small in number and weak. (Is. 49:19-20; 14:2; 49:22-23)

vs. 4-6 *Do not fear (Is. 41:10).* Israel will be restored like a widow that is rescued from her reproach. *And will not remember the reproach of your widowhood anymore:* Just as God compared the disgrace of Israel to the shame of barrenness, now He compares their humiliation to the *reproach* of *widowhood*. Here, the LORD promises rescue from Israel's shame. *ashamed . . . disgraced . . . put to shame* represent three similar Hebrew verbs sharing the idea of disappointed hopes, the embarrassment of expecting and announcing one thing and then reaping another. *For your Maker is your husband:* Israel may have been regarded as forsaken as a widow, but the LORD promises to stand in the place of her *husband*. **This principle applies to this day to hurting women, who have taken this promise for themselves.** Forsaken by or of a husband, they have found much comfort in God's promise that He would be a *husband* to them, even if all others forsook them. The principle is true for all of us! God will indeed supply and meet our emotional needs, and rescue us from our disgrace and shame, when others have forsaken us. **The LORD of hosts is His name:** To comfort and strengthen His people, God reminds them of how glorious of a Savior He is. He is their *Maker*, He is the *LORD of hosts*, He is their *Redeemer*, He is the *Holy One of Israel*, and *He is called the God of the whole earth*. Not only does God supply a husband, but a great one - Himself! The promise that the LORD will meet our needs when others forsake never leaves us to a place of less best. The LORD God can be a **greater** husband than any man can be, which is something for **single** women to remember and something that no **married** woman should forget. No earthly husband can ever fulfill every single need that the great Heavenly Husband can! (Jer. 3:14-18; Zech. 14:9; Rom. 3:29)” *Like a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, Like a youthful wife when you were refused," (Is. 62:4-5)*

vs. 1-3 This is a most encouraging example to us of God's sure promises. Being outside time and space and knowing all things, God can promise Israel great and wonderful promises for their future even though they haven't even gone into Babylonian captivity and are being told that now there will be bad times now and ahead. We too, can and must stand on His sure future promises for us as His children! Mat 6:10 "Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven."

vs. 4-6 We have another promise here. Hurting women (and men) who have been forsaken by a husband (or wife) can find much comfort in God's promise that He would be a *husband* (or wife) to them, even if all others forsook them. The principle is true for all of us! God will indeed supply and meet our emotional needs, and rescue us from our disgrace and shame, when others have forsaken us.

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OBSERVATION

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

A Mere Moment and a Little Wrath:

Isa 54:7 "For a mere moment I have forsaken you, But with great mercies I will gather you.

Isa 54:8 With a little wrath I hid My face from you for a moment; But with everlasting kindness I will have mercy on you," Says the LORD, your Redeemer.

The Immovable Certainty of the Future Salvation:

Isa 54:9 "For this is like the waters of Noah to Me; For as I have sworn That the waters of Noah would no longer cover the earth, So have I sworn That I would not be angry with you, nor rebuke you.

Isa 54:10 For the mountains shall depart And the hills be removed, But My kindness shall not depart from you, Nor shall My covenant of peace be removed," Says the LORD, who has mercy on you.

Jehovah's Confession With Forsaken Wife

Isa 54:11 "O you afflicted one, Tossed with tempest, and not comforted, Behold, I will lay your stones with colorful gems, And lay your foundations with sapphires.

Isa 54:12 I will make your pinnacles of rubies, Your gates of crystal, And all your walls of precious stones.

The Inhabitants of Restored Jerusalem

Isa 54:13 All your children shall be taught by the LORD, And great shall be the peace of your children.

Isa 54:14 In righteousness you shall be established; You shall be far from oppression, for you shall not fear; And from terror, for it shall not come near you.

Isa 54:15 Indeed they shall surely assemble, but not because of Me. Whoever assembles against you shall fall for your sake.

vs. 7-8 God explains His restoration of Israel. *For a mere moment I have forsaken you, But with great mercies I will gather you.* : The forsaken is in the present tense; the great mercies are in the future tense. God never really forsook Israel; yet He recognizes that they felt forsaken. God says, “for a mere moment I allowed you to feel that I have forsaken you. But they are real, and give Israel cause to set their hope and trust in the LORD, though they feel forsaken at the moment. a mere moment. It has been two thousand years! But, with God, a day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years is as a day. When you consider two thousand years with eternity, and it’s all a matter of degrees. Two thousand years compared with eternity is absolutely nothing! It’s just a breath! It’s just a moment! So, “For a mere moment I have forsaken you”, but as He receives them back, “with great mercies I will gather you.” (*2 Cor. 4:17; Is. 43:4-7;*) *I hid My face from you for a moment; but with everlasting kindness I will have mercy on you:* What a contrast is between the mere moment of feeling forsaken and the everlasting nature of the kindness that will come! (*Is. 55:3; Jer. 31:3*)

vs. 9-10 A promise to never forsake Israel. *For this is like the waters of Noah to Me:* Just as God promised that the flood waters of Noah’s day would not cover the earth forever- the perpetuity of the Noahic covenant- so will His anger recede from Israel. (*Gen. 8:21; 9:11-17*) *For the mountains shall depart . . . but My kindness shall not depart from you:* Flood waters recede, and mountains do not. But even if the mountains shall depart, even if the hills be removed, the kindness of the LORD to His people will never depart from you. The LORD’s kindness is more certain than the mountains and the hills, and His covenant of peace is more sure. (*Is.59:21; 61.8*)

vs. 11-15 Promises of prosperity, peace, and protection. *O you afflicted one, tossed with tempest and not comforted:* God cares about the afflicted one. He cares about the one tossed with tempest. He cares about the one who is not comforted. When someone is in this place - afflicted, tossed, and not comforted - it is easy for them to believe God doesn’t care. But He does, and He gives precious promises to give strength. *Behold, I will lay your stones with colorful gems . . . sapphires . . . rubies . . . crystal:* God will lavish riches upon the hurting and afflicted, who feel poor, no matter how much money they have in the bank. God promises to make the afflicted truly rich. (*Rev. 21:18, 19*) *All your children shall be taught by the LORD, and great shall be the peace of your children: (Jer. 31:34; Ps. 119:165)* When we are afflicted, tossed, and not comforted, we also feel bad for our children. God gives precious assurance not only for us, but also quiets our fears for our children. *In righteousness you shall be established . . . you shall not fear . . . whoever assembles against you shall fall for your sake:* God promises those who are afflicted, tossed, and not comforted will find protection and security in Him. (*Is. 41:11-16*)

vs. 7-8 The contrast is between the mere moment of feeling forsaken and the everlasting nature of the kindness that will come. It’s somewhat similar in our lives here on earth. When we feel tried and forsaken, we should recognize that it is just for a mere moment, and the everlasting blessing will certainly come.

vs. 9-10 Another future promise by God to Israel! His kindness to us, also as His believing children, is more certain than the mountains and the hills, and His covenant of peace is more sure.

vs. 11-15 Again, we believers can receive these promises made by God to Israel! When we are afflicted, tossed, and not comforted, we feel bad not just for ourselves, but also for our children. God gives precious assurance not only for us, but also quiets our fears for our children. *In righteousness you shall be established . . . you shall not fear . . . whoever assembles against you shall fall for your sake:* God promises those who are afflicted, tossed, and not comforted will find protection and security in Him.

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OBSERVATION

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Isa 54:16 "Behold, I have created the blacksmith Who blows the coals in the fire, Who brings forth an instrument (weapon) for his work; And I have created the spoiler (destroyer, like Assyria, antichrist) to destroy.
Isa 54:17 No weapon formed against you shall prosper, And every tongue which rises against you in judgment You shall condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, And their righteousness is from Me," Says the LORD.

Kind Invitation to Salvation in Christ

Isa 55:1 "Ho! Everyone (a universal, all-inclusive) who thirsts (intense desire; sense of want), Come to the waters; And you who have no money, Come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk Without money (absolute freeness) and without price.

Isa 55:2 Why do you spend money for what is not bread, And your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, And let your soul delight itself in abundance.

vs. 16-17 The sovereign God - who *created the blacksmith*, who *created the spoiler to destroy* - also has the power to protect. He can promise that *no weapon formed against you shall prosper. (Is. 17:12-14)* Whatever weapon is raised against God's people is destined to be destroyed itself. God will ultimately even protect His people from criticism; indeed, *every tongue which rises against you in judgment you shall condemn.* The LORD will not allow the *weapon formed against* His servants to *prosper*. Sometimes this means the LORD takes the *weapon* out of the hand of the enemy of His servants. Sometimes it means that God allows the *weapon* to strike, but brings a greater good out of it than the pain of the immediate blow. In allowing this, God will not allow the *weapon to prosper*, but transforms the violent sword into a trowel for building His kingdom. The *tongue which rises against you* can really hurt. It's been said that Satan leaves no stone unturned against the Church. He uses not simply the hand; but more often a sharper weapon, the tongue. We can withstand a blow more easily than we can endure an insult. There is a great power in the tongue. We can rise from a blow which knocks us to the ground; but we cannot so easily recover from slander that cuts our character to the core. Yet, we can trust in the LORD's triumph, so the more accusers, the more acquittals; the more slander, the more honor; therefore, the enemy may slander us as much as he pleases. *their righteousness is from Me (Is. 45:24-25)*

vs. 1-2 An invitation to be richly fed. *Ho!* The prophet calls out, loud and clear, to all that can hear. This is an important announcement, and is therefore prefaced with this unique call. *Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters:* It is not an invitation to *everyone* - but *everyone who thirsts*. Only those who thirst will *come to the waters*. If we aren't thirsty for what the LORD can give us, then we will never *come* to His waters. *(Rev. 21:6; 22:17).* Jesus may have had this passage from Isaiah in mind when He cried out, *If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. (Joh 7:37)* *You who have no money, come, buy, and eat:* Those who do thirst, and answer the LORD's invitation, don't need to bring money. Their money won't really do them any good. They can simply bring their trust and faith and receive what God has to give them. *Rev 22:17. Water . . . wine* (feasts, emblematic of salvation) . . . *milk:* It's all free. It isn't that the *entrance* into the Christian life is free, and then we must be charged to *advance* in the Christian life. It's all free; our growth is just as much a gift of grace as our salvation. *(Matt. 13:44) Why do you spend money for what is not bread, and your wages for what does not satisfy? In* His invitation, God asks His people to ask themselves - "Why do I spend money for what can't *satisfy*?" This is a remarkably relevant question, in light of all the things we can pour our time and money and effort into - things which will never satisfy the way the LORD can satisfy. *(Jn. 6:27) Listen diligently to Me, and eat what is good, and let your soul delight itself in abundance:* The invitation is clear. The offer is made, the provision is made, and everything is available - but we must still do some things. First, we must *listen diligently*, which is required to receive God's promises. That takes time, attention, and effort to *listen diligently*, and some aren't willing to do this. Secondly, we must *eat what is good*. Discernment must be used to choose *what is good*, and then *eat* that. Many just simply eat whatever spiritual meal is set before them, without taking care to see that it *is good*. Thirdly, we must *let your soul delight itself in abundance*. Even when we *listen* and even *eat what is good*, we still must *let our soul delight itself in abundance*. You can sit down at a great spiritual meal, but by a stubborn or bad attitude, simply **not let your soul delight itself in abundance.** *Psa 81:10.*

vs. 16-17 This promise from the LORD specifically says, *this is the heritage of the servants of the LORD.* Are you a *servant of the LORD*? If so, you can rest easy in His promised protection. The LORD also says that this is a promise for those whose *righteousness is from Me - from the LORD Himself - and not from themselves.* When we understand that our righteousness is really from the LORD, we should be much more comfortable in letting the LORD protect our righteousness

vs. 1-2 A money on temporal things which can never satisfy! - great warning here for us not to spend for that which satisfies not (55:2). How true this is of man today! We are spending our money so often for things that do not and cannot really satisfy. We get temporary satisfaction many times, but never permanent. The only true lasting satisfaction comes from a true, meaningful relationship with God, which is free to us, costing God a tremendous price. But it's free to you through Jesus Christ. Therefore, the question, "Why do you spend money for what is not bread, And your wages for what does not satisfy?"

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OBSERVATION

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Isa 55:3 Incline your ear, and come to Me. Hear, and your soul shall live; And I will make an everlasting covenant with you— The sure mercies of David. Christ the King, a Witness and Commander of the Nations
Isa 55:4 Indeed I have given him as a witness to the people, A leader and commander for the people.
Isa 55:5 Surely you shall call a nation you do not know, And nations who do not know you shall run to you, Because of the LORD your God, And the Holy One of Israel; For He has glorified you."

vs. 3-5 An invitation to be wonderfully led. ***Incline your ear:*** The thought continues from the idea of *let your soul delight itself in abundance*. To genuinely “feast” off the Word, one must consciously *incline* their ear towards what God will say. This demonstrates why two people can listen to the same message, and one benefit and the other not. Often, the one who did not benefit simply did not *incline* their ear to the LORD. ***Hear, and your soul shall live:*** There is great benefit in inclining your ear to God!. When we do it, we have life for our soul. ***And I will make an everlasting covenant with you - the sure mercies of David:*** For the one who will listen to the LORD, God promises a covenant. From Isaiah’s perspective, this covenant is *still in the future (I will make)*. The covenant is also characterized by *the sure mercies of David (Ps. 89:28, 29, 35; Acts 13:34)*. As well, the *mercies of David* are *sure*. They are certain. God never gave up on David, never stopped showing him mercy. We can count on God when He promises to us the *sure mercies of David. I have given him as a witness to the people, a leader and a commander for the people:* God promises the blessing of *good and wise leadership* as a part of His *sure mercies*. God gave David and his remarkable leadership as a gift to Israel; here God promises that He will keep giving this gift according to the pattern shown in David. David was a *witness* in the sense that he had a real relationship, a real experience with God, and could speak to Israel as a *witness* of what he had seen and heard in that relationship with God. Notice that David was a *witness to the people*. A witness **to**, not **of** the people. David did not lead through popularity polls or just giving the people what they wanted. He witnessed something from God, and he gave testimony of it **to the people**. David was a *leader* for Israel, leading them spiritually, politically, and militarily. He led both by his godly example and his shepherd’s heart. Notice that David was a *leader* and a *commander for the people*. Not a leader and a commander **of** the people, but **for the people**. He led with a shepherd’s heart that genuinely desired God’s best for the people. It’s most interesting that David is used here as God’s prototype for a leader, in that David’s reign can be seen as quite troubled. He came to the throne of Israel through much struggle and difficulty. He slipped into terrible scandal, marked by murder and adultery. There was incest, rape, and murder among his own children. And his reign was marred by an ugly civil war, in which his own son almost deposed him. Yet David is here lifted up as a wonderful leader of God’s people! This shows that David’s heart after God meant more than outward success, comfort, and ease. It also shows that God’s best and most effective don’t necessarily have it easy. David was a *commander* for Israel. Even with his tender shepherd’s heart, his leadership was bold and out-front. Because he had a sense of the heart of God, being a man after God’s own heart (***1Sa 13:14***), he could boldly lead God’s people. These prophecies are fulfilled **spiritually** when God gives wonderful, David-like leadership to His people. They will be fulfilled **ultimately** when David - literal King David in his resurrection body - reigns over Israel in the millennium, the 1,000-year reign of Jesus Christ over this earth. (***Jer. 30:9; Eze 34:23-25; Dan. 9:25***) We have indications that as God’s people rule with Jesus over the millennial earth, people will be entrusted with geographical regions according to their faithfulness (***Luk 19:12-19***). It seems that David’s glorious portion will be to rule over Israel. ***Surely you shall call a nation you do not know, and nations who do not know you shall run to you:*** Is this addressed to Israel, or to David, as the leader and commander of God’s people? Possibly both. Certainly, its ultimate fulfillment is in the millennium, when the nations will flock to Israel (***Isa 60:5, 9***). ***Because of the LORD your God, and the Holy One of Israel; for He has glorified you:*** Why do the nations flock to David and/or Israel? Because the LORD has lifted them up, in accordance with His blessings of restoration.

vs. 3-5 God showed His great mercy to David; not only by sparing David’s life when he was guilty of murder and adultery, but also in blessings and preserving and guiding David every day of his life. If God promises us the same mercy He showed to David, we are blessed indeed. We can count on God when He promises to us the *sure mercies of David. I have given him as a witness to the people, a leader and a commander for the people:* God promises the blessing of *good and wise leadership* as a part of His *sure mercies*. God gave David and his remarkable leadership as a gift to Israel; here God promises that He will keep giving this gift according to the pattern shown in David – *everlasting covenant; forever mercies!*

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OBSERVATION

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APPLICATION

The Call to Sinners to Come to Christ

Isa 55:6 Seek the LORD while He may be found, Call upon Him while He is near.

Isa 55:7 Let the wicked forsake his way, And the unrighteous man his thoughts; Let him return to the LORD, And He will have mercy on him; And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon.

The Lord's Thoughts, Ways and Words

Isa 55:8 "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," says the LORD.

Isa 55:9 "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.

vs. 6-7 An invitation to be forgiven. *Seek the LORD while He may be found: (Is. 49:8; 2 Cor. 6:2)* The prophet impresses a sense of urgency on God's people. "This is the time. God can be found **now**. Seek Him **now**." It isn't that God is hidden, and can only be found now. It is that He can only be found when our hearts are inclined to look for Him, and that inclination itself is a gift from God! We must receive the gift, and make the most of it while we have it. **Not seeking**, and failing to *call upon Him while He is near*, means we will not receive the blessings He promises. *Let the wicked forsake his way*: The prophet impresses the need for **repentance** among God's people. Repentance is simply turning around our **way** - turning from our own way, turning unto God's **way**. Simply, this is what it means to **return to the LORD**, and we can never walk on God's way until we *forsake* our own way. The LORD's glorious restoration works in and through our repentance. Isaiah makes an important point when he says, *and the unrighteous man his thoughts*. Wickedness may be demonstrated by our actions (our way); but **unrighteousness** can be found in our very **thoughts**. The battleground for a righteous walk with the LORD is often found in our minds, in our **thoughts**. *(Is. 59:7)* Paul knew this also when he wrote of *bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ - (2Co 10:5)* and not be conformed to the world, but transformed - *Rom 12:2* *And He will have mercy on him*: What a glorious promise! When we turn to the LORD, *He will have mercy on us!* In fact, *He will abundantly pardon!* *(Jer. 3:12)* The problem is never that we turn to the LORD and find that He rejects us. The problem is that we fail to **return to the LORD!**

vs. 8-9 The glorious ways of the LORD. A reminder of the difference and distance between God and man. *For My thoughts are not your thoughts*: God doesn't **think** the way we do. We get into a lot of trouble when we expect that He should think as we do. Because we are made in the image of God, we can relate to God's **thoughts**, but we cannot master them. *Nor are your ways My ways*: God doesn't **act** the way we do. He does things **His way**, and His **ways** are often not our **ways**. We get into a lot of trouble when we expect that God should act the way we do. How far is the distance between God's thoughts and ours? How far is the distance between His ways and ours? The distance is a great *as the heavens are higher than the earth*. Gloriously, in Jesus Christ, heaven has come down to earth, and we can have our thoughts and ways transformed to be **more like** God's thoughts and ways. This is what it means *to be conformed to the image of His Son (Rom 8:29)*. The distance will never be closed; God will always be God, and we will always be human. But when our salvation is complete, and we are united with the LORD in glory, the distance will be as close as is possible. *(Ps. 103:11-12)*

vs. 6-7 For the believers, here is an invitation to pray with assurance of answers. Two things required are to seek and to inquire of **Him and to call, to pray to Him. Do it now while He may be found, while He is near, as there is a day coming when He will be afar off and not be found. For the unbeliever, let them repent and reform, and their sins shall be pardoned. Two things are involved in repentance. First is to turn from sin; to forsake it, to leave it, Yet this is not all, the second is to return to the Lord; to return to Him as our God, our sovereign Lord. If we do so, God will have mercy. Though our sins have been very great and many, and though we have often backslidden and are still prone to offend, yet God will repeat His pardon, and welcome even backsliding children that return to Him in sincerity.**

vs. 8-9 If we look up to heaven, we find God's counsels there high and transcendent, His thoughts and ways infinitely above ours, so His mercies extended in verses 6-7 are beyond our thoughts and understanding. It's ridiculous for us to ever tell God what to do. **The only logical thing, I can say is, Lord, as I talk to You, I realize You see things I don't and see things I can't see! Therefore, may Your will be done!**

Isaiah Chapters 54-55 – A Perpetual Covenant of Peace; An Invitation to Abundant Life!

Monday 7:00pm, H 112 (1st floor, backside of the High School, facing Mac Arthur, near the east corner, adjacent to the High School office), Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – Phil Twente, cell #714 425 9221; email – ptwente@gmail.com For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: www.ptwente.com Click on “Bible Studies” on the left column. References include commentaries by numerous pastor/teachers.

OBSERVATION

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

*Isa 55:10 "For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, And do not return there, But water the earth, And make it bring forth and bud, That it may give seed to the sower And bread to the eater,
Isa 55:11 So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.*

Israel's Restoration and Its Results

*Isa 55:12 "For you shall go out with joy, And be led out with peace; The mountains and the hills Shall break forth into singing before you, And all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.
Isa 55:13 Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress tree, And instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree; And it shall be to the LORD for a name, For an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off."*

vs. 10-11 The glorious operation of the Word of God. *For as the rain comes down:* Using the figure of the water cycle, the LORD illustrates the essential principle that His word *shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please.* Rain and snow come down from heaven, and *do not return* before serving their purpose on earth (they *water the earth, and make it bring forth and bud*). The rain and snow eventually do return to heaven, but **not** before accomplishing their purpose on earth. Even so, God's Word, when He sends it down from heaven, does not return to Him **void**. Instead, it always fulfills His purpose on earth. *Make it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater:* The use of these pictures to illustrate the operation of God's Word shows that God's Word brings forth **fruit**. It also shows that the fruit has many different applications. The same grain that gives *seed to the sower* also gives *bread to the eater*. *It shall accomplish what I please:* God's Word has something to *accomplish*. God doesn't just speak to hear Himself talk. His Word is not empty, or lacking in power. This also means that God's Word has a **purpose**. He didn't speak in unfathomable mysteries just to blow our minds, or confuse us, or leave things up to any possible interpretation. When God speaks, He speaks to *accomplish* a purpose. (Is. 45:22-23) *It shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it:* God's Word doesn't "barely" get the job done. It *shall prosper* in the purpose God has for it. It is rich and full of life. **God's Word always succeeds, and always fulfills God's purpose.** This doesn't mean that it doesn't matter how God's Word is presented. Sometimes a terrible sermon has been excused by saying, "God's Word doesn't return void." The principle is clear and true from this passage of Isaiah, but by the preacher's poor preparation or preaching, there has been little of God's Word put forth. The preacher can ignore, dilute, or obscure God's Word so that little goes forth. When little goes forth, that little will succeed - but **how much better if more of the whole counsel of God** went forth to succeed!

vs. 12-13 The joy and blessing of restoration. *For you shall go out with joy, and be led out with peace:* When God's people turn to Him, listen to Him, and His Word does His work in them, *joy* and *peace* are always the result. The joy is so great, that even the *mountains and the hills*, and the *trees of the field* join in! *Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress tree:* Where before there was barrenness and reminders of the curse (*the thorn*), now there will be beautiful and useful trees. The picture is clear; in His glorious work of restoration, God takes away the barren and the cursed, and brings forth beauty and fruit. *It shall be to the LORD for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off:* When the LORD restores, all the work is done for His *name*, and for His glory. When the LORD restores, the work is secure; it is *an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off*. The reference here is to all that had been said in the chapter. **The gift of the Messiah; the universal offer of the gospel; the bestowing of pardon; the turning of the wicked unto God; and the great and salutary changes produced by the gospel, would all be a memorial of the benevolence and glory of the LORD!**

vs. 10-11 Just as the rain gives life to the dry and the dusty, His *Word* gives life to whomever partakes of it! His *Word* will never return void. Therefore; we are to share it with everyone, even though they don't believe or may not receive it. We have God's promise that His *Word* will have an effect and will accomplish that which He sends it to do!

vs. 12-13 *While* this prophetic promise is directed to Israel with a number of fulfillment times, it certainly will be completed in full at the Second Coming of Jesus. For us believers, Gospel grace will set those at liberty that were in bondage to sin and Satan. They shall go out and be led forth. Christ shall make them free, and then they shall be free indeed. It will fill those with joy that were melancholy. It will make a great change in men's characters. Those that were as thorns and briers, good for nothing but the fire, shall become graceful and useful as the fir-tree and the myrtle-tree. In all this God shall be glorified. It shall be to him for a name, by which He will be made known and praised, and by it, believers shall be encouraged. It shall be for an everlasting sign of God's favor to us, assuring us that, though it may for a time be clouded, it shall never be cut off. The covenant of grace is an everlasting covenant; for the present blessings of it are signs of everlasting ones.

Isaiah Chapters 54-55 – A Perpetual Covenant of Peace; An Invitation to Abundant Life!

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OBSERVATION

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

ISAIAH 54

- *The Eternal Covenant of Peace – He Shall See His Seed; The Great Growth of Restored Israel: (vs. 1-3)*
- *The Fear, Shame, Reproach, and Confusion Taken Away: (vs. 4-6)*
- *A Mere Moment and a Little Wrath: (vs. 7-8)*
- *The Immovable Certainty of the Future Salvation: (vs. 9-10)*
- *Jehovah’s Confession With Forsaken Wife (vs. 11-12)*
- *The Inhabitants of Restored Jerusalem (vs. 13-17)*

ISAIAH 55

- *The Compassion of the Lord: (vs. 1-3)*
- *Christ the King, a Witness and Commander of the Nations: (vs. 4-5)*
- *The Call to Sinners to Come to Christ: (vs. 6-7)*
- *The Lord’s Thoughts, Ways and Words: (vs. 8-11)*
- *Israel’s Restoration and Its Results: (vs. 12-13)*