

Thursday Evening Bible Study
Series: The Book of Isaiah

Teaching Summary for Isaiah 55: part 2

Isaiah 55

Overview

The theme of chapters 49-57 is the Person and work of the Servant of the LORD, who will bring salvation to Israel and the nations.

Chapters 54-55 proclaim the salvation won by the Servant of the Lord (Isaiah 52:13 – 53:12).

The tone of these chapters is one of great joy and assurance. Together, these two chapters constitute one of the most beautiful texts in the Bible.

Chapter 55 is the *invitation* from the LORD to the nation of Israel - and by extension all men and women - to come and partake of the glorious salvation He has prepared for them through the death of the Servant – the Lord Jesus Christ. This salvation is received as a gracious gift through faith in the word of the LORD.

Isaiah Chapter 55

Chapter 55 is the invitation to listen to the word of the LORD, change one's heart and ways, and return to the Lord to receive the salvation blessings promised in chapter 54. Chapter 55 is addressed first to the remnant of Israel in the last days, and then to all the people in the world. See Isaiah 49:6-7. At that time, the nations of the world will stream to Jerusalem for their share in the blessings of the New Covenant. See Zechariah 8:23 and 14:16-17.

Last week, we examined the connections between Chapter 54 and Chapter 55. They included joy and singing, the coming of peace, the LORD's compassion and love, His covenant, and a new relationship with the nations.

The issues no longer center around any difficulties that the nation of Israel was enduring.

Instead, the focus is on

- the free food and water available (both literal and symbolic),
- an everlasting covenant,
- forgiveness of sins,
- joy,
- and the fulfillment of the LORD's promises.

These are the promises the LORD will fulfill for all people living in the Messianic kingdom, where the Messiah, the Servant of the LORD, will reign as King.

Let's now **read chapter 55** together.

Here is a high-level outline of Chapter 55, courtesy of Gary Smith, Isaiah 40-66 of the New American Commentary:

	Subject
<i>Verses 1-5</i>	Invitation to participate in God's provisions and covenant
<i>Verses 6-13</i>	Invitation to repent and return, and see the LORD fulfill His word

Each of these paragraphs begins with a series of invitations.

In verses 1-3, the LORD invites His people to listen to Him, come to Him, and eat what He freely offers to them.

In verses 6-7, the LORD invites people individually to seek Him and call upon Him. He implores the wicked man to forsake his thoughts and ways, and return to the LORD, who will have compassion on him.

Verse 55:3b speaks of the everlasting covenant, while verse 55:13b points to an everlasting sign.

The final paragraph, 55:6-13, serves as an epilogue (conclusion) matching the prologue of **40:1-11** at the beginning of the long literary unit of chapters 40-55. See also **Isaiah 52:7-12**.

Now, the people understand how their sins will be forgiven. See **Isaiah 40:2; 53:1-12; and 55:3, 6-7**.

Now it's clear that should no longer fear the foreign nations. Indeed, many from the nations will come to acknowledge and worship the God of Israel, **Isaiah 40:5-7; 45:20-25; 52:10-15; 55:5**.

Now they know that God will do what He has declared, **Isaiah 40:8b; 55:11**.

As a result, they know that the good news - the redemption of sinful Zion - is something they ought to sing and rejoice about! See **Isaiah 40:9-11; 52:7-9; 54:1; 55:12-13**.

The final verses of chapter 55 are in the form of a hymn. Isaiah 55:12-13 mark the end of a literary unit. We have seen these hymns earlier, particularly those that marked the end of a Servant Song. See **Isaiah 12:1-6; 42:10-13; 44:23; 49:13; and 52:9-10**. Those that immediately follow a Servant Song are in *italics*.

Next week we will begin our verse-by-verse study of Isaiah 55.