

AN INVITATION TO THE UNSAVED

BIBLE TEXT : Isaiah 55:1-13.

LESSON 360 Senior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (John 4:14).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Isaiah 55:1-13

¹ Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

² Wherefore do ye spend money for *that which is* not bread? and your labour for *that which* satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye *that which is* good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.

³ Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, *even* the sure mercies of David.

⁴ Behold, I have given him *for* a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people.

⁵ Behold, thou shalt call a nation *that* thou knowest not, and nations *that* knew not thee shall run unto thee because of the LORD thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel; for he hath glorified thee.

⁶ Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near:

⁷ Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

⁸ For my thoughts *are* not your thoughts, neither *are* your ways my ways, saith the LORD.

⁹ For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways

BIBLE REFERENCES:

I A Universal Call to the Thirsty

1. The spiritual thirst of any individual will be satisfied freely, Isaiah 55:1;

Matthew 5:6

⁶ Blessed *are* they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

John 4:14

¹⁴ But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

Revelation 22:17

¹⁷ And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

2. An admonition is given to those who seek for reality in wrong channels, Isaiah 55:2;

Ecclesiastes 11:9

⁹ Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these *things* God will bring thee into judgment.

Luke 12:15

¹⁵ And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

Luke 12:19-21

¹⁹ And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, *and* be merry.

²⁰ But God said unto him, *Thou* fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?

²¹ So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

3. A message is given, and a promise is made to those who heed God's call, Isaiah 55:3;

Romans 10:17

¹⁷ So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

2 Timothy 3:15

¹⁵ And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

Hebrews 6:17-19

¹⁷ Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed *it* by an oath:

¹⁸ That by two immutable things, in which *it was* impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:

¹⁹ Which *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;

Hebrews 8:10

¹⁰ For this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:

Hebrews 9:15

¹⁵ And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions *that were* under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

Psalms 89:3

³ I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto

higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

¹⁰ For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater:

¹¹ So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper *in the thing* whereto I sent it.

¹² For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap *their* hands.

¹³ Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir 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.

David my servant,

Psalm 89:27-35

²⁷ Also I will make him *my* firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth.

²⁸ My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him.

²⁹ His seed also will I make *to endure* for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven.

³⁰ If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments;

³¹ If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments;

³² Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes.

³³ Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail.

³⁴ My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips.

³⁵ Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David.

Acts 2:29-35

²⁹ Men *and* brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day.

³⁰ Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne;

³¹ He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.

³² This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.

³³ Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.

³⁴ For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,

³⁵ Until I make thy foes thy footstool.

2 Samuel 23:5

⁵ Although my house *be* not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all *things*, and sure: for *this is* all my salvation, and all *my* desire, although he make *it* not to grow.

4. Christ is promised as the Saviour of men, Isaiah 55:4, 5;

Luke 19:10

¹⁰ For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

Matthew 18:11-14

¹¹ For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost.

¹² How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?

¹³ And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that *sheep*, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray.

¹⁴ Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.

Matthew 1:21

²¹ And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

II The Steps from Sin to Salvation

1. The first step, "Seek ye the LORD," demonstrates the earnestness required of the true penitent, Isaiah 55:6;

Luke 11:10

¹⁰ For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

Deuteronomy 4:29

²⁹ But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find *him*, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.

Jeremiah 29:13

¹³ And ye shall seek me, and find *me*, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.

2. The second step, "Call ye upon him," shows the need of prayer, Isaiah 55:6;

Hosea 14:2

² Take with you words, and turn to the LORD: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive *us* graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips.

Luke 18:13-14

¹³ And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as *his* eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

¹⁴ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified *rather* than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

2 Chronicles 7:14

¹⁴ If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

3. The third step, "Let the wicked forsake his way," proves that he must forsake his sins, Isaiah 55:7;

Proverbs 28:13

¹³ He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh *them* shall have mercy.

Ephesians 4:21-23

²¹ If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus:

²² That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;

²³ And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

Ezekiel 33:14-16

¹⁴ Again, when I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; if he turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right;

¹⁵ *If* the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die.

¹⁶ None of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him: he hath done that which is lawful and right; he shall surely live.

4. The fourth step, "Let him return unto the LORD" shows repentance is necessary, Isaiah 55:7;

Joel 2:13

¹³ And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he *is* gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.

Psalms 34:18

¹⁸ The LORD *is* nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.

Luke 15:18

¹⁸ I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee,

Luke 15:19

¹⁹ And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.

5. The fifth step is God's gracious **answer**: mercy and pardon, Isaiah 55:7;

Romans 2:4

⁴ Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?

Titus 2:11-12

¹¹ For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,

¹² Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;

Luke 15:20

²⁰ And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

III The Assurance of Salvation in God's Word

1. God's thoughts and ways are far above man's, Isaiah 55:8, 9;

Psalm 8:1-9

- ¹ O LORD our Lord, how excellent *is* thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens.
- ² Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.
- ³ When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;
- ⁴ What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?
- ⁵ For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.
- ⁶ Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all *things* under his feet:
- ⁷ All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field;
- ⁸ The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, *and whatsoever* passeth through the paths of the seas.
- ⁹ O LORD our Lord, how excellent *is* thy name in all the earth!

Psalm 18:30

- ³⁰ *As for* God, his way *is* perfect: the word of the LORD is tried: he *is* a buckler to all those that trust in him.

Psalm 40:5

- ⁵ Many, O LORD my God, *are* thy wonderful works *which* thou hast done, and thy thoughts *which are* to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: *if* I would declare and speak *of them*, they are more than can be numbered.

2. God's Word, like the rain, is sure to bring forth fruit, Isaiah 55:10, 11;

1 Corinthians 3:6-7

- ⁶ I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.
- ⁷ So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

3. Great joy is given to those who find salvation, Isaiah 55:12; Isaiah 12:3

- ³ Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.

Psalm 51:12

- ¹² Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me *with thy* free spirit.

Romans 14:17

- ¹⁷ For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

John 15:11

- ¹¹ These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and *that* your joy might be full.

John 17:13

- ¹³ And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.

4. A contrast is made between the godly and the ungodly, Isaiah 55:13;

Psalm 1:1-6

- ¹ Blessed *is* the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.
- ² But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.
- ³ And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.
- ⁴ The ungodly *are* not so: but *are* like the chaff which the wind driveth away.
- ⁵ Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.
- ⁶ For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

NOTES:

Isaiah, the Prophet of God

The prophet of God, Isaiah, lived under four of Judah's kings.

During the reign of Hezekiah, when the neglected worship of God was restored, there occurred a sweeping revival in the kingdom, and the people of the nation were turned toward God. This was near the end of Isaiah's life, and no doubt was a result of the lifetime ministry of this godly man. Isaiah, through the Holy Spirit's inspiration and leadership, has given us many insights into God's sublime and wonderful plan concerning the coming of Christ, the dispersion and the restoration of the nation of Israel, and the coming Millennial age.

It is very significant that, while the great bulk of Isaiah's prophetic message concerns Israel and God's dealings with them, there is much that is applicable to the Gentiles as well. Since the God of all is God to all, and since His Word will remain unaltered throughout all time; since God is always the same, never-changing in His attributes and perfections, not the least of which are His mercy and goodness; and since God's plan singled out the Chosen Nation, to bless and instruct them, that the whole world might be saved, it is not unreasonable to expect that His message, through the Prophet whom He could entrust with so much of His eternal Plan, would include men of all times and places.

The Law as given by Moses was a steppingstone in the upward and onward progression of the revelation of God's plan. The prophets were preachers, or expounders of the Law. The New Testament classifies prophets as preachers of the Word of God. To prophesy is to preach the Word of God. An individual who brings a message that is not in complete harmony with the Word of God is a false prophet, and his message is to be rejected by all who are godly (**Galatians 1:7-9** ⁷ Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. ⁸ But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. ⁹ As we said before, so say I now again, If any *man* preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. **2 John 1:10-11** ¹⁰ If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into *your* house, neither bid him God speed: ¹¹ For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.)

The Universal Call of God

Here, in this chapter, we have a comprehensive statement of the Gospel Message. Here we can read that the Gospel is for all men — rich and poor, educated and illiterate, liberated and oppressed. This message states that none are excluded, and none are omitted from its promises. These statements are as sweeping in their extent as the "whosoever will" of the final great consummation chapter of the Bible.

Let those who teach that God's salvation is for a selected few explain the fact that "every one that thirsteth" is invited to come and drink of the waters of life freely. Let those who distort God's Word in that way satisfy themselves, if they so choose, in their theory of a limited call by God. Those who desire the blessings of God more than any other thing can find comfort and assurance in the fact that "he that hath no money" can come, buy, and eat "without money and without price."

No further explanation is needed for these words. Those who want to explain them away may use volumes of argumentation to set forth their views, but God's simple yet universal call remains unchanged. That call is stated in those few, clear, and uncontradictable words. "Wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein" (Isaiah 35:8).

The whole of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, in all its beautiful fullness, is just that clear. It is just that simple, just that unquestionable, unimpeachable, and unchangeable. The heights of the Gospel Message have never been reached by mortal man; its depths will never be found on this side of the grave; the lengths and breadths of that message and its provisions can never be surveyed — or even imagined. And yet that message is so simple that all we need to know concerning it, in order to make our peace with God, is easily comprehended.

Here, in this chapter, it is stated that there is a time in which

we can seek God, implying that there is an end to that time. This also is in keeping with the teaching of our Lord and of the Apostles. God's day of mercy will come to an end and His day of judgment will begin, just as surely as there have been dawns and endings to the natural days down through the history of this terrestrial sphere.

The Eternal God and His Covenant with Us

God is eternal in His being and attributes, and therefore His ways and thoughts are far above ours. We are earthy; He is eternal. God sees the heart of man, but we look at the outward appearance. God sees the intent behind an action or word, but we see the act or hear the word alone. God is originally, and always, perfect in holiness, but originally we are "carnal, sold under sin." God is not limited in any way, with the exception of the limitations He has imposed upon Himself in giving man the right to exercise his free will. We are limited, since we "see through a glass, darkly," and "know [only] in part." We know that God's salvation is sufficient for all, "to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him [Jesus]." And, because of God's supremacy and infallibility in all things, we can see that His salvation is wider and more embracing in its provisions than we can understand or comprehend.

If we will incline our ears and come to God, hear His gracious words, and receive His glorious promises, we can claim His promise concerning us: "I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David." Here is another sublime yet staggering statement that we can never — this side of eternity — realise in its fullness.

"I will make an everlasting covenant with you," Only an **eternal** God could make an **everlasting** covenant. The treaties of men or nations are of no value if the power to enforce or fulfil them is taken away. The wishes of man are valid only so long as he lives to make them effective, or only so long as those who succeed him feel obligated to carry them out. But God's promises will never fail, for God cannot lie and He will never pass away. He honours His Word above His name. His Word is forever settled in Heaven. And, to show that His intent and purpose toward us who bear His name and enlist in His cause will never change, He gave not only His Word in the matter but confirmed it with an oath. And "because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, . . . For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us" (Hebrews 6:13-18).

Who, then, are these with whom God has made a covenant, set forth by His Word which, in itself, can never change, but which He has confirmed by an oath that was sworn to by Himself? Who of us are entitled to such consideration that the Almighty Creator would make guarantees for our present and eternal welfare, for which we can never pay Him or prove worthy? Who is there who can, on his own merits, stand before God to reason with Him or contend for rights or privileges that he desires?

Our lesson text shows us that these privileged individuals, heirs to the promises of the Covenant, are those whose hearts are hungering and thirsting for the waters of life and who are seeking for the satisfaction of that hunger and thirst in the right channels. They "love not the world, neither the things that are in the world" (I John 2:15). On the other hand, these individuals are those who seek "first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness" and therefore, see "all these things" added unto them (Mathew 6:33).

Are these favoured individuals entitled to these privileges? In their own right, no! Are they worthy of them? By virtue of their own accomplishments and attainments, heritages or birthrights, absolutely no! Are they sufficient, in any way whatsoever, to be able to stand before the Almighty God as one stands before a court of justice on this earth, to plead their cause before God? In no way whatever could they ever do this! What, then, is the basis by which these things are accomplished for these favoured people and these privileges granted to these privileged individuals? Only one thing: the mercy and love of God, who gave His Only

Begotten to pay the penalty for our sins, our shortcomings, our neglects, and our human frailties, and to bridge the gulf between the Almighty Creator and the creature.

The Infinite Mercy and Love of an Eternal God

Here, then, we see infinite mercy and unlimited love manifested. God needs nothing that we have, that we are, or that we can do. We, by virtue of our own sinful choice, have gone our own way, neglecting Him, despising Him, and rejecting Him. Yet this merciful God has devised a plan for our rescue, our salvation, and our glorification. He has endowed us with a soul, which, by virtue of His own design, will never die. Since God does not change, and since he is perfect in all His ways, that soul which He has planted in man **will** not only never die, but **can** never do so. The soul who continues to neglect or reject God is doomed to eternal despair.

God is not willing that any should perish; and knowing from the very beginning the terrible cost that He would have to pay in order that even one might be redeemed, He willingly paid the cost of that redemption. Nothing but an infinite mercy and an unlimited love could devise a plan of that character, which was made operative so that those who had despised that mercy and love, but who repented of their sin and rebellion, could be rescued from their fate and made to sit in heavenly places — which favour they could never merit or repay.

We, as humans, devise plans for the carrying out of our desires or our pleasures. Before we undertake the carrying out of these plans we sit down and thoroughly count the cost. Will we be able to finish the project? Will we be able to do so and still not endanger the other projects we have under consideration? Will the project in itself be beneficial to us or profitable to us in the way it is designed? All these and many other questions arise to be settled before we actually set forth on the work before us. And many times we are compelled, by necessity, to abandon one plan to guarantee success to another.

But with God the work of redemption was no afterthought or alternative because of the failure of a previous plan or procedure. God knew from the beginning the future course of events. He knew the things that would be necessary to bring about His desires concerning us. He knew the price that would have to be paid by His Son. But He never hesitated, even though the cost was an infinite one.

God made the Plan. The price was paid. He gave the invitation. Then He sent His Spirit to lead men to accept the Plan and receive His salvation. And He is carrying out every phase of that Plan for our eventual glorification.

He has said to us: "Seek ye the LORD . . . call ye upon him . . . let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

QUESTIONS

1. To whom is the invitation given that is found in the first verse of our lesson?
2. Memorise I John 2:15-17.
3. Why are we sure that God's plan of salvation will include us?
4. What did God do, in addition to giving us His Word, that guarantees us the privileges of His salvation?
5. Why do men swear by an oath? Why did God do so in this matter of our salvation?
6. Enumerate the steps to salvation.
7. The Scripture states: "By grace are ye saved through faith." What is grace? What is faith? How do we receive faith?
8. God's thoughts and ways are far above man's. Enumerate some of the things that prove this. How does this principle affect His plan of salvation?
9. Name some of the blessings that come to us through God's salvation.
10. Using Psalm 1 as a text, state the contrast between the godly and the ungodly.