



# Lessons from the Old Testament

## *Lesson 6—Isaiah 55* “The Gracious Call”

# Isaiah 55

*Everyone that thirsteth and he that hath no money*—The beauty of expression in this chapter is unsurpassed in Scripture. No more gracious invitation could be given to men. None are excluded—“whosoever will” may come and “take the water of life freely” (Revelation 22:17). Men are not selectively called to be saved with some being left out. All are called to be saved, everyone who is thirsty and even those with no money, but God does not force himself on us. We each have the freedom to say no to God.

*Buy*—Those who desire to walk with God must not only hunger and thirst for this closeness but also put forth an effort to obtain it. We cannot be indifferent nor unwilling to try. The blessings of salvation are free, but we still have to buy them, and the cost is total surrender to God.

# The Two Ways

*God's Way and Ours*

# Man's way

Wherefore do ye  
spend money  
for *that which is*  
not bread? and  
your labour for  
*that which*  
satisfieth not?  
(Isaiah 55:2)



# God's way

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.  
(Isaiah 55:3)



*Everlasting Covenant*—This refers to the “new” covenant, under which God promises to write His law within men’s hearts (see on Jeremiah 31:31–34; Hebrews 8:10, 11). This covenant embraces all the promises made to the fathers (Genesis 12:1–3; 17:7, 8; Psalm 89:3, 4, 28, 29, 36, 37; 105:8–12; see also pp. 26, 27).

*Sure Mercies of David*—David was a great sinner. But when his sins were pointed out, he repented sincerely and completely (Psalm. 51) and accordingly became the recipient of divine mercy. This mercy is as “sure” for us today as it was for David. (*SDA BC*)

# God's Call

- ◆ To everyone that thirsteth

Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: 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. (John 4:13–14)

For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken **me the fountain of living waters,** *and* hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water. (Jeremiah 2:13, see also 17:13)

The gracious invitation, “Come unto me, and drink,” comes down through all the ages to our time. And we may stand in a position similar to that of the Jews in the time of Christ, rejoicing because the **fountain of truth** has been opened to us, while **its living waters** are not permitted to refresh our thirsty souls. We must drink. It is our privilege and duty to drink, and refresh our own souls; and then, by our words of courage and holy joy and triumph, to encourage and strengthen others. We must express, in words and actions, the benefits of the great salvation that has been provided for us. (*RH* November 17, 1885, par. 4)

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

(Matthew 5:6)

And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of **the fountain of the water of life** freely. . . . 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. (Revelation 21:6)

And he shewed me a pure river of **water of life**,  
clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of  
God and of the Lamb. (Revelation 22:1)

“I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.”

Revelation 21:6. **This promise is only to those that thirst.** None but those who feel their need of the water of life, and seek it at the loss of all things else, will be supplied. “He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be My son.” Verse 7. Here, also, conditions are specified. In order to inherit all things, we must resist and overcome sin. (GC 540.2)

In the last day, that great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, **If any man thirst**, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet *given*; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.) (John 7:37–39)

Great and small alike are chosen vessels  
to bear the water of life to thirsting souls.

*(5T 461.2)*

Christ presents to us who are athirst the  
water of life, that we may drink freely;  
when we do this we have Christ within us  
as a well of water springing up into  
everlasting life. Then our words are full of  
moisture. We are prepared to water  
others. *(6T 51.2)*

# God's Call

- ◆ To everyone that thirsteth
- ◆ To those who have no money and to those who do have money but spend it on that which does not satisfy and that which is not bread

◆ Isaiah 55:1—Come to the waters, come buy  
and eat

- ◆ Isaiah 55:1—Come to the waters, come buy and eat
- ◆ Matthew 11:28—Come all ye that labor and are heavy laden.
- ◆ Mark 1:17—Come after me and I will make you to become fishers of men.
- ◆ Mark 6:31—Come ye apart and rest awhile.
- ◆ Mark 10:21—Come, take up the cross, and follow me.
- ◆ Luke 14:17—Come for all things are made ready.
- ◆ Revelation 22:17—And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come.

# The Counsel

- ◆ Come to the waters, buy and eat
- ◆ Hearken diligently
- ◆ Eat that which is good; let your soul delight
- ◆ Incline your ear, come to me, hear
- ◆ Seek the LORD; call upon him.
- ◆ Forsake wicked ways and unrighteous thoughts.
- ◆ Return to the LORD.

- ◆ Eat for strength—Ecclesiastes 10:17; whatsoever we eat, drink, or do, do all to the glory of God—1 Corinthians 10:31
- ◆ Hearken unto me—Mark 7:14; take heed what you hear—Mark 4:23–24; Luke 8:18
- ◆ Seek ye first the kingdom of God—Matthew 6:33
- ◆ Seek and ye shall find—Matthew 7:7
- ◆ Call unto me—Jeremiah 33:3
- ◆ 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. (2 Chronicles 7:14)

◆ Say unto them, *As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?* (Ezekiel 33:11)

# The Result

- ◆ Our souls shall live
- ◆ God will make an everlasting covenant with us
- ◆ The LORD will have mercy and abundantly pardon.
- ◆ We shall go out with joy and be lead with peace.

◆ And the LORD descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear *the guilty*; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth *generation*. (Exodus 34:5–7)

◆ John 1:9—If we confess our sins . . .

# Illustrations

- ◆ As the heavens are higher than earth
- ◆ As the rain that cometh down
- ◆ The mountains and the hills shall sing and the trees clap their hands
- ◆ Instead of the thorn and the brier

# Rain

- ◆ Deuteronomy 32:2
- ◆ Joel 2:23
- ◆ Hosea 6:3

But near the close of earth's harvest, a special bestowal of spiritual grace is promised to prepare the church for the coming of the Son of man. This outpouring of the Spirit is likened to the falling of the latter rain; and it is for this added power that Christians are to send their petitions to the Lord of the harvest "in the time of the latter rain." In response, "the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain." "He will cause to come down ... the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain," Zechariah 10:1; Joel 2:23. (AA 55.1)

I saw that many were neglecting the preparation so needful and were looking to the time of “refreshing” and the “latter rain” to fit them to stand in the day of the Lord and to live in His sight. Oh, how many I saw in the time of trouble without a shelter! They had neglected the needful preparation; therefore they could not receive the refreshing that all must have to fit them to live in the sight of a holy God. Those who refuse to be hewed by the prophets and fail to purify their souls in obeying the whole truth, and who are willing to believe that their condition is far better than it really is, will come up to the time of the falling of the plagues, and then see that they needed to be hewed and squared for the building. (EW 71.2)

But there will be no time then to do it and no Mediator to plead their cause before the Father. Before this time the awfully solemn declaration has gone forth, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still." I saw that none could share the "refreshing" unless they obtain the victory over every besetment, over pride, selfishness, love of the world, and over every wrong word and action. We should, therefore, be drawing nearer and nearer to the Lord and be earnestly seeking that preparation necessary to enable us to stand in the battle in the day of the Lord. Let all remember that God is holy and that none but holy beings can ever dwell in His presence. (EW 71.2)

The work will be similar to that of the Day of Pentecost. As the “former rain” was given, in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at the opening of the gospel, to cause the upspringing of the precious seed, so the “latter rain” will be given at its close for the ripening of the harvest. “Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: His going forth is prepared as the morning; and He shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth.” Hosea 6:3. “Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for He hath given you the former rain moderately, and He will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain.” Joel 2:23. “In the last days, saith God, I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh.” “And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” Acts 2:17, 21. (GC 611.2)

The great work of the gospel is not to close with less manifestation of the power of God than marked its opening. The prophecies which were fulfilled in the outpouring of the former rain at the opening of the gospel are again to be fulfilled in the latter rain at its close. Here are “the times of refreshing” to which the apostle Peter looked forward when he said: “Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and He shall send Jesus.” Acts 3:19, 20. (GC 611.3)

Servants of God, with their faces lighted up and shining with holy consecration, will hasten from place to place to proclaim the message from heaven. By thousands of voices, all over the earth, the warning will be given. Miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and signs and wonders will follow the believers. Satan also works, with lying wonders, even bringing down fire from heaven in the sight of men. Revelation 13:13. Thus the inhabitants of the earth will be brought to take their stand. (GC 612.1)

Isaiah 55 is all clearly stated and understood.

It is such wonderful news that Isaiah says even the mountains and hills will break forth into singing, and the trees will clap their hands!

Let the floods clap *their* hands: let the hills be joyful together  
Before the LORD; for he cometh to judge the earth: with  
righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with  
equity. (Psalm 98:8–9)

And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion  
with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall  
obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee  
away. (Isaiah 35:10)

And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the LORD. As for me, this *is* my covenant with them, saith the LORD; My spirit that *is* upon thee, And my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth and for ever. (Isaiah 59:20–21)

Arise, shine; for thy light is come, And the  
glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. For,  
behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and  
gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall  
arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen  
upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy  
light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.  
(Isaiah 60:1–3)