

## ***The Invitation of Heaven 6-3-01***

Isaiah 55

There is one word that rings throughout the universe today – a word from The Father, Son and Holy Spirit, a word from the cloud of witnesses that surround us this moment. It will not resound forever – like the holy, holy, holy around the throne. It is a word for today, for this age, for this moment in eternity. It is the word “come”. Isaiah often forwarded a message from God that tells us we need to listen. If we listen we hear the call, “come”.

Here in Arizona we live in a climate very similar to Israel. As I prepare this message for you today the outside temperature is over 100 degrees. The wind is warm and steady. While working this morning I consumed several quarts of water, and upon return home at least another quart. Without that water I would be increasingly uncomfortable, eventually miserable, until heat stroke would set in with a severe headache and nausea and disorientation. This is the kind of world in which the words Isaiah wrote were first read. Not only is it a hot and dry place physically but the people were spiritually dry. (Isa 41:17,18) A drink of cool refreshing water would be the most wonderful thing one could imagine. Have you been in that kind of spiritual state in which a word of comfort from the LORD would end the dry thirst that has consumed your thoughts and emotions? (Ps 63:1)

Then if we will still our souls and listen we will hear the call of Isaiah 55:1 (NIV) “<sup>1</sup> “Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost.”

And where are we being called to come? Where is the water? John 7:37b-38 (NIV) Jesus said “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink.<sup>38</sup> Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.” “Come **to me** and drink” Jesus says. That is where the cool refreshing waters of life are. The prophet Ezekiel saw the heavenly throne and out from under it flows a river that brings life wherever it goes. Remember Jesus is at God’s right hand upon the throne. He is the source. Rev 22:1

So if we will hear the call and come, our thirst will be quenched. We need no money to eat our fill of the bread of life. He freely gives himself to us. He has paid the price so that we could have the Spirit (the wine) and the Word (the milk). Just because it is free to us we are tempted to take it lightly. If something is free we tend not to value it. But the price of the bread, the wine, the milk was more than we could possibly pay – and so it was paid by God himself out of his great love for us. Don’t value it less because it is free. Realize

the price paid was more than you could ever afford, and value it as an incomparably precious love gift.

<sup>2</sup> Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and your soul will delight in the richest of fare.

Why waste your time on things that will never feed your eternal soul and work for things that never satisfy? Good question, but one few stop to ask. The world goes to work day after day but there is an eternal difference in the reason. Some work to earn enough to take a vacation in which they hope to find pleasure. Some work to earn enough to buy a car or a house. Not bad things in themselves, but if we think they will satisfy, that in them we will find fulfillment, we have another god – an idol.

The Redeemed children of God go to work to honor and glorify God. (Col 3:17) They work as unto the Lord. Their wages earned they consider a gift from God who gave them the strength and wisdom and talent to work. And so they take their wages and use them as He directs. Their satisfaction is the fountain of living waters. They realize "all our fresh springs are in thee". (Ps 87:7) They take seriously the command of their Lord when He said, <sup>27</sup> Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you.

(John 6:27 (NIV)) That is the ultimate goal of their work. They have faith that pleases God; their focus is the unseen.

Here is that double word use of the Hebrews that emphasized the importance of the word – listen, listen, to me and eat what is good and your soul will delight in the richest fare. It is so urgent that we listen. We come, but to drink and eat what He has for us we must listen, listen. The feast for our ears is the best meal imaginable as opposed to the husks we have been dining on. (Hag 1:6)

<sup>3</sup> Give ear and come to me; hear me, that your soul may live. I will make an everlasting covenant with you, my faithful love promised to David.

Here is another repetition of the great need of mankind. Come to Jesus, give him our ear, and hear Him. Why? So our soul may live. In this American culture we often hear the expression, "get a life" which implies you are not enjoying life and you need to get out and have fun. In reality getting life is to come to Jesus and to hear Him. The world's idea of life is death in disguise. To really live is to know the love of Jesus and let Him live in you. That begins with coming to Him and hearing his words of love and mercy given to you.

If you will do that this verse promises a covenant that never ends – a marriage contract from which He will never back away. His faithful love promised to David will be yours. Here is a part of that promise from Psalms 89:20-26 (NIV) Listen to it as from the LORD to you. <sup>20</sup> I have found David my servant; with my sacred oil I have anointed him.<sup>21</sup> My hand will sustain him; surely my arm will strengthen him.<sup>22</sup> No enemy will subject him to tribute; no wicked man will oppress him.<sup>23</sup> I will crush his foes before him and strike down his adversaries.<sup>24</sup> My faithful love will be with him, and through my name his horn will be exalted.<sup>25</sup> I will set his hand over the sea, his right hand over the rivers.<sup>26</sup> He will call out to me, 'You are my Father, my God, the Rock my Savior.' -That is for you if you will just come and listen.

<sup>4</sup> See, I have made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander of the peoples.<sup>5</sup> Surely you will summon nations you know not, and nations that do not know you will hasten to you, because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has endowed you with splendor."

David was promised the rule over nations and so are the redeemed, for we will rule and reign with Christ. The nations will submit themselves to us for they will see the glory of God upon us. Chapter 60 tells more about this time in the Millennial Kingdom. In that chapter, 4 times it declares the glory and splendor of God will be visible upon us. Right now we often fail to express the likeness of Christ. But then His work in us will be complete and the world will see that likeness. As a bride is the glory of her husband so we will be the glory of Jesus. What a wonderful thing to look forward to.

<sup>6</sup> Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near.

The invitation to come will not last forever. This is the time to 'come'. There is a day coming in which the call to come will go out no more. He will be found by all who seek Him in sincerity.

<sup>7</sup> Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the LORD, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon.

He's not talking to a particular group. He's calling out to mankind. Our thoughts and ways are so wicked that Isaiah tells us all we should do with them is forsake them. We are that wicked man with wicked ways. We are the evil man with evil thoughts. But if we will forsake our thoughts and ways we will find mercy and be freely pardoned. Forsake means to leave behind. The disciples forsook their nets and boat, but it took Pentecost before they forsook their thoughts and ways.

<sup>8</sup> "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD.<sup>9</sup> "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.<sup>10</sup> As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater,<sup>11</sup> so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

Now we have this verse in context. We usually quote this to mean we are unable to understand what God is doing. We can't see all the repercussions and factors involved in a situation. That is not at all the context. The context is, your thoughts and ways are wicked. Mine are so much higher than yours, you need to give up yours and listen – listen to mine. Why do you keep walking in your evil destructive ways? Look! My word accomplishes good. What it is sent for gets done. There is lasting good from it. Why don't you give up your thoughts and listen to mine. God's thoughts and ways are so much higher, holier, better. His thoughts and ways bear good fruit and accomplish things, whereas ours only brings pain and destruction. So what are we to do? Forsake ours and LISTEN to his.

And if you do... if you come and listen, forsake your thoughts and ways and listen to his here is the promise from God that follows:

<sup>12</sup> You will go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and hills will burst into song before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands.

<sup>13</sup> Instead of the thornbush will grow the pine tree, and instead of briars the myrtle will grow. This will be for the Lord's renown, for an everlasting sign, which will not be destroyed."

Paul tells us in Romans 8 that all creation is waiting for the sons of God to be revealed by God's splendor upon us, because it knows the curse will then soon be lifted. The curse of thorns came because of sin and it will be lifted when we receive the fullness of our inheritance. So much of Isaiah has come to pass in detail in the first coming of Christ. The rest is soon to come to pass in the second coming. It too, will be fulfilled in every detail. How will you live today? Eyes on the physical, laboring for what will not satisfy? Or will you come to Jesus, give him your ear, and let your soul delight in the richest fare? Everyday the choice is ours. Come, listen and live!

Rev 22:17 (NIV)<sup>17</sup> The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.