

## A BETTER KING, SERVANT, CONQUEROR

*The Book of Isaiah*

Isaiah 54—55

### Verse to Remember

*Come, all you are 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.*  
Isaiah 55:1

“As we savor the good news of the sin-bearing servant of the Lord (52:13—53:12),... [t]he gospel of a surprising salvation can only make us laugh, sing, and cheer. ...In Isaiah 54 the prophet uses three images [the woman, the marriage, and the city] to portray the miracle of God’s grace. The servant of the Lord has changed everything by his sufferings, death, and resurrection. Isaiah helps us grasp what the servant’s victory is worth to us. Then in chapter 55 the prophet coaches us in how to enjoy this amazing grace.”<sup>1</sup>

### Day 1 — Read Isaiah 54.

#### The Barren Woman Rejoices

1. In Isaiah 54:1–8 Isaiah likens Israel to a barren woman – even more, to an unfaithful barren woman – who has been rejected by her husband, the LORD.
  - a. What does Isaiah say is associated with barrenness in the culture of his day? (Is. 54:4)
  
  - b. Why is Israel, the barren woman, commanded to sing and to enlarge her tent? (Is. 54:1, 3; Is. 49:17–23)
  
  - c. Why do you think this command would be difficult to obey?

**Isaiah 54:1–3** talks about the descendants and children of the barren woman. After the time of exile God will gather Israel's children from the four corners of the earth and they will expand into the surrounding nations (Is. 11:12; 43:5–7). God made this promise to Abraham in Genesis 22:17 and God will keep his word. In the New Testament Paul explains that God’s promise is even larger, for Israel’s true children are all those born of the Spirit through faith in Jesus (Gal. 3:26–4:7). No wonder that in heaven, the new Jerusalem, there will be a countless multitude of children from every nation who will be singing for joy and praising God (Rev. 7:9–10; 19:6–7a).

2. How is it possible for a barren woman to enjoy such blessing? (Is. 54:5–6)


**Day 2 — Reread Isaiah 54.  
The Confidence of Restoration**

**Isaiah 54:6** could seem like the husband is at fault for deserting and rejecting his wife, but the blame is clearly on the wife for her adultery (Is. 1:21; Jer. 2; Hos. 2). She finds herself distressed as a result of her husband's just departure. However, the love the husband has for his wife is an undying love; he will not allow her sin to keep them apart.

1. Those whom the LORD restores are told "Do not be afraid" (Is. 54:4). Why?  
Is. 54:4

Is. 54:6–8

Is. 54:9–10;  \* Gen. 9:12–16

2. What does the future hold for the once-afflicted city of Jerusalem? (Is. 54:11–12;  Rev. 21:10–21)

3. Isaiah describes the recreated city as not only beautiful outside but also beautiful within, in the lives of its inhabitants.  
What is attractive to you about life within the restored city? (Is. 54:13–17)

What makes this life possible?

### **Tyranny and Terror**

In this context, the distinction between tyranny and terror is that tyranny is oppression from within a nation, while terror is oppression from an outside enemy. In God's city, neither one will be present. The inhabitants will be made righteous, and no weapon brought against them will prevail.

### **Day 3 — Read Isaiah 55:1–5. You are Invited! Come!**

1. What amazing invitation is extended to all people? (Is. 55:1–2)

2. What must the people do to respond to this invitation? (Is. 55:1–3a)


3. How does this generous invitation contrast with what they have been doing? (Is. 55:2a)


**Isaiah 55:3** refers to David, Israel's foremost king with whom God made an everlasting covenant (Ps. 89:19–37). In the New Testament Paul declares that while David died, his heir, Jesus, inherits the blessings of the covenant by being raised from the dead (Acts 13:32–37). The good news is that through our union with Christ, we receive the blessings as well.

### **Day 4 — Read Isaiah 55:6–13. A Call to Respond**

1. In Isaiah 55:1 the readers are exhorted to “come.” What actions are the readers now exhorted to take? (Is. 55:6–7)

2. Do you think these actions are easy or difficult or both? Why?

3. Why do sinners need to forsake their ways and thoughts and “turn to the LORD” (Is. 55:7)? (Is. 55:8–9;  Rom. 11:33–34)

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4. Why is the illustration of rain and snow helpful in understanding God's word? (Is. 55:10–11)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. God's word will accomplish his purposes. How will all of creation respond? (Is. 55:12–13; Rom. 8:20–21)

### Day 5 — Your Chance to Respond

1. Skim through Isaiah 54–55. What words or phrases describe the God who extends this invitation to you?

Which description resonates with you?

2. How does a clearer understanding of who God is influence your response to him personally?

How can you more fully entrust your heart and life to this God?

\*The 📖 symbol indicates verses for further study.

<sup>1</sup> Raymond C. Ortlund, Jr., *Isaiah: God Saves Sinners* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2005), 363-364.