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My Word That Goes Out from My Mouth Will Not Return to Me Empty

55: 1-13

My word that goes out from My mouth will not return to Me empty DIG: What time period do we see here? And what is God's message to these unsaved Gentiles? What three types of drinks are offered, and what do they represent? Why is King David mentioned? What kind of authority will he have? How will he be a witness? Why will Isra'el be the center of Gentile attention? What does it mean to seek the LORD? How long do the unbelieving Gentiles have to be saved? What are the two reasons that they should do so?

REFLECT: How does the question in 55:2 strike you? How does Isaiah's invitation relate to Jesus' words in John 6:35? What does it mean to "feed" upon Jesus? This past week, would you say you have been living on spiritual junk food, or God's meat and potatoes? Why? God's Word is compared to food (Psalm 119:103; Ezekiel 3:1-3; Revelation 10:10) because it is where we obtain our spiritual nourishment. So there are only two kinds of spiritual food; there is angel's food or devil's food and if you aren't eating one, you're eating the other. What have you been eating lately? Joy and peace are the fruit God's Word produces. At what stage of development is the fruit in your life?

This is a far eschatological prophecy during the Messianic Kingdom. The work of **the Suffering Servant** in **Chapter 53** made possible the offer of **salvation** in this chapter. **ADONAI** calls **the Gentile nations** to **come** and **eat** and drink spiritual **food**. Speaking both for **God** and as **God**, **the prophet** issued a sweeping invitation: **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 (55:1)!** Shockingly, **Isaiah** says that it may be acquired **without cost**. What merchant would ever think of selling his goods free of charge? But **God** does! How can **He** do it? Perhaps Someone else has already paid the price? We have everything we need necessary for eternal life - **without cost**. Why wait to accept the invitation?²²⁹

The call brings to mind **Jesus'** comments to **the Gentile Samaritan woman**. **If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked Him and He would have given you living water.** "Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his flocks and herds?" **Everyone who drinks the water** you speak of **will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up in to eternal life (John 4:10-14).**

There are three types of drink offered. First, **come to the waters**. The plural form is used. In Hebrew the plural form a superlative degree. This water is too wonderful to be expressed in the singular form. **Waters** also speaks of abundance, of quantity as well as quality. This is **water** for the soul. This is **the water** that **Yeshua** offered using the same symbolism when **He** stood in the Temple and said in a loud voice: **Let anyone who is thirsty come to Me and drink. Whoever believes in Me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them (John 7:37b-38).** **The Gentiles** who are not killed by the end of the Great Tribulation will have another opportunity to accept **rivers of living water** during the Messianic Kingdom.

Secondly, **come and buy wine**, which symbolizes joy. **David** wrote: **You have filled my heart with greater joy than when their grain and new wine abound (Psalm 4:7; also see Ecclesiastes 9:7; Isaiah 16:10, 22:13, 24:11; Jeremiah 31:12, 48:33; Zechariah 10:7).** **Joy** is the flag that is flown in the heart when **the Master** is residing within.

Thirdly, **come and buy milk**. **The milk of the Word of God** is necessary for spiritual growth. **Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation (First Peter 2:2).**

Is a piece of your life missing? We might wake up one day and find ourselves far from **ADONAI**. Sometimes we grow accustomed to feeling distant from **God**. This makes it easier to sin, complicating the sense that something important is missing. But no matter how far we may drift from **God**, **He** wants us near. **He** appeared to **His** people through **His** prophet: **Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy (55:2a)?** **Worldly pursuits involve the spending of money and labor without satisfying the soul that craves the spiritual life.** The solution is in the second part of the verse: **Listen intently to Me and give Me your full and undivided attention. Eat what is good, and your soul will delight in the richest of food (55:2b).** If something is missing

in your life, remember that **God** is the only **One** who can fully and abundantly satisfy you. The **God**-shaped void within your heart cannot be filled by anyone else.

Give ear and come to Me; hear Me, that your soul may live. I will make an everlasting Covenant [for] you, my faithful love promised to David (55:3). King **David** is mentioned here for two reasons. First, the **Covenant** was **everlasting**, based on **God's faithful love promised to David (Second Samuel 7:11b-16)**. The point is that just as the Davidic **Covenant** is sure, so is the New **Covenant**. The obligation of **the Gentiles** living in the Messianic Kingdom will be to listen **and come to God**. The promise is that if they **hear**, in the sense of *doing* that which is heard, in the sense of obeying what they know, their **soul may live**. And if they respond to the invitation of **salvation, God's** response will be **an everlasting**, or **B'rit Chadashah (Jeremiah 31:31-34)**.

The second reason king **David** is mentioned is that **he** will be given the dual titles of **king** and **prince** in the government in the Messianic Kingdom (**Psalm 89:34-37**). The absolute monarchy of **the Messiah** will extend to **Israel** as well as to **the Gentile nations** (see the commentary on **Revelation, to see link click [Fi - The Government of the Messianic Kingdom](#)**). But directly under **Jesus**, having authority over all **Isra'el**, will be the resurrected **David**, who will be given the dual titles of **king** and **prince**. **He** will be a **king** because **He** will rule over **Isra'el (Jeremiah 30:9; Ezeke'el 34:23-24, 37:24-25; Hosea 3:5)**, and **He** will be a **prince** because **He** will reign under the authority of **the Messiah**. **The Gentile peoples** will have kings, and **Isra'el** will have a king. The difference is that the **Gentile kings** will have **their** natural bodies, while **David** will have **his** resurrected body.

To the nations under **the Messiah's** leadership, **ADONAI** says: **See, I have made David a witness to the Gentile peoples (55:4a)**. This is a surprising announcement, for **Isaiah** uses a term that is never applied to **David** in the historical books of the TaNaKh: **a witness**. As **he** is obedient to **the LORD**, **he** is **a witness to the Gentile peoples** to be obedient to **ADONAI**. **He** will be building a kingdom for **himself**, but declaring the character of **the One** who alone can be called **King** of all the earth. Because **he** is **a witness**, **he** is also **a leader and commander of the Gentile peoples (55:4b)**. So in that sense **David** is in a unique position and **God** calls **him** three things. First, he is **a witness to the peoples** because **he** will demonstrate the **faithful love** of **God**. Secondly, **he** will be a **leader (2 Sam 7:8)**. And thirdly, **he** will be a **commander**. **The Gentiles** will be given every opportunity to accept **Yeshua** as **the Messiah** and **David** will be a positive example for them to emulate.

Then **Isra'el's** position is emphasized. **Surely you will summon the Gentile nations you**

know not, and those Gentle nations that do not know you will hasten to you (see [Jw - Foreigners Will Rebuild Your Walls, and Their Kings Will Serve You](#)). And **the** reason Gentile **nations** will run to **Isra'el** is **because of the LORD her God, the Holy One of Isra'el, for He** will empower her **with splendor (55:5)**. This is the same point that **Zechariah 8** makes, the Jews will become the center of **Gentile** attention in the Messianic Kingdom (see the commentary on [Revelation Fj - My Chosen People Will Inherit My Mountains](#)). So what **Isaiah** says here first, **Zechariah** elaborates on later.

For **the Gentiles**, the invitation to **salvation** is followed by an exhortation that will have both positive and negative aspects. On the positive side, **they** are to **seek the LORD while He may be found and call on Him while He is near (55:6)**. **The inhabitants of the earth (Revelation 3:10, 6:10, 8:13 11:10, 13:8, 12 and 14, 17:2 and 8)**, who hated **ADONAI** so much during the Great Tribulation, will live in a perfect society where **they** will not be permitted to act on **their** own sin nature. **They** will be encouraged to **call on Yeshua Messiah while He is near** because **He** will be ruling and reigning directly from the Most Holy Place in the Millennial Temple in Jerusalem (see [Db - The Nine Missing Articles in Messiah's Coming Temple](#)). As a result of these experiences, they will not be able to offer any further excuses for their sin.

Now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation (Second Corinthians 6:2b). In other words, while **the Gentiles** have suffered the wrath of **God** during the Great Tribulation, **He** will still be willing to extend mercy during the Messianic Kingdom. **Jesus** uses this same intensity of exhortation in **His** parable of the king's banquet (see my commentary on [The Life of Christ Hp - The Parable of the Great Banquet](#)). When those who were first invited to the banquet refused to come, the king told his servants to go out **to the roads and country lanes and make them come in, so that my house will be full**. **God** has made all the preparations, and he *will* find people to respond to **His** invitation. As Paul says: **not many of these will be mighty, wise, influential, or noble by human standards (First Corinthians 1:26-29)**. The mighty, the **wise**, and the **noble** demand that **God's** ways and thoughts be made intelligible to them first. But the lowly, the helpless and the broken don't have to have things explained to them; they simply see the open door and the loaded tables. During the Messianic Kingdom, **the Gentiles** will be lowly, helpless and broken.

An illustration of both the gravity and the intensity of this invitation can be pictured by a time of tragedy, such as a flood. A mother, a son, and a daughter are clinging to the upper branches of a large tree surrounded by raging floodwaters. The rescue team in a boat cannot get right up to the tree because of debris, but the distance between the boat and the

tree can be jumped with effort. The team in the boat shout with urgency, "Jump, jump." But the family members are afraid. Finally, summoning up courage, the son jumps and lands safely in the boat. Then the daughter jumps. She falls into the water, but the rescuers are ready and quickly pull her into the boat. Now the rescuers along with the son and daughter plead with the mother, "Jump, jump, you can do it!" There is a compelling urgency and exhortation. But she is afraid, and as she debates whether to jump or remain in the apparent safety of the tree, there is a terrible crack, the tree falls and she is swept away with it. **Seek the LORD while He may be found.**²³⁰

On the negative side, **the wicked must forsake their ways and the unrighteous their thoughts.** The only way they will be able to do that is for **them to turn to the LORD, and He will have mercy on them, and to our God, for He will freely pardon (55:7).** If the **Gentiles will turn to Messiah, He will have mercy and freely pardon** all their wickedness and unrighteousness. There is an implied urgency here because those unbelieving **Gentiles** will have until **their** hundredth birthday to accept **Yeshua** as **the Messiah** or die (see [Kq - The Wolf and the Lamb Will Feed Together, and the Lion Will Eat Straw Like the Ox](#)).

Can **God** so quickly forget and forgive? From a human perspective this seems impossible. But in the next two verses **God** differentiates **His** thinking processes from our thinking processes. These two verses stress the superiority of **God's** thoughts and ways. To be sure, **God's** invitation comes to us as **He** desperately pleads with us to jump from that apparently secure tree of pride and self-sufficiency into **His** arms. It is a plea to jump from appearance to reality. The life outside of **God** is only apparently secure and abundant. It really has none of that to offer in the end. To remain in the world is to choose loss and spiritual poverty. It is to live in defiance of **the God** who made us. Thus, **God** calls us to jump out of what is only an appearance into what is a reality. Come from hunger to **the richest of food**, from thirst to **water**, from sadness to **joy**, and death to **pardon.**²³¹

Two reasons are then stated why **the** unbelieving **Gentiles** should ask for forgiveness of **their** sins and be saved. **First, God's work is different: For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, declares the LORD. As the heaven's are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts (55:8-9).** So if we sometimes cannot understand why **God** does things the way **He** does, it is because **He** has a different frame of reference than we do. **God's** work is different. And one of these differences lies between the carrying out of that which has been promised. We may resolve to do something and then not do it. **God's Word** is totally different as we see in the next two verses.



Secondly, His Word is dependable: Having spoken of the future Messianic Kingdom and **their salvation** as a result of it, **the LORD** assures **the Gentiles** that **His Word** will accomplish what **He** has said it will. **For 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, so is My Word that goes out from My mouth. (55:10-11a).** His Word is like rain and snow that water the earth and help give it life. **God's Word** is as crucial to the process of **salvation** as rain is to the process of plant growth. **It will not return to Me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it (55:11b).** Just as rain comes down and accomplishes the **purpose** for which it was sent, when **God** sends **His Word out** it accomplishes **the purpose for which** it was sent. **It will not return to Him empty.** The reason for turning to **God** is the dependability of **His Word**. What **God** has said about the certainty of **pardon** for sin being available is absolutely dependable. And because **God's Word** is dependable, it accomplishes *nine* things at the moment of belief, faith, and trust in **Jesus Christ** as **Lord** of one's life (see the commentary on [The Life of Christ Bw - What God Does for Us at the Moment of Faith](#)).

Because **God's Word** will accomplish the purpose for which it was sent, **those** unbelieving **Gentiles** in the Messianic Kingdom can be saved. **For 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 (55:12). Instead of the thornbush, the pine tree will grow, and instead of briers, the myrtle will grow (55:13a).** These verses are obviously figurative, **mountains and hills** do not sing; and **trees** don't **clap their hands**. Therefore, the interpretation is likewise figurative. Those **Gentile peoples** will be changed from the worthless **thornbush (Proverbs 26:9; Isaiah 7:19, 33:12, 55:13; Matthew 7:16)** and **briers (Judges 8:16; Job 31:10; Isaiah 5:6, 7:23-25, 9:18, 10:17, 27:4, 32:13; Ezekiel 2:6, 28:24; Hosea 9:6; Luke 6:44)**, to the productive **pine and myrtle**



trees (Nehemiah 8:15; Isaiah 41:19; Zechariah 1:7-11).

This will be for the LORD's renown, for an everlasting sign, which will not be destroyed (55:13b). The salvation of **the unbelieving Gentiles** will serve as **an everlasting sign, which will never be destroyed** because their **salvation** cannot be lost. **Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light (Matthew 11:28-30).**