



ISAIAH: THE MESSAGE OF HOPE

Lesson 2 - A Prophecy of Redemption

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INTRODUCTION

I. The prophecy of Isaiah is often identified as the 🕊️ *“Gospel of the Old Testament.”*

1. Isaiah proclaims the coming of Christ, the salvation of sinners, and the establishment of God’s Kingdom.
2. The central message focuses upon the answer to the problem of sin in the nation’s life.
3. Isaiah’s prophecy announces that God’s salvation will be offered to all mankind:

🕊️ *“Turn to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God and there is no other ... 🕊️ Ho! Every one who thirsts, come to the waters; and you who have no money come. Buy, and eat ... Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, and delight yourself in abundance. 🕊️ Incline your ear and come to Me. Listen, that you might live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you ... Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the Lord, and He will have compassion on him. And to our God, for He will abundantly pardon” (Isaiah 45:22; 55:1, 2, 3, 7).*

II. Isaiah announces the good news of salvation for all nations to hear.

1. This announcement offers mankind the greatest hope.
2. This message should be heralded throughout the world so all will know and rejoice in the remission of sins (Isaiah 66:19b-21; Mark 16:15-16).
3. There is great joy in publishing good news.

A man once described how the news of the end of the War of 1812 spread throughout the city of New York. It was a Saturday afternoon in February and a ship was seen that was bringing the commissioners at Ghent home from their mission. Most assumed the mission was unsuccessful. The sun had set gloomily before any news from the vessel reached the city. Expectation became painfully intense as the hours of darkness drew on.

Finally, a boat reached the wharf announcing the fact that a treaty of peace had been signed, and that the peace treaty was waiting for nothing but the action of the government to become a law. The men who first heard this news rushed into the city shouting, “Peace! Peace! Peace!” Everyone who heard the news repeated it. From house to house, from street to street, the exciting news spread quickly. The whole city was in commotion. Men bearing lighted torches were flying back and forth, shouting like madmen, “Peace! Peace! Peace!”

One idea occupied every mind - Peace had been found! Few men slept that night. They gathered in the streets and by the fires reminding each other that the agony of war was over. Everyone became a herald, and the news soon reached every man, woman, and child in the city. All this was reasonable and proper and expected!

There is another “Peace” that should be urgently announced. Jehovah God has offered the



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world a treaty of peace! In the peace treaty offered by God men and women who are doomed to hell may be raised to sit at the right hand of God. Such news is too wonderful to keep silent. Why is there not a similar zeal displayed in proclaiming the good news of the peace offered by God as that zeal in proclaiming the peace that comes from carnal war? There are men perishing all around us but very few seem upset that the hope of salvation is not announced!¹

III. Isaiah had the enviable position of foretelling the message of salvation.

1. 🕊 Within the chapters of Isaiah's prophecy, one finds this wonderful message that secures hope within our heart! It is a message longed for in a culture consumed with selfishness and a world community governed by anarchy.
2. 🕊 This message should excite Christians and energize their zeal to go and tell others about the Messiah's peace. A sad reality today, even though this message is true, there is very little effort to proclaim the good news.
3. 🕊 The prophecy was not to be concealed (Isaiah 45:19; 48:6).
4. When Isaiah was called to his prophetic career, he was told to speak and spread the message of Jehovah God (Isaiah 6:9-11).
5. 🕊 Why? Why is there an indifference to such a wonderful message of joy, peace, and comfort?
6. 🕊 The content of the message was to offer hope in a world of hopelessness. The message focused on the problem of sin, God's sorrow over sin, and the divine scheme by which sin would be erased and redemption found (Isaiah 9:6-7; 7:14; 59:20; John 12:41). It was a message that was desperately needed but met with skepticism.

IV. Is it possible that the lack of enthusiasm in proclaiming the Gospel is because many do not understand the basic points of the message?

1. If this is the reason, Christians will finally become actively involved in publishing that message to others when they become aware of the points of God's message of hope.
2. This is why the major points of Isaiah's message should be examined. Understanding these points bring a much-needed awareness and provoke Christians to action.

REDEMPTION FOR THE LOST

Isaiah announces that God's great scheme of redemption has a worldwide scope (Matthew 28:18-20).

1. God planned for ALL humanity to have the opportunity to hear the gospel and be saved, God never intended to limit the redemption to just one geographical region or one racial group.

"God has shown me that I should not call any man unholy or unclean...I most certainly understand now that God is not one to show partiality, but in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right is welcome to Him" (Acts 10:28-35).



2. God's love has always been universal!

The promise to Abraham was never restricted to those of his "blood-line" but was always available to those of his "faith-line"! (See *Galatians 3:7, 26, 29*).

3. Isaiah's prophecy proclaims the message of redemption from sin. This is the message of hope because God offers redemption. When redemption is extended, mankind finds a blessed hope.
4. Notice various aspects of this message of redemption God foretells through Isaiah.

A MESSAGE WITH A UNIVERSAL OFFER (Isaiah 45:22-25; 31:6; 56:3, 5; 19:20-23; 30:18-20)

I. A message of universal scope was published so all would hear, understand, and be united with the Lord God (Isaiah 45:19-20).

A. The Almighty God has always wanted every human being to find identification with Him.

1. There are requirements that must be met in order to gain identification.
2. Even the most sacred of all feasts, the Passover, had conditions that invited "foreigners" to comply and become a part of God's people (Exodus 12:43-49).
3. God's offer of salvation can be received by anyone who is willing to obey God's commands (Revelation 22:17).

B. Isaiah 45 demonstrates the universal offer of salvation.

1. The Almighty God (Isaiah 45:18) wants to make sure the announcement is not vague (Isaiah 45:19).
2. The offer is to the "fugitives of nations" who had no "knowledge" of the Almighty God and are bound to idolatry (Isaiah 45:20).
3. The gracious invitation: "Turn to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth" (45:22a). This universal offer is to accept lifestyles that are "righteous" and "upright" (Isaiah 45:19b).
4. For God to restrict His salvation only to the physical lineage of Abraham, would be an unrighteous act. Instead, there is no restriction! ALL humanity is invited to accept God's salvation!

C. The universal offer of salvation is restated in Isaiah 56:3, 5:

Let not the foreigner who has joined himself to the Lord say, "The Lord will surely separate me from His people." Nor let the eunuch say, "Behold, I am a dry tree"...To them I will give in My house and within My walls a memorial, and a name better than that of sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name which will not be cut off.

1. The "foreigners" are invited to join themselves to the Lord (they can identify themselves with the Lord and His people).



2. This identification (“joining”) results when an individual obeys God’s commands and changes his identity.
 - a. His identity changes from a previous life.
 - b. He was previously identified with those opposed to God but now he identified with God’s People and their words, ways, and worship.
 - c. God invites all to leave the previous associations and become members of His People.²
- D. Isaiah’s use of this Old Testament identification process parallels the Church (i.e. the Kingdom, the people of God) under the Messiah’s rule.
 1. One becomes identified as a member of God’s Kingdom and that identification is binding (Acts 9:26).
 - a. In God’s Messianic Kingdom, there are no positions of prestige! (Romans 9:6-13).
 - b. In God’s Kingdom, membership is only on one level—all are sinners who have been saved by God’s grace! (See Ephesians 2:1-14).
 2. Those who have been identified with God’s People are those who have been saved by obeying God’s commands.
 - a. These are secure in their spiritual lives - “To them I will give in My house and within My walls a memorial, and a name better than that of sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name which will not be cut off” (Isaiah 56:5).
 - b. Isaiah foretells the universal offer of salvation will be accepted by many and the result will be a wonderful unity in faith and devotion.
 - c. Everyone responding to God’s offer of salvation will be acknowledged as God’s people (Isaiah 19:20-25).
- II. What a wonderful fact to consider!
 - A. God’s salvation is offered to every person on earth! (Matthew 22:9-10). “As many as you find *there*, invite to the wedding feast.”
 - B. No one is prevented from receiving an invitation.
 - C. Why does the Lord God Almighty offer such a universal plea for mankind to be saved? Because the Lord is “gracious to you” and the Lord “waits on high to have compassion on you for the Lord God is a God of justice” (Isaiah 30:18).
- III. 🕊 The universal offer of God’s salvation should be met with overwhelming gratitude and joy.
 - A. Those saved by the wonderful love and compassion of God ought to find great joy filling their souls.



- B. 🕊️ Every time one becomes aware that another soul has heard, believed, and obeyed the Gospel's commands and turned from darkness into light, great rejoicing should occur (Acts 8:39b; 16:34).

1. There is joy in the fact that God has provided the means by which our souls can be saved.
2. This thrilling message is applicable for the population of the entire earth.
3. No one is beyond the scope of salvation if he or she is willing to obey God! (John 7:17; Revelation 22:17; Acts 22:16).

IV. Once we understand the universal offer of salvation, what should we do?

- A. 🕊️ Let us recognize the wonderful blessings of the universal offer of salvation.
- B. 🕊️ Let us rejoice in the fact that God is not willing that "anyone" perish but that "all" come to salvation (2 Peter 3:9b).
- C. 🕊️ Let us resolve to publish this wonderful news so that all honest and good hearts will have the opportunity to hear the wonderful story of Christ Jesus (2 Kings 7:9). "We are not doing right. This day is a day of good news, but we are keeping silent; if we wait until morning light, punishment will overtake us. Now therefore come, let us go and tell."
- D. 🕊️ Let us reveal how the simplicity of the Gospel teaches anyone to be reconciled to God and saved by the blood of Christ. If he will hear the gospel, believe it, confess Christ's deity (Romans 10:9-10), repent and be immersed for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38), that person is placed "into Christ" where all spiritual blessings are found (Galatians 3:27; Ephesians 1:3).

🕊️ **A MESSAGE WITH A UNIVERSAL IDENTITY** (Isaiah 1:26; 59:20; 51:11; 27:12-13)

Isaiah describes a unique identity for those who listen to the offer of salvation and decide to believe and obey its requirements. Those obedient to God will be viewed by these descriptions:

I. 🕊️ ***They will be called "the city of righteousness, a faithful city"*** (Isaiah 1:26).

- A. The disobedient are viewed as God's "adversaries," but the obedient are restored and identified by two significant traits.
1. Their righteousness toward God's will
 2. Their faithfulness toward God's commands.

B. This group is not insignificant but will be numbered large enough to be a "city."

II. 🕊️ ***They will be called "those who were perishing...scattered"*** (Isaiah 27:12-13).

- A. The prophet uses familiar images to communicate this significant point.
1. The threshing of grain.



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Workers carefully collected the grain and safely place it in a secure place. Especially in times of poor harvest, the threshers would carefully guard each grain and pick them up "one by one." This metaphor indicates personal worth, great value, and intricate care.

2. Lost sheep or cattle that were scattered but were then found and safely secured (Jeremiah 23:1; 50:6; Ezekiel 34:12-16).
 3. They were once in danger of destruction but after being gathered together again, there is security and safety.
- B. Each metaphor helps show that the lost state was in the past. No longer are they lost or scattered.
1. These metaphors identify God's people.
 2. Those who now belong to God and who are numbered as God's righteous and faithful city were...
 - a. Once wayward and lost
 - b. Had been separated from God
 - c. Destined for destruction.
 3. Each was of immense value and thus the gathering was accomplished by the loving individual (the Hebrew term literally means "with respect to one, one").
 - a. God's wonderful love and compassion seeks to gather each one who was lost.
 - b. The lost can be found! Those destined for destruction could be saved! Those whose personal value had become bankrupt had true value restored!
 - c. What a wonderful identity!
- C. Isaiah's prophecy called for mankind to recognize this message, respond to God, and identify with the Almighty. Those in this group would excitedly sing, "I once was lost but now am found!"
- III. 📖 ***They will be called "the ransomed of the Lord" (Isaiah 51:11a).***
- A. Isaiah's use of this term instantly draws attention to the New Testament doctrine of the propitiatory atonement of Christ Jesus (Acts 20:28).
 - B. The context of this phrase (Isaiah 51:9-16) presents the ability of Jehovah God to *rescue* mankind from sin's snares.
 - C. The crossing of the Red Sea illustrates God's ability to redeem those in hopeless predicaments (Isaiah 51:10).

"Was it not You who dried up the sea, the waters of the great deep; Who made the depths of the sea a pathway for the redeemed to cross over? So the ransomed of the Lord will



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return and come with joyful shouting to Zion, and everlasting joy will be on their heads. They will obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing will flee away." (Isaiah 51:10)

1. This history lesson stressed that God's power is greater than any force opposing Him.
2. Our great God, who delivered Israel from the terrors of the exodus in Egypt, is able to do even more to deliver mankind from sin's despair regardless of how impossible one's salvation appears!
3. God devised a plan whereby man's eternal soul is redeemed from Satan's eternal damnation.
 - a. The death of Christ on Calvary *paid the debt He did not owe*, because we *owed a debt we could not pay!*
 - b. Each Christian is a unique treasure individually purchased ("one-by-one," 27:12-13) and "owned" by the Lord God Almighty!

"In that day...you will be gathered up one by one...in that day that a great trumpet will be blown, and those who were perishing...will come and worship the Lord in the holy mountain at Jerusalem" (Isaiah 27:12-13).
 - c. After the Christian is ransomed by God, he is given a "name" that reflects this blessing (Isaiah 54:5; 62:2).

"For your husband is your Maker, Whose name is the Lord of hosts" (Isaiah 54:5).

"And you will be called by a new name Which the mouth of the Lord will designate" (Isaiah 62:2).
4. What a wonderful truth! When Christians understand this fact, they will have a cherished hope that will guard and foster godly contentment deep within their hearts! (Philippians 4:4-9).

IV. 🕊️ *They will be called "those who turn from transgression" (Isaiah 59:20).*

- A. This phrase identifies those who are truly converted.
 1. The Hebrew verb that translates the action "turn from transgression," is a root verb meaning, "to turn back, retreat, recover, repent, reverse, withdraw."
 2. This verb expresses man's full penitence regarding wrongdoing, and expresses the two requirements of repentance:
 - a. Turning away from evil
 - b. Turning toward good
 3. This action describes those whose hearts are so sensitive to wrong-doing that they instantly humble themselves, confess their wrong-doing, and initiate immediate changes to stop the wrong-doing!



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4. Those who are identified as the “saved” have repented and turned to the Deliverer because they truly “fear” the name of the Lord (Isaiah 59:19).
 5. The blessings enjoyed by such individuals result because the penitent is included in the covenant of redemption offered by the Lord and lasting “from now and forever” (Isaiah 59:21). “As for Me, this is My covenant with them, My Spirit...shall not depart...from now and forever.”
- B. This prophetic point is illustrated in the New Testament when the Gospel is preached, believed, and obeyed (Acts 2:38; 3:19; 1 Thessalonians 1:10).
1. Isaiah's words do not refer to a return of national Israel but to the “seed promise” given to Abraham.
 2. All who hear the Gospel and obey its commands must “turn” away from evil and “turn” to good!
 3. This is one of the most encouraging points in Isaiah's prophecy – we have the opportunity to “turn” back to God.
 - a. All people can choose to return to God and start his or her spiritual life all over.
 - b. Here is hope! Here is encouragement! Here is good news!
 - c. Individuals ensnared by sin's bondage are often
 - ...Convinced they were “beyond help”
 - ...Certain they can “never find forgiveness”
 - ...Convicted that all is hopeless.
 - d. To such despondent souls, Isaiah's prophecy foretells of the wonderful grace and full forgiveness that is offered by Jehovah God. Here is a message of hope!
- C. All who are “willing” to submit and obey God's commands are assured of full forgiveness as they “turn from transgressions” (See 1 Timothy 1:12-17; 2 Timothy 2:24-26; Acts 22:16; etc.).
- D. God's promise secures a wonderful hope to the heart of all struggling to find righteousness!
- The message of the Gospel is distinctive and identifies all who obey its commands.
1. 🚫 One cannot obey God's commands and continue to worship and live as the majority lives and worships.
 2. Are you among those “identified” by the message of God's Truth that “redeems” the lost and turns them back toward God?



🔑 **A MESSAGE WITH A UNIVERSAL PLAN** (Isaiah 55:6-7)

I. The message of salvation applies to everyone.

A. Salvation is not restricted by geographical boundaries, limited by different languages, or reserved for one ethnic/racial population.

1. The Gospel is for ALL the world (Colossians 1:23; Luke 24:44-48).

2. Not only is salvation offered to all people, but God's plan can provide all needs for those who obey and turn to Him.

B. The universal plan of God's message is illustrated in Isaiah 55:1-13.

Isaiah 55 is one of Scripture's most expressive chapters describing God's message of salvation. Throughout these verses, the moods and tenses of grammar are used to heighten the exciting description. As you read this chapter, observe how the message of salvation is designed for universal need:

1. 📖 55:1 - It is able to provide the basic needs that all men lack!

2. 📖 55:1b - It is able to supply what everyone needs (in the Hebrew, the subject is singular, "he that thirsts" but the imperative is plural, "come, by, eat")!

3. 📖 55:1-3 - It is able to compel (the five imperatives used in these verses, suggest man's inability is answered by God's ability)!

4. 📖 55:2-3 - It is able to satisfy with abundance! Those who respond to this invitation find refreshment, exhilaration, joy, and health!

5. 📖 55:4-7 - It is able to embrace all nations! Even the nations that previously did not "know God" will come to experience God's compassion. They will "run" to Him.

6. 📖 55:8-13 - It is able to comfort! Those who "return" will find God's mercy is waiting upon their decision to return. The "joy" and "peace" (verse 12) describe the manner of living after one has returned to God.

II. This message of universal hope offers desperate souls a wonderful alternative to life.

A. Will they continue living in a hopeless despondency when they can choose to "return" to the Lord God Almighty and find hope?

B. This is a message suitable for the entire world's needs.

1. It is "good news" that must be published throughout all creation.

2. It is a message of excitement.

3. It is a message of comfort.

4. It is a message that many long to hear and receive! (Isaiah 52:6-12).



☞ Whenever this universal message is preached, understood, and obeyed, there will be honest hearts rejoicing in their salvation. Isaiah looks forward to such a celebration: *“They will sanctify My name; indeed, they will sanctify the Holy One of Jacob and will stand in awe of the God of Israel. Those who err in mind will know the truth and those who criticize will accept instruction”* (29:23b-24).

☞ **A MESSAGE WITH A UNIVERSAL JOY** (Isaiah 12:1-6; 35:8-10; 43:1-7)

The preaching of the message brings indescribable joy.

- I. This wonderful message speaks of redemption from sin's terrors and freedom from Satan's snares.
- II. Joy comes into the heart of one who realizes that he is no longer a subject of God's anger but His blessings (Isaiah 12:1-6).
 - A. God has “become my salvation” (Isaiah 12:2b) is a statement of blessed assurance.
 1. The prophet speaks of God's “salvation” (literally “deliverance, help, health, etc.”).
 2. The Hebrew verb (“*become*”) is not saying that God “becomes” capable of offering deliverance and help at a certain point. God is ALWAYS capable of offering salvation (deliverance and help).
 3. Isaiah's point is that the individual has chosen to accept this deliverance in his or her life—it becomes “MY salvation.”
 - B. Those who find the joyous salvation are described with a wonderful metaphor—“joyously draw water from the springs of salvation” (12:3).
 1. This metaphor portrays abundant blessings.
 2. ☞ Isaiah 12:4-6 describes the actions of those who understand the joy of salvation.
 3. ☞ These will be thankful, submit to God's authority, educate others to the blessings of salvation, praise the Lord's deliverance, proclaim the good news of salvation throughout the earth, and revere the Holy One of Israel!
 - C. ☞ Isaiah spoke of the “Highway of holiness” describing the joy of those receiving the message of salvation (Isaiah 35:8-10).
 1. ☞ The imagery is of a great roadway filled with happy travelers.
 2. They travel in joy because they have been redeemed and ransomed by God's grace.
 3. The entire procession makes joyful shouts and demonstrations that reveal the gladness of their salvation. They possess an “everlasting joy” because they will never again experience sorrow and sighing!



III. ☞ Universal joy is **guaranteed by God Himself** (Isaiah 43:1-7).

- A. God assures those in this group: *"I have redeemed you ... I have called you ... I will be with you ... you will not be scorched ... you are precious in My sight ... you are honored and I love you ... I am with you."* ☞ These promises provide a wonderful security - *"do not fear."* Anyone "called by My name" is assured of God's eternal blessings!
- B. ☞ The universal joy that Isaiah foretold is now a reality!
1. Every time a sinner realizes the tragedy of sin's despair and the hopelessness of eternity, there is an indescribable sorrow that burdens the heart.
 2. When the Gospel is preached and the good news is discovered that sin can be removed, there is immediate desire to learn what must be done (Acts 2:37b).
 3. When the sinner learns what to do in order to receive forgiveness and then does what is commanded, an indescribable joy results! (1 Thessalonians 1:9; Acts 8:39; 1 Peter 1:8-9).
 4. True Pleasure in Life. There once lived a man whose entire life was spent in reckless living. He cared not for God. In the midst of his wicked career, he was arrested and imprisoned. While in jail he was brought to repentance, converted, pardoned by the blood of Christ, and began living a new life. The great change in his life was noticed by those around him after he was released from jail. One of his old friends remarked, "I hear you've given up all your pleasures." "No. I never really knew what pleasure was until now. As I've tried the pleasure of sin and of faith both, and you've only tried one, I am the better judge of true pleasure!"
 5. Let all souls who are "bowed down with sorrow" listen to the glorious message of the Gospel and find relief and joy in believing and obeying the Lord Jesus Christ!

A CONCLUDING VALIDATION

The message foretold by Isaiah 55 reveals the wonderful hope that is offered to mankind.

1. ALL needs are met ("without money, without cost," Isaiah 55:1; "my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus" Philippians 4:19).
2. ALL is furnished with overflowing abundance ("And delight yourself in abundance," Isaiah 55:2; "to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think" Ephesians 3:20).
3. ALL who languish in sin and sorrow need to respond ("for He will abundantly pardon," Isaiah 55:7).
4. ALL who rest in their proud religious heritage and arrogance need to repent ("Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the Lord, and He will have compassion on him. And to our God, for He will abundantly pardon," Isaiah 55:7).
5. ALL seeking true blessings must surrender ("Incline your ear and come to Me. Listen, that you may live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you," Isaiah 55:3)



There is a clear illustration of the reality of this prophetic message of redemption (Acts 13:32-33).

1. There is an amazing “good news” (verse 32) that is announced to the “sons of Abraham’s family and those who fear God” (verse 26).
2. This is the “promise” (verse 33) that “forgiveness of sins is proclaimed” (verse 38).
3. This good news offers a freedom of release from sin’s damnation. “Everyone who believes is freed” (verse 39).
4. This wonderful offer can be refused so all need to “take heed so that the thing spoken of in the Prophets may not come upon you” (verse 39).
5. This message brings “rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord” (verse 48).

¹ Adapted from Elon Foster, *6,000 Sermon Illustrations*, #2638, p. 311, Baker Book House (Grand Rapids).

² See the necessary commands to be obeyed if the non-Israeli wanted to partake of the Passover Feast in Exodus 12:43-49. During the Mosaic Dispensation, even though the foreigners were admitted they were still looked upon as “inferior” since they were not literal descendants of Abraham.