

## “A Word from our Sponsor” Isaiah 55:8-13

God called Isaiah to prophesy to the southern kingdom during a time of spiritual idolatry. Chapter 40 tells us that Idolatry had been intermittent, but now people “have become broken cisterns...” They’ve turned from the light of God and He is punishing them double for their sins. God begins to turn them toward Himself but needs to cleanse them so that they may be fully restored.

**Look out** – Isaiah 55:8-9 tells us that God’s thoughts are not our thoughts. God doesn’t think in the same manner that we do. He does not think in time as we do. And above all, His perspective is from a perspective that is unlike ours. As we look around our world both personally and globally, there’s more than enough to see and hear. Many are trying to help with advice and services. Businesses, organizations, and parties are hoping that we take advantage of their resources, some at no cost. Commercials are to persuade the hearer of a good product, as well as an entity that treated the people well during difficult times. Pastor Henley suggests to us that God gives out offers and invitations that are satisfying, beneficial, and **free**.

**Look in** – God desires a holy life. Idolatry like any sin is artificial. It makes you think that’s its good for you and you crave more of it. Sin even gives the illusion that you can live off of it and can’t live without it. The God of Israel and the God of today purposes to change the appetite of the soul. What do you think you would not want to live without?

**Look up** – This chapter begins with God’s calling to “Come... buy without money and without price.” He asks, “Why do you spend money for that which is not bread ...” His people continued to spend money, time, and energy but they were never satisfied. The basic needs may be met, but one may still feel dissatisfied and starving while the battle between the appetites for God and for personal want continues. Sin causes the negative cravings for the things that don’t help (see James 1:13-15, 4:2-3). God needs to repair the soul in His aim of restoration. This inner work takes effort, perseverance, and longsuffering by a loving God. How did you feel after God took an important item or person out of your routine? Suppose God wants to lower your finances, how do you adjust in your mind and heart?

In verse 2, the prophet tells the people to eat what is good “...let your soul delight itself in fatness.” Ideally, God wants His people to thirst for Him. He doesn’t want you to come to Him forced or out of habit, but with desire and enthusiasm to worship. God satisfies but we can “never get enough” according to our Pastor.

**Look on** – God has always told Israel: If they turn, He will turn and He waited patiently for repentance in response to His word. The chapter begins with God’s directive to His people. The instruction is to keep their guard up against ever prevailing sin. This is captured in three commands: *Hearken* or give attention (vs. 2), *Incline*/listen (vs. 3), and *Hear*, which includes obey (vs. 3). Today, God faithfully and responsibly asks the believer to draw close and give Him attention. When we listen intently, the heart that God has restored is moved to reject temptations and choose God’s way. Have you rejected a temptation, recently? Should you, today?

The word is sent to rebellious people, it comes down into the soul to build, change, and create new desires. He sends His word with intentionality, that produces the desired effect. This designed word, is earmarked for what He wants it to do. God will find us in the midst of a pandemic or any other virus the world, flesh, or the devil may bring about. As we open our souls to God and He makes us flourish in the midst of a famine of needs or even God’s word, He can keep you, no matter what the world throws at you. Our God says to any/all, “Seek the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near” (vs 6). Verse 8 says that God’s thought and ways are not like ours. Especially when there’s sin, which mars our thinking. Thankfully, our God is merciful and forgiving. He will abundantly pardon. Call to Him, respond to Him and see God as the sponsor of your ultimate good!

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