

UNDERSTANDING THE MESSAGE OF THE PROPHETS

“ISAIAH – SEEK YE THE LORD”

“**Seek ye the Lord while he may be found**, call ye upon him while he is near” (Isaiah 55:6). Isaiah chapter 55 is yet another one of those Old Testament chapters which addresses the wonderful blessing which will be pored out upon all nations when the Messiah comes (the Christian era, today). In that day, drink and food will be given to all, without charge (v1-2). Those who come unto the Messiah will inherit the sure mercies promised to David (v3). The Messiah will be a witness, leader, and commander of the people (v4). In that day, all nations will **seek after God**, and God will have mercy upon them, forgiving them of their wicked ways (v5-7). The thoughts and ways of God are higher and holier than the thoughts and the ways of man (8-9), therefore, God’s word will not return unto Him void, His promises will transpire, just as assuredly as the rain waters the earth, bringing forth bread for the hungry, and seed for the sower (v10-11). Even the earth will rejoice in the salvation of man, and in the blessings he will inherit under the reign of the Messiah (v12-13).

All of the blessings mentioned above are only extended to those who “**seek the Lord**” (v6, above). Jesus said, “Ask, and it shall be given you; **seek**, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that **seeketh** findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened” (Matthew 7:7-8). The Hebrew writer informs us, “But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that **diligently seek him**” (Hebrews 11:6). Not only are we told to **seek after God**, we are told to do so with **diligence**. Paul exhorted the Colossians, “If ye then be risen with Christ, **seek those things which are above**, where Christ setteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth” (Colossians 3:1-2). And, as he taught the Athenians on Mars’ hill about the one true God, and their obligations toward Him, he said, “That they should **seek the Lord**, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be **not far** from every one of us” (Acts 17:27). If we hope to become a recipient of God’s spiritual blessings, we must **diligently seek after Him**.

Isaiah had told his audience to, “**Seek ye the Lord while he may be found ...**” (Isaiah 55:6). The day will come when God’s blessings can no longer **be found**. Jesus said, “I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: **the night cometh, when no man can work**” (John 9:4). The Hebrew writer warned, “And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment” (Hebrews 9:27). Opportunity to **seek** after God is not a permanent thing. Someday, the door of opportunity will close for you and me, and then, the judgment. Tomorrow belongs to God, today is the day of salvation, “(For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, **now is the accepted time**; behold, **now is the day of salvation**)” (2nd Corinthians 6:2). My friend, haven’t you waited long enough? Why don’t you turn unto God and **seek after Him today**, while He may yet be **found**?

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BAPTISM AND THE BLOOD OF CHRIST

Have you given serious consideration to the condition of your immortal soul? Many answers can be cited as to why many have not obeyed the gospel: ignorance, love of the world, fear, unbelief, waiting, etc. No doubt, a lack of understanding the seriousness of sin is one of the major reasons many have yet to obey the gospel. For one’s view or concept of sin, determines how they live. God reveals through the Bible how He looks upon sin:

As a **DEAD BODY**: “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men’s bones, and of all uncleanness” (Mat. 23:27).

As a **DIRTY GARMENT**: “Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments ...” (Rev. 3:4).

As a **DISEASED BODY**: “From the sole of the foot unto the head there is no soundness in it, but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment” (Isa. 1:6).

As **FILTH & VOMIT**: “But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire: (2 Pet. 2:22).

SIN SEPARATES from God: “But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear” (Isa. 59:2).

The **WAGES of SIN**: “For the wages of sin is death ...” (Rom. 6:23).

While God reveals through the Bible how He looks upon sin, He also reveals how sins can be blotted out and forgiven. “Repent ye therefore, and be converted that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord” (Acts 3:19). The “blotting out” of sins is equivalent to “remission of sins” which takes place when one is baptized “for the remission of sins” (Acts 2:38). Having done that, Paul says, “But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness” (Rom. 6:17-18). My friend, “that form of doctrine” is having reference to Romans 6:3-6 where baptism is the likeness of Christ death, burial and resurrection. Therefore, freedom from sin takes place when one’s faith in Christ (Rom. 8:24), leads them to repent of sins (Lk. 13:3), confess Christ (Mat. 10:32) and be immersed “for the remission of sins” (Acts 2:38). In baptism, one reaches the blood of Christ which washes away our sins. “And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord” (Acts 22:16). Having done that, they arise from the watery grave of baptism to “walk in newness of life” (Rom. 6:4b) “where the blood of Jesus Christ clean seth us from all sin” (1 Jno. 1:7).

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**- Ivie Powell III,
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