

---

ISAIAH 55: 1 "Come, everyone who thirsts, to the waters! Come, he who has no money, buy, and eat! Yes, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

---

This chapter first displays the fullness, freeness, excellence, and everlasting nature of the blessings of the Gospel, and foretells again the enlargement of Messiah's kingdom, Isa 55:1-5. This view leads the prophet to exhort all to seize the precious opportunity of sharing in such blessings, which were not, however, to be expected without repentance and reformation, Isa 55:6, Isa 55:7. And as the things now and formerly predicted were so great as to appear incredible, the prophet points to the omnipotence of God, who would infallibly accomplish his word, and bring about those glorious deliverances which he had promised; the happy effects of which are again set forth by images beautiful and poetical in the highest degree, Isa 55:8-13.

#### Verse 1

Ho, every one that thirsteth - "Water," says Zimchi, "is a metaphor for the law and wisdom: as the world cannot subsist without water, so it is impossible that it can subsist without wisdom. The law is also compared to wine and milk: to wine because wine rejoiceth the heart, as it is written: 'The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart,' Psa 19:8. It is compared also to milk, because milk is the subsistence of the child; so are the words of the law the nourishment of his soul who walks in the Divine teaching, and grows up under it."

Come, buy wine and milk - In ancient times our forefathers used what is now called the old third person singular, ending in eth, for the imperative mood. We have a fine example of His in the first verses of this chapter. I shall present them as they stand in my old MS. Bible: - Alle gee thirstinge cummeth to wateris: and gee that han not sylver, goth forth and bieth, and etith. Cummeth, bieth without silver, and without eny chaungyng, wyn and mylc. Heerith gee, heering me and etith gode thinge, and deliten schal in fattnesse your soule. Bowith in your eie and cummeth to mee, heerith and liven schal your soule. And I shall smyten with gou, everlastyng covenant, the faithful mercies of David.

---

ISAIAH 55: 2 Why do you spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which doesn't satisfy? listen diligently to me, and eat you that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.

---

#### Verse 2

Wherefore do ye spend - Why should ye be so zealously attached to a doctrine from which your souls derive neither comfort nor nourishment?

---

ISAIAH 55: 3 Turn your ear, and come to me; hear, and your soul shall live: and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.

---

## Verse 3

I will make an everlasting covenant - Hebrews **לכם ברית עולם** echrethah lachem berith olam, "I will cut the old or everlasting covenant sacrifice with you." That covenant sacrifice which was pointed out of old from the very beginning; and which is to last to the consummation of ages; viz., the Lamb of God that was slain from the foundation of the world.

The sure mercies of David - That is, says Kimchi, "The Messiah," called here David; as it is written, "David my servant shall be a prince over you."

ISAIAH 55: 4 Behold, I have given him for a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander to the peoples.

ISAIAH 55: 5 Behold, you shall call a nation that you don't know; and a nation that didn't know you shall run to you, because of the LORD your God, and for the Holy One of Israel; for he has glorified you."

ISAIAH 55: 6 Seek the LORD while he may be found; call you on him while he is near:

## Verse 6

Seek ye the Lord while he may be found - Rab. David Kimchi gives the true sense of this passage: "Seek ye the Lord, because he may be found: call upon him, because he is near. Repent before ye die, for after death there is no conversion of the soul."

ISAIAH 55: 7 let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the LORD, and he will have mercy on him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

ISAIAH 55: 8 "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," says the LORD.

ISAIAH 55: 9 "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

## Verse 9

For as the heavens are higher - I am persuaded that כ caph, the particle of comparison, is lost in this place, from the likeness of the particle כי ki, immediately preceding it. So Houbigant and Secker. And their remark is confirmed by all the ancient Versions, which express it; and by the following passage of Psa 103:11, which is almost the same: - **כי - הארץ על שמים כגבה כי** haarets al shamayim chigboah ki **גבר על חסדו גבר** yereaiv al chasdo gabar "For as the heavens are high above the earth,

So high is his goodness over them that fear him."

Where, by the nature of the sentence, the verb in the second line ought to be the same with that in the first; **גבה gabah**, not **גבר gabar**: so Archbishop Secker conjectured; referring however to Psa 117:2.

---

ISAIAH 55: 10 For as the rain comes down and the snow from the sky, and doesn't return there, but waters the earth, and makes it grow and bud, and gives seed to the sower and bread to the eater;

ISAIAH 55: 11 so shall my word be that goes out of my mouth: it shall not return to me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing I sent it to do.

ISAIAH 55: 12 For you shall go out with joy, and be led out with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break out before you into singing; and all the trees of the fields shall clap their hands.

---

#### Verse 12

The mountains and the hills - These are highly poetical images to express a happy state attended with joy and exultation.

*Ipsi laetitia voces ad sidera jactant*

*Intonsi montes: ipsae jam carmina rupes,*

*Ipsa sonant arbusta.*

Virg. Ecl. 5:61. "The mountain tops unshorn, the rocks rejoice;

The lowly shrubs partake of human voice."

Dryden.

---

ISAIAH 55: 13 Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree; and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the LORD for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off."

---

#### Verse 13

Instead of the thorn "Instead of the thorny bushes" - These likewise (see note on Isa 55:12, and on Isa 54:11 (note)) are general poetical images, expressing a great and happy change for the better. The wilderness turned into a paradise, Lebanon into Carmel: the desert of the Gentiles watered with the heavenly snow and rain, which fail not to have their due effect, and becoming fruitful in piety and righteousness: or, as the Chaldee gives the moral sense of the emblem, "instead of the wicked shall arise the just; and instead of sinners, such as fear to sin." Compare Isa 35:1, Isa 35:2; Isa 41:19.

And instead of - The conjunction *I vau* is added, *וַתַּחַת* *vetachath*, in forty-five MSS. of Kennicott's several of De Rossi's, and five editions; and it is acknowledged by all the ancient Versions. The Masoretes therefore might have safely received it into the text, and not have referred us for it to the margin. But this is no uncommon case with them. Even in our own Version the best reading is very often found in the margin.