



**Mustard Seed Sunday School Lesson for June 24, 2007
Released on Wednesday, June 20, 2007**

“Come to the Feast” (Committed to Seeking God)

Lesson: Isaiah 55:1–3a; 6-11.

Read: Isaiah 55:1-11.

Devotional Reading: 2 Corinthians 9:10-15.

Background Scripture: Isaiah 55:1-11.

Time: about 700-695 B.C.

Place: Jerusalem

GOLDEN TEXT: “Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near” (Isaiah 55:6).

SCRIPTURE LESSON TEXT:

Isaiah 55:1-11

1Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

2Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.

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

4Behold, I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people.

5Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not, and nations that knew not thee shall run unto thee because of the LORD thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel; for he hath glorified thee.

6Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near:

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

8For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD.

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

10For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater:

11So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

NOTES ON THE LESSON

God's message through Isaiah to the southern kingdom was a two-pronged one. The first theme was the reminder that the nation had rebelled against their good God (1:4). The second was that He was offering them forgiveness for that rebellion if they would but acknowledge their need and come to Him (1:18–19).

No other Old Testament book emphasizes God's grace to the extent that Isaiah does! And His grace, demonstrated in His free forgiveness, is the thrust of this week's lesson.

Verse 1 of chapter 55 opens with the call of an Eastern water seller. "Everyone who is thirsty, here is water. Come! Buy!"

Even in the Middle East today, vendors push their carts through the alleys every morning, stopping by each gate and shouting their wares: "Melons! Pineapples! Oranges!" So the call of the water seller must have been a familiar sound in Old Jerusalem.

In Isaiah 55:1, however, God Himself is the water seller! Something is far different about His sales cry, though. The kind of water He offers customers is free! They have no money? Not to worry. They can just come. He "sells" without charge.

God broadens the invitation to include food. Rebellious people are offered not just free water but, as it were, a free "feast."

Isaiah goes on to clarify what the Lord was saying. What He offered using picture language was mercy and pardon and life. The people need only come to Him to receive it all-freely-but they must come. All who do come will be received.

We are reminded of the New Testament invitation in Revelation 22:17: "Let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

This lesson can be applied in either of two directions according to the needs of your class. So think of your primaries, one by one.

Are most still uncommitted as far as faith in Christ is concerned? Then it is fitting that your emphasis be on God's invitation to come and get the "water of life" free of

charge. Payment for forgiveness and life has already been made by Jesus, when He died and rose again. Review the gospel until you are certain they understand.

But there is a message here for Christian children too. Their lifelong job is to let others know of God's invitation. They are to be "water sellers" for Him, asking, "Are you thirsty? Do you know you need forgiveness? Come to the Lord for the water of life. It is free."

THE OBJECT IN VIEW:

Teach that God invites people to come to Him for something we badly need-His forgiveness-and that His forgiveness is free because Jesus paid our penalty.

TRUTHS TO STRESS:

1. God offered the blessing of forgiveness to His disobedient people if only they would come to Him for it.
2. The Lord's forgiveness was a gift if the people would just return to Him, admitting their need.
3. Today we too are invited to come to God and receive forgiveness and life without payment, for Jesus has paid our penalty.

PLANNING VISUAL AIDS:

For Telling the Lesson, prepare a series of flash cards: "Amos," "Hosea," "Isaiah," "free," "forgiveness," and "come." You will also need a picture of a kitchen, showing the sink.

For Helping to Remember, take enough half sheets of colored construction paper for each student to choose a favorite color. He or she will also need crayons, glitter, glue, and black markers.

BEGINNING THE LESSON:

Leeza skipped down the sidewalk. She was excited about going to Ann Drake's birthday party. Leeza had lived in another country most of her life, and this was her first party in America.

When Mrs. Drake came to the door to welcome her, Leeza smiled and held out her hand. "I brought my money," she said.

Mrs. Drake looked puzzled. "But why would you need money, Leeza?"

"To come to the party," Leeza told her.

Mrs. Drake put her arms around Leeza and gave her a big hug. "No, no, no, no," she said. "You were *invited* to Ann's party, and when you are invited to something, you do not pay. There is nothing for you to do but come right in."

So Leeza did.

God once gave some people in the Bible an invitation. It was not an invitation to a party, though. It was a special kind of invitation to people who were disobeying Him, and it was an invitation to get something free. (Show "free.") Let us look in the Bible and find out more.

TELLING THE LESSON:

The Lord was sending His friends one at a time to tell His people different things. Amos came and said, "Let the good things you do be like a great river." (Show "Amos.") Hosea came and said God was not seeing the good things in them He wanted to see. (Show "Hosea.") When it was Isaiah's turn, he came and said that if the people would just come to God and ask, He would make even their worst sins as white as snow. (Show "Isaiah.")

Then Isaiah said something else. But before we talk about that, I must tell you something about what people did in those long-ago times.

In those days, nobody had water in their houses the way we do today. You could not go to the kitchen and get a drink. (Show kitchen picture.) When you wanted water, you had to take your water jar and go to the well or down to the river. Or you could go and buy water from someone who was selling it-but you would need money to do that.

Isaiah must have been thinking of buying water when he said something like this: "Listen, everybody. God has something for you, something you need, like good food and water. God says that if you are thirsty, just come to the water. Even if you have no money, come anyway. You can have good food and good drink, and it is free. (Show "free.") Just come and get it."

Isaiah was not talking about food and water for eating and drinking. He was using word pictures to say that God has something good for His people. Like water and food, it was something they needed. And it was free. (Show "free.")

What do you think it was that these people needed?

Remember, when God looked at them, He wanted to see a river of goodness. Instead, He saw what? He saw people going their own way, doing what they wanted to do, not caring about what pleased Him, and thinking that keeping temple (or church) rules made everything all right. So what did they need more than anything else? They needed God to forgive them for all that wrongness.

Isaiah told them what God said they should do: "Seek the Lord and call on Him." The word "seek" means they were to go after Him. More than anything else, they should try to please Him.

Then the Lord gave them an invitation, "Come to Me and live," He said. If they would just make up their minds to come to Him and stay with Him, He would give them something that was as good for them as food was for their bodies. And that good thing was free. (Show "free.") What was that free thing? It was forgiveness. (Show "forgiveness.") It was having all their sins taken away.

God told them to "incline" their ears and listen to Him. "Incline" means to stretch out (or lean to). Have you ever seen an older man lean toward whoever was talking to him and put his hand to his ear like this? (Cup a hand to your own ear.) He was *inclining* his ear so that he could hear every word that was being said. God was saying, "Lean your ear to Me. Listen to My invitation."

The Bible does not say how many people listened to the Lord and went to Him for the free forgiveness He wanted to give. It does say that most of them did *not* listen, and that is sad.

Another thing we know is that today God is still inviting people to come to Him. (Show "come.") The Bible says so. His invitation to us says, "I have something you need, and you may have it for free. (Show "free.") It is forgiveness and eternal life" (cross reference Rev. 22:17). (Show "forgiveness.")

That is happy news! That is much better than being invited to a good free dinner.

TELLING HOW TO LIVE:

God wants us to know that getting sins taken away is really free. (Show "free.") You cannot pay for it with money. The Lord is not selling forgiveness. You cannot trade the good things you do for God's forgiveness, either.

But He will let you have forgiveness as a present. Have you said yes to God's invitation? Then help other people know about God's free gift.

HELPING TO REMEMBER:

Each student will make an invitation to give to his or her choice of family member or friend. Let each choose his favorite color paper, fold it in half like a birthday card, and decorate inside and out with crayons. With the markers, have him or her print "You Are Invited" on the right inside page. Help to lightly apply glue here and there to hold a sprinkle of glitter.

EXPLAINING THE GOLDEN TEXT:

"Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near" (Isaiah 55:6).

Sometimes we play the game hide-and-seek, but the "seek" in this verse does not mean the God is hiding and we must find Him. He is always near us. "Seek the Lord" means make up your mind that you will go His way, doing what He wants, starting now.

Lesson Summarized by:

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MUSTARD SEED LESSON ACTIVITIES:

Question: Have you said yes to God's invitation?



"Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near (Isaiah 55:6)."

**"COME TO THE FEAST"
(ISAIAH 55:1-11)**

CIRCLE THE CORRECT WORDS:

1. "Ho, every one that (LAUGHS, THIRSTS), come ye to the waters, and he that hath no (MONEY, TOYS); come ye, buy, and eat...." ISAIAH 55:1a
2. "(INCLINE, CLEAN) your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your (CIRCUS, SOUL) shall live." ISAIAH 55:3a

TRUE OR FALSE:

3. "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near." ISAIAH 55:6

CIRCLE THE CORRECT WORDS:

4. "For my _____ are not your thoughts, neither are your _____ my ways, saith the Lord." ISAIAH 55:8
TEARS WAYS FINGERS THOUGHTS LAUGHTER

TRUE OR FALSE:

5. God's word is just like rain water; it gives life to everything and everyone that it touches. ISAIAH 55:11

TRUE OR FALSE:

6. God's invitation to abundant life is not free; it costs the receiver. ISAIAH 55:1



Come to the Feast

C I G C M R L T E Q F R F Z X
A J V E N N H F E W O E O D G
D B R C E O J H R J R H U R Z
P C F V U B S N F U G G N A K
Y M A G S V R O S S I I D E A
I E H O S E A E M R V H F A L
H T U O M I E T A A E D R O W
S K R Z M X E K N D N T R L J
N S L I V E Y U E E E D A Y Y
C B C W L B L Y A E S H O W G
P I Y B K G D Q R M S W A E E
U P I B O W R O W A K H E M V
B M K W W E B Y S R T O O B J
W Y H U L C L N G X Y C O M L
T H A I A S I A Q R E L K P E

AMOS
EAR
FREE
HOSEA
LORD
NEAR
THOUGHTS

BREAD
FORGIVENESS
HEAVEN
ISAIAH
MERCY
SEEK
WATERS

COME
FOUND
HIGHER
LIVE
MOUTH
SENT
WORD

21 of 21 words were placed into the puzzle.

Come to the Feast Solution

+ + + + M + + T E + F R F + +
+ + + E + N H + E + O E O + +
+ + R + E O + + R + R H U R +
+ C + V U B S + F + G G N A +
Y + A G S + R O S + I I D E +
+ E H O S E A E M R V H + + L
H T U O M + E T A A E D R O W
S + + + + + K N D N T R + +
+ + L I V E + + E E E D A + +
+ + + + + + + A + S + + W +
+ + + + + + + R + S + + + E
+ + + + + + + + + + + M +
+ + + + + + + + + + + O + +
+ + + + + + + + + + C + + +
+ H A I A S I + + + + + + +

(Over,Down,Direction)

AMOS (10, 7, NW)
BREAD (6, 4, SE)
COME (12, 14, NE)
EAR (14, 5, N)
FORGIVENESS (11, 1, S)
FOUND (13, 1, S)
FREE (9, 4, N)
HEAVEN (1, 7, NE)
HIGHER (12, 6, N)
HOSEA (3, 6, E)
ISAIAH (7, 15, W)
LIVE (3, 9, E)
LORD (15, 6, SW)
MERCY (5, 1, SW)
MOUTH (5, 7, W)
NEAR (9, 8, S)
SEEK (5, 5, SE)
SENT (11, 10, NW)
THOUGHTS (8, 1, SW)
WATERS (14, 10, NW)
WORD (15, 7, W)