True Israel as the Messiah’s agents

*After all that has been achieved by the Messiah as suffering servant, a new world order is being brought in. In a reversal of the triangle we have seen, the True Israel takes a dual role as the recipient of God’s blessings, and the ones who hold out God’s blessing to the nations.*

Read Isaiah 55

The image of a banquet is a good picture of the human situation. Most of us have significantly more than the basics of human life. We have more than enough to survive. Yet, paradoxically, for all of us this is rarely enough. We long for more and spend our lives searching for fulfilment. For different people in society it will be different things – pleasure, sex, money, prestige, knowledge, recognition or success. However, the human experience is that these things constantly let us down. So humans search for more. This is because God has made us for more.

Look back to the end of Isaiah 54. How does the invitation in chapter 55 connect to the promises at the end of chapter 54?

What is God offering?

Who is God offering it to?

Why does God offer it?

In verses 3 to 5, there is a clear connection to the Davidic covenant. How are the promises linked to the salvation achieved in chapter 53?

What guarantees are there that God will do as he says?

What is the authentic response to God’s offer of grace revealed in the suffering servants sacrifice?

What is so encouraging about verse 8? How can you take that knowledge to heart in your workplace or your frontline for ministry and outreach?

Verses 12 and 13 would have filled those living in exile with a real hope. How does it contrast to the emotions of Psalm 137? How do we balance these two different parts of scripture when we are finding things hard?

How are verse 12 and 13 fulfilled in Jesus? What are our expectations as a result of what Jesus has done?

Look at Romans 3:21 – 26. Which of the principles of salvation seen in Isaiah 55 are also seen in Paul’s explanation of the good news of Jesus in the verses from Romans?

Thinking back over chapters 54 & 55, describe a time when you felt rejected and deserted by God. What did he do to bring you back to him?

What have you done that can be called “spending money on what is not bread”? Have you found a more satisfying way?

What testimony can you give from your own experience to show that God's word does not return to him empty?