

Isaiah 56 — A House of Prayer for All Peoples

Near Salvation, Real Responsibility (Isaiah 56:1–2)

*“Thus says the LORD: ‘Keep justice, and do righteousness,
For My salvation is about to come,
And My righteousness to be revealed.
Blessed is the man who does this,
And the son of man who lays hold on it;
Who keeps from defiling the Sabbath,
And keeps his hand from doing any evil.’”* (Isaiah 56:1–2, NKJV)

God’s sovereign side: His salvation is “about to come,” His righteousness “to be revealed.”

Our responsive side: “Keep justice... do righteousness... keep... from doing any evil.” God’s nearness never cancels our duty; it clarifies it.

Personal application: Live today as if God’s kingdom were breaking in before sunset. Deal fairly. Refuse compromise. Do what is right when no one is watching.

Note: In Israel the Sabbath was a covenant sign (Exodus 31:16–17). For all God’s people the principle still stands—rest in the Lord and honor Him with your time. In Christ we find our true rest (Hebrews 4:9–11).

Outsiders Welcomed In (Isaiah 56:3–5)

*“Do not let the son of the foreigner who has joined himself to the LORD speak, saying,
‘The LORD has utterly separated me from His people’;
Nor let the eunuch say, ‘Here I am, a dry tree.’
For thus says the LORD: ‘To the eunuchs who keep My Sabbaths,
And choose what pleases Me, and hold fast My covenant,
Even to them I will give in My house and within My walls a place and a name
Better than that of sons and daughters;
I will give them an everlasting name
That shall not be cut off.’”* (Isaiah 56:3–5, NKJV)

God’s sovereign side: He opens His house to the overlooked and the wounded.

Our responsive side: “Choose what pleases Me... hold fast My covenant.”

Personal application: Your past, your pain, or your status does not disqualify you. In Jesus Christ, God gives you “a place and a name.” Hold fast to Him.

A House of Prayer for All Peoples (Isaiah 56:6–8)

*“Also the sons of the foreigner who join themselves to the LORD, to serve Him,
And to love the name of the LORD, to be His servants—
Everyone who keeps from defiling the Sabbath,
And holds fast My covenant—
Even them I will bring to My holy mountain,*

*And make them joyful in My house of prayer.
Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on My altar;
For My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations.”
“The Lord GOD, who gathers the outcasts of Israel, says,
‘Yet I will gather to him others besides those who are gathered to him.’” (Isaiah 56:6–8, NKJV)*

God’s sovereign side: He gathers outcasts and nations; He makes worshipers joyful in His presence.

Our responsive side: “Join... serve... love the name of the LORD... be His servants... hold fast.”

Personal application: The Father delights to receive you. Come as you are, but do not stay as you were—join yourself to the Lord in love and obedience.

A Warning to Leaders: Blind Watchmen, Greedy Shepherds (Isaiah 56:9–12)

*“All you beasts of the field, come to devour,
All you beasts in the forest.
His watchmen are blind,
They are all ignorant;
They are all dumb dogs,
They cannot bark;
Sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber.
Yes, they are greedy dogs
Which never have enough.
And they are shepherds
Who cannot understand;
They all look to their own way,
Every one for his own gain,
From his own territory.
‘Come,’ one says, ‘I will bring wine,
And we will fill ourselves with intoxicating drink;
Tomorrow will be as today,
And much more abundant.’” (Isaiah 56:9–12, NKJV)*

God condemns leaders who nap through danger, feed themselves, and ignore the flock. This is a sober word for any who teach, pastor, parent, or influence others.

Personal application: Ask the Lord to expose spiritual drowsiness, selfish ambition, or complacency. True leadership watches, prays, serves, and guards the vulnerable.

Salvation Invitation

Isaiah 56 promises welcome, joy, and a name that endures—gifts fulfilled in Jesus Christ. By His death and resurrection He opened God’s house to all who come.

If you have not yet trusted Him, call on Him now:

“Lord Jesus, I come to You. I turn from my sin and from going my own way. Thank You for dying for me and rising again. Forgive me, receive me, and make me Your own. I trust You as my Savior and Lord. Amen.”

“Whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.” (Romans 10:13, NKJV)

Challenge for Believers

1. Practice justice today (Isaiah 56:1). Settle a matter fairly; refuse a shady advantage.
2. Hold fast to God’s covenant (Isaiah 56:4, Isaiah 56:6). Keep your word; keep close to His Word.
3. Pray like family in the Father’s house (Isaiah 56:7). Make your home, and the place of your Bible study group, “a house of prayer.”
4. Welcome the outsider (Isaiah 56:3, Isaiah 56:6–8). Seek the overlooked; invite them into worship and fellowship.
5. Stay awake at your post (Isaiah 56:10–12). Watch and pray; lead by serving; protect the weak.