

162 55:1-3b

In order to provide this free salvation it was necessary that He pay an infinite price - the death of His one, unique Son.

Ponce de Leon spent the last part of his life searching through the wilds of Florida, hoping vainly to find the fountain of youth. His tremendous longing was never satisfied. These verses offer something far better than the fountain of youth. The soul of anyone who responds to this gracious invitation can "delight [itself] in fatness."

The terminology of these verses is somewhat figurative and quite general in character. The word "thirst" does not refer simply to need of physical water. Even those with a great abundance of this world's goods may have a tremendous thirst. Verse 2 points out the folly of the people of the world as they struggle to obtain things that can never satisfy.

The invitation looks forward to Jesus' words to the woman of Samaria: "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (John 4:13-14).

The word *come* occurs three times in verse 1 and once in verse 3. God provides salvation freely for everyone who thirsts, but He calls upon sinners to come. In verses 2 and 3 He urges them to listen. Man is not a mere automaton. He is real. Decisions are real. Man has to make choices and is responsible for the choices he makes. God has made man a rational and moral creature, and expects him to use his mind and govern his will.

This passage gives full warrant for pleading with sinners to receive the salvation that Christ procured through His sacrifice at Calvary. The urgency of the invitation can be compared to our Lord's parable in which He described a householder as ordering his servants to go "out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in" (Luke 14:23).

The call to listen carefully is very important. God has given His people the duty, not simply of proclaiming the message of salvation, but of pressing it upon sinners and urging them to