

# THE SURE MERCIES OF DAVID

---

ISAIAH 55:3 • TV206B

A television broadcast sermon delivered  
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 11<sup>TH</sup>, 1983  
By  
**HENRY T. MAHAN**

---

Transcribed, edited and published  
MARCH 13<sup>TH</sup>, 2012

**HENRY T. MAHAN TAPE LIBRARY**  
Zebulon Baptist Church  
6088 Zebulon Highway  
Pikeville, KY 41501

---

## **Isaiah 55:3**

*“Incline 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.”*

If you will take your Bible and open it to the **Book of Isaiah**, we are going to be looking at the **55<sup>th</sup> Chapter of Isaiah, Isaiah 55:3**.

Here is my subject today: **“THE SURE MERCIES OF DAVID.”**

I am going to be talking about a covenant. I am going to be talking about the mercies of God. I am going to be talking about that everlasting covenant of grace. It is going to be an interesting time and I invite you to spend it with me.

Here, in **Isaiah 55:3**; listen carefully, our God says; *“incline your ear and come to me. Hear and your soul shall live, and I will make with you an everlasting covenant, even the sure mercies of David.”*

## THE SURE MERCIES OF DAVID

ISAIAH 55:3 • HENRY T. MAHAN

---

Do you hear what God is saying? I think sometimes we read the Word of God and we read it so flippantly, carelessly, and so quickly, that we just don't really hear what God is saying. Do you hear what He is saying?

Let me paraphrase a little bit; He is saying, "turn your ears this way; listen to me." He says, "Hear my Word; hear my promises; come to me with a hearing ear. Come to me with a ready heart and your soul will live forever. Hear me, come to me, incline your ear, and your soul will live forever."

"I will make with you an everlasting covenant. I, God Almighty, the eternal, living God, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, will enter into a covenant with you, a covenant that shall never change and never be broken and never cease."

"Upon you shall come those sure, certain, eternal mercies, that I conferred upon David, the sweet Psalmist of Israel." That man, of whom God twice said, "*is a man after my own heart.*"

Now, you think about that. Do you have time to listen? That is what God says; "listen to me, come to me, incline your ear this way and your soul will live and I will make with you an everlasting covenant. I will confer upon you the sure mercies of David."

If you are interested for the next few minutes, I will enlarge upon what we call the "everlasting covenant and the sure mercies of David." You must have some interest.

I am not here to entertain you. We are not building a school over our way or promoting anything special. I am here to tell you about Christ and about His mercies. Do you care to hear it?

All right; listen:

First of all: The word covenant appears in the Bible over 250 times, just the word covenant. Have you ever run across it? How have you missed it over 250 times?

Our Lord speaks of a covenant with Noah. Every time you see the rainbow you ought to think of a covenant. For God said to Noah after the ark came down from the flood, as God put the rainbow in the sky, He said; "*I will never destroy the world by water again. That bow in the sky will be a sign of the covenant that I will make with you. I will destroy it by fire but never by water.*"

Then, there was a covenant with Abraham. Then there was a covenant with Israel. There was a covenant with David and many more. Over 250 times God talks about the covenant.

Listen to me; here is where you will want to listen a little more carefully. I've been giving you general information but now this is to the point. There are two main

## THE SURE MERCIES OF DAVID

ISAIAH 55:3 • HENRY T. MAHAN

---

covenants with which we have to do. There are two main covenants mentioned in the Scripture with which we have to do.

The first covenant called the “covenant of works,” was a covenant made with Adam and all his sons in him. It was a covenant of works made with Adam in the Garden of Eden.

Then, there is the second covenant, or the new covenant. The reason it is called the new covenant is not because it is a covenant made after the first one, but because it is newly revealed. Usually the second one comes after the first but in this case the first covenant was second.

You see, God revealed the covenant of works before He revealed the covenant of grace, though the covenant of grace preceded the covenant of works. *“Christ was the lamb slain before the foundation of the world.”*

Before God ever made Adam, before God ever put Adam on the earth, He talked about the everlasting covenant, the surety of an everlasting covenant, Christ being *“the lamb slain before the foundation of the world.”* He had a people chosen in Christ before the world, before the foundation of the world.

So, this new covenant is a covenant of grace, an everlasting covenant. So, there you have the two covenants, the covenant of works and the covenant of grace, the old covenant and the new covenant.

Now then, listen; we, all of us, every one of us, every son of Adam, every one of us is vitally involved and vitally affected by that first covenant, the covenant of works. Yes sir, we are all vitally affected by that, every one of us.

Everyone out there listening to my voice came from Adam. If you are a member of the human race, you came from Adam. We all are involved in and affected by that covenant of works.

Now, here is what I am saying; I hope by God’s grace that you and I have an interest in that new covenant, in that covenant of grace, in that everlasting covenant.

I know that those two covenants of which the rest of them ought to be studied because they have some relationship to our Lord Jesus Christ in revealing Him to us, but principally, you and I are involved in two covenants:

I know that all the covenants ought to be studied, because they have some relationship to our Lord Jesus Christ in revealing Him to us, but principally, you and I are involved in two covenants:

First of all: The covenant of works.

## THE SURE MERCIES OF DAVID

ISAIAH 55:3 • HENRY T. MAHAN

---

Secondly: The covenant of grace.

One, the covenant made with Adam. Two, the covenant made with the second Adam. One, the covenant of works made with Adam who fell and two, the covenant of grace made with Christ by whom we are restored.

*“In Adam we die; in Christ we are made alive.”* That is what the Scripture says. In Adam death came. By the second Adam, Christ’s restoration and resurrection came.

All right; let’s look for a brief moment at the first covenant, what we call the covenant of works. It was made with Adam. Adam was a representative person. The word Adam itself means, man, made from the red earth.

Adam, red man of the earth man, Adam was made from the earth. God made Him from the dust of the earth. *“He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. He became a living soul.”*

Eve was taken out of Adam. God took a rib out of Adam and made Eve. She is from him. He is her representative. He is her leader, her authority, her federal head, just like he is the federal head of all who came from him.

The whole human race is in the loins of Adam. When that first child was born, that is the first part of the human race. From then on, every child is a part of Adam’s race.

That covenant that God made with Adam when He made him and put him in the Garden of Eden, he is the trunk of the tree, he is the head of the human race. He is the representative; he is the federal-head. He is man (m-a-n); Adam is man. All men are in that man.

God never created but one man and that is Adam. He created one man and everything else and everybody else, every creature walking on two legs which is called “human” came from Adam.

God spoke to Adam and gave him a covenant. It is summed up in four words; God said to Adam, *“this do and live.”* That was it! All the requirements and the laws that God gave to Adam were summed up in one sentence of four words, *“this do and live.”*

God said, “Adam, you are a king, you are a prince. You have dominion over the whole earth; multiply and replenish the earth. Subdue the world. But, there is one tree in the Garden of which you shall not eat lest you die.”

“That tree is a token of my sovereignty. It is a token of your dependence on Me. It is a token of my independence of you that I do all things well; I am God.”

## THE SURE MERCIES OF DAVID

ISAIAH 55:3 • HENRY T. MAHAN

---

And Adam, of course, took the forbidden fruit. You see; that covenant failed, that first covenant failed because man didn't keep God's Law. Man didn't keep God's commandments. That first covenant was doomed from the start because it was made with a creature liable to fall.

Because of Adam's sin, because of Adam's fall, death, judgment, condemnation, came upon all of his seed, all of his people, all whom he represented.

Adam is a representative person; let me show you that in the Scripture, if you care. Notice that I said, because of Adam's sin; this is what the Bible says and God's Word says, what is our source of authority, what is our source of information other than the Scripture?"

We can't just reach out and take doctrine out of the air and make it stand, it has to come from the Word. Listen to **Romans 5:12**; "*By one man sin entered the world and death by sin.*" Death is the cause by sin. "*The sting of death is sin and death came into the world and death passed upon all men.*"

You see; when we are born of Adam, we are born "*dead in trespasses and sin.*" Look at **Romans 5:17**; "*By one man's offence death reigned.*" Whose offense? Adam; he was a federal-head. He was a representative person.

**Romans 5:18** says, "*By the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation,*" not some men, not the worst of men, but all men and women.

**Romans 5:19** says, "*By one man's disobedience many were made sinners.*" This is what we are saying. In **1 Corinthians 15**: it says, "*In Adam all die.*" I am not making this up dear friend; I am reading it from God's Word.

When God spoke to Adam in the Garden, He spoke to the whole human race. Adam was our representative. Adam is man. Adam is our federal-head. When he lived we lived, when he stood, we stood. When he died, we died. When he sinned, we sinned. When he fell, we fell.

The covenant was obliterated; it was eradicated; it was destroyed. This covenant of works is broken. It no longer has anything for us but condemnation; "*by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in God's sight.*"

That is what it says. No man is justified by works in the sight of God; it is evident. That was the first covenant.

Now, in my text, in **Isaiah 55:3**, God says; "*I will make a new covenant.*" We have to have a new one, the old one is broken, the old one is done away with, the old one is destroyed, and the old one is lying in pieces at our feet. It can't do anything but condemn us.

## THE SURE MERCIES OF DAVID

ISAIAH 55:3 • HENRY T. MAHAN

---

We need a new one. God says, *“I will make with you a new covenant.”* There are six things about this new covenant that you need to look into. This new covenant, as I said before, is newly revealed. It was already awaiting Adam’s fall.

You see, God doesn’t do things like we do; we wait for something to happen and then we make some plans. God foresees all things; He foreknows all things because He foreordained all things.

*“Known unto God are all His works from the beginning. He declares the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things that are not yet done; saying, my council shall stand.”* Adam’s fall did not slip up on God. There was a Saviour before there was a sinner. There was a lamb slain before the sin-offering was needed.

This new covenant is newly revealed. It is a covenant of Grace. It is not of works; it is of pure grace. A covenant of works will not do us any good; we had one of those one time. It did not do us any good and it won’t do you any good now. There is no use of a preacher coming to you and giving you a system of works by which to live; you can’t live that way.

Then, it is a covenant for the sinner, not for the righteous. Christ said, *“I didn’t come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. There is none righteous, no not one. There is none that seeketh after God. There is none that doeth good, no not one.”* So, it is a covenant for sinners not for the righteous.

Then, this covenant is unconditional, as far as I’m concerned and you are concerned, and as far as the creature is concerned. It has conditions but Christ met them.

You see, it is unconditional and it is free. It is free grace; it is the gift of God. God keeps saying that to us. We are so hard-headed and hard of hearing. He says, *“Eternal life is the gift of God.”*

You don’t buy gifts, people give them to you. You don’t pay for gifts. If a friend hands you a gift for Christmas or your Birthday and you hand him a quarter, you would insult him. We insult God; we spit in God’s face all the time. We give Him our quarters for eternal life. It is unconditional.

It is an everlasting covenant, it will never cease. Everlasting, what does everlasting mean? It means always, always, always, and always.

Then, this covenant is *“ordered in all things.”* David talked about it. You know; if you will read **2 Samuel 23:5**, it says; *“these are the last words of David.”* And this is especially significant here because our Lord said, *“I am going to make a new covenant with you and give you the sure mercies of David.”*

## THE SURE MERCIES OF DAVID

ISAIAH 55:3 • HENRY T. MAHAN

---

So, when David was dying, the author of all the Psalms, the slayer of Goliath, the ruler of the people, the man after God's own heart, do you know what his last words were? Before he died, he said this; "*all though it be not so with my house; God hath made with me an everlasting covenant.*"

That was the last word. David had talked about the Shepherd. David was the one who talked about God's power, David was the one who talked about God's holiness, David was the one who talked about God's redeemer and all of these subjects that he had in the Psalms.

When he came down to die, where did he find his rest? Where did he find his hope? Where did he find his confidence? Where did he find his assurance? "*God hath made with me an everlasting covenant.*"

This is something preachers don't preach about and don't talk about and people don't study. Yet David, "*a man after God's own heart,*" when he came to face God in death, when he came to meet God at the judgment, when he came to face eternity, he said; you know, "*God hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure.*" Watch it; and he said, "*This is all my salvation.*"

Think of the things that he had done. From a boy, he had been anointed king of Israel. He faced the armies of the Philistines, (the uncircumcised heathen), alone. In the power of God he slew their giant, their champion.

He had reigned over Israel. He made Israel the greatest kingdom on the face of the earth. He had written all these Psalms. When he came to die he said, "You know what, all my salvation and all my desire; God made with me an everlasting covenant; it is ordered in everything, nothing lacking."

This covenant is filled with the sure mercies, sure mercies. Oh, I tell you, sure mercies. I am tired of temporary things aren't you?

The hymn writer said:

**"Change and decay  
In all around I see  
O Thou that changest not  
Abide with me."**

Learn this; now listen to me; this everlasting covenant which God says, "*I will make with you,*" in which David found his comfort and his desire in salvation, is actually made with us. Oh get this my friend; in our representative, the Lord Jesus Christ.

You see, that covenant of works was made with us in Adam. In Adam, you see, we sinned. In Christ we are restored. "*As we borne the image of the earthy, we will bear the*

## THE SURE MERCIES OF DAVID

ISAIAH 55:3 • HENRY T. MAHAN

---

*image of the heavenly. The first man is of the earth, earthy, the second man is the Lord from heaven.”*

The covenant of works was made with that natural man, the flesh, Adam; he fell and he broke it. That second covenant was made with us in Christ with our second Adam. That’s right; that is what the Word says.

It says, *“In Adam we die; in Christ we are made alive.”* That’s right; it says, *“By one man’s disobedience we were made sinners; by one man’s obedience we were made righteous.”* That’s right; it is the eternal covenant wherein God determined to save a people and He gave them to Christ.

Our Lord said, now listen; in **John 6:37**, *“all that my Father giveth me will come to me and him that cometh, I will in no wise cast out. I came down from heaven not to do my own will but the will of him that sent me. And this is the will of Him that sent me, that all that he hath given me, I will lose nothing but raise it up at the last day.”*

This everlasting covenant which God says, *“I will make with you an everlasting covenant,”* was made with us in Christ. It wasn’t made with us directly; there was nothing that we could do about it. We couldn’t handle it. We couldn’t fulfill it. We couldn’t understand it. We couldn’t embrace it. We couldn’t meet its requirements.

There is no use in God making any more covenants with us; *“we are dead in trespasses and sin.”* Thank God, now watch it; He made it with Christ back yonder in the eternal councils of glory and He revealed it after Adam fell.

He revealed it all the way through His Word. When God says, *“I will make with you an everlasting covenant,”* He is saying, *“this covenant is made with you in Christ.”* That is the only way that it can be certain and that is the only way that it can be sure because *“He never fails.”* God put everything in good hands, in the hands of Christ.

Now, there are two or three vital things that you and I need to learn. There are things that are not being preached in our day and things that most people don’t know anything about. Do you know what they are?

First of all: God forgives sin but God never forgives sin and frees the sinner at the expense of His character. He never does! God never forgives sin or overlooks sin or puts away sin at the expense of His character and His holiness and His justice.

God is righteous and He is going to keep on being righteous. God is holy and He is going to keep on being holy. God is just and He must keep on being just. God must punish sin; He has to punish sin if He can be *“just and justifier,”* if He can be both holy and merciful, then He will do something for us as far as the saving of our soul is concerned.



## THE SURE MERCIES OF DAVID

ISAIAH 55:3 • HENRY T. MAHAN

---

But, there is no way that a sinner can be justified in the eyes of God unless God's holy Law is honored and God's justice is satisfied. Now that is just so!

You see, God is holy and you and I are unholy. The only way that God Almighty can receive unholy creatures is for them to be made holy, be made holy in the eyes of the law and before the throne of justice. That's what He does in Christ.

This is why God provided a substitute. This is why Jesus Christ came into this world "*in the likeness of sinful flesh*;" He was born of a woman.

I am going to take you though this a little bit. You see; God made with Adam a covenant. Adam broke it and fell. The whole human race fell in him. There was sin, death, judgment, and condemnation, "*which passed upon all men*." We became sinners.

God had made with Christ in eternity an everlasting covenant on our behalf. He made a covenant with us in Christ our representative.

Well, from the time that Adam fell, God started giving promises, prophecies, and pictures of this redeemer who would come, of this Christ who would come, (a prophet like Moses, a priest like Melchisedek, a king like David), who would come and fulfill all that the sinner needed and all that the law required and all that justice demanded and all that this covenant of grace required in order to deliver its promises.

So, one day He came. Our representative, our federal-head, our Lord from heaven came. He must be born like we are born. He was born of a woman. He must grow up from infancy to young manhood like we grew up subject to his parents, subject to all the laws, and to all the requirements, all morality, decency, holiness, truth, beauty, love, faith, and everything that a perfect God requires.

*"He did no sin and He knew no sin. There was no guile in His mouth."* He perfectly kept the law on this earth while walking on this earth. *"He was tempted, tested, and tried in all points as we are, yet without sin."*

You see, He is a representative person, a person, not just an example. He is not a frustrated reformer but a representative. He stood for me and He lived for me and He died for me.

You see; He lived for me and satisfied God's Law. He died for me and satisfied God's justice. *"The soul that sinneth, it shall die."* Christ died. *"He was buried and rose again."* Now, He is at God's right hand as our representative.

Watch this is **1 Corinthians 1:30**; God said, *"But of God are you in Christ."* You are in Christ in His birth, in Christ in His life, in Christ in His death, in Christ in His burial, in Christ in His resurrection, in Christ in His ascension, in Christ in His mediatorial reign; you are in Christ.

## THE SURE MERCIES OF DAVID

ISAIAH 55:3 • HENRY T. MAHAN

---

*“He is made unto you all you need, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.”* It is all in Christ. *“You are complete in Him.”* That is when it says that everything dwells in Him and *“you are complete in Him.”*

In **2 Corinthians 5:21**, learn two things in regard to the Gospel, substitution, which is somebody taking our place and satisfaction, what He did is sufficient.

But, **2 Corinthians 5:21** says, *“He, (Christ) was made sin, made in the likeness of sinful flesh. He took our sins in His body on the tree. He was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.”*

Let me give you several things about the sure mercies of David; (covenant mercies in Christ) found in the book of **Jeremiah**.

In **Jeremiah 31:33**, God says; *“This shall be the covenant that I will make with them in those days. I will put my law in their inward parts (not written on stones but written on the heart). I will write it on their hearts (they will love it) and I will be their God and they will be my people.”*

In **verse 34**, He says; *“They shall know me.”* They are not going to have to say, “Let’s teach everybody about God.” Everybody who loves God will know God from the least to the greatest.

Then He said in **verse 34**; *“I will forgive their iniquities and I will remember their sins no more. I will blot them out.”* No more, no more.

He said in **verse 39**; *“I will give them one heart and one way and they will fear me forever.”*

Watch **verse 40 in Jeremiah 32**; *“I will make an everlasting covenant with them and I will not turn away from them ever and they shall not depart from me.”*

You know the writer of Hebrews picks that same theme up in **Hebrews 10** and says; *“God will put His law in our hearts. He will remember our sins no more.”*

He opens for us into the very presence of God *“a new and living way,”* so come boldly!