

A GATHERING GRACE

Isaiah 55:1-3

God is doing a gathering work in our midst. Our God whose thoughts and ways transcend our own and whose mercy, grace, and forgiveness is lavished upon all who come to Him is marvelously drawing people to turn and to return to Him. Let's investigate Isaiah chapter 55 to see how we can be gathered to God afresh and how we can be those who God uses to gather others to Himself.

¹ "Ho! Every one who thirsts, come to the waters; and you who have no money come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost.

² "Why do you spend money for what is not bread, and your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, and delight yourself in abundance.

³ "Incline your ear and come to Me. Listen, that you may live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, according to the faithful mercies shown to David.

⁴ "Behold, I have made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples.

⁵ "Behold, you will call a nation you do not know, and a nation which knows you not will run to you, because of the Lord your God, even the Holy One of Israel; for He has glorified you."

⁶ Seek the Lord while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near.

⁷ Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the Lord, and He will have compassion on him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.

⁸ "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways," declares the Lord.

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

¹⁰ "For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there without watering the earth and making it bear and sprout, and furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater;

¹¹ So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; it will not return to Me empty, without accomplishing what I desire, and without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.

¹² "For you will go out with joy and be led forth with peace; the mountains and the

hills will break forth into shouts of joy before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands.

¹³ "Instead of the thorn bush the cypress will come up, and instead of the nettle the myrtle will come up, and it will be a memorial to the Lord, for an everlasting sign which will not be cut off." Isaiah 55:1-13 NASB

Isaiah 55: The First Group God is Gathering

- **Look who God is gathering. Isaiah 55:1-2**
 - **Those who come because they are (v1) hungry and thirsty.**
 - **'singular'**
 - **Which means every single one of us**
 - **Those who are spiritually impoverished. (v2)**
 - **Those who don't believe they have what it takes to believe in God and walk with Him.**
 - **Those who have been bank-rupt and broken (v1-2) by the alternatives this world offers.**
 - **This is plural – you all come! Each one of you – God's decision is made – the price has been paid.**
 - **Those with an 'inclined' ear. (v3)**

NOTE: He gathers to Himself those who yearn for Him.

- **Group two that God is gathering. (v4-5)**
 - **Those who do not know about God or the church of the Living God.**
 - **Those who will come to God because He has come to us. (v5)**

NOTE: He gathers to Himself those who have learned about Him from those who love Him already.

"Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.

² "For behold, darkness will cover the earth and deep darkness the peoples; but the Lord will rise upon you and His glory will appear upon you. ³ "Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising. Isaiah 60:1-3 NASB

The people who walk in darkness will see a great light; those who live in a dark land, the light will shine on them. Isaiah 9:2 NASB

Thus says the Lord of hosts, 'In those days ten men from all the nations will grasp the garment of a Jew, saying, "Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you. Zechariah 8:23 NASB

- ***The third group God is gathering. (v6)***
 - ***All who will seek Him and call upon Him.***
- ***Everyone who calls upon Him... 'nations' we don't know.***
- ***The striped, spotted, speckled, and the black sheep...(Genesis 30:32)***
- ***Jacob had 'redemptive eyes', kingdom eyes...he didn't see wormy caterpillars, he saw monarch butterflies!***
 - ***What do you see?***

¹² Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. ¹³ You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart. ¹⁴ I will be found by you,' declares the Lord, 'and I will restore your fortunes and will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you,' declares the Lord, 'and I will bring you back to the place from where I sent you into exile.' Jeremiah 29:12-14 NASB

- ***Seek Him...He is seeking you, and drawing you...seek Him now...seek Him for the first time or for the latest time!***
- ***We come to the Lord as we are, but not to stay as we are.***
 - ***Those ways are wicked.***
 - ***Those whose thoughts are unrighteous.***
 - ***NOTE: He gathers to Himself those that others might overlook or undervalue.***
 - ***Those who may be 'down' and out.***
 - ***Those who are 'up' and out.***
 - ***Those who are just 'out to lunch'.***

⁷ Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the Lord, and He will have love, pity, and mercy for him, and to our God, for He will multiply to him His abundant pardon.

⁸ For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, says the Lord.

⁹ For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts. Isaiah 55:7-9 AMPC

- ***The Word says...change your ways...the things you are doing...forsake your thoughts, your way of thinking, your mindset...***
- ***Turn to Him, return to Him...He will 'multiply' His abundant pardon to you (multiplied pardon for those who return to Him).***
- ***His thoughts and His mindset is higher than ours.***
- ***His thoughts about you are higher, richer, and more noble than your thoughts about you... "As heaven is higher than the earth so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts higher than your thoughts." Moffatt***

¹⁰ "The rain and snow come down from the heavens and stay on the ground to water the earth. They cause the grain to grow, producing seed for the farmer and bread for the hungry.

¹¹ It is the same with my word. I send it out, and it always produces fruit. It will accomplish all I want it to, and it will prosper everywhere I send it. Isaiah 55:10-11 NLT

- ***His Word is NOT void...NOT empty – full of purpose and an empowered result.***

For with God nothing is ever impossible and no word from God shall be without power or impossible of fulfillment. Luke 1:37 AMPC

- ***"So with the promise that has passed My lips, it falls not fruitless and in vain but works out what I will and carried out My purpose." Isaiah 55:11 Moffatt***

"So you'll go out in joy, you'll be led into a whole and complete life. The mountains and hills will lead the parade, bursting with song. All the trees of the forest will join the procession, exuberant with applause. No more thistles, but giant sequoias, no more thornbushes, but stately pines - monuments to me, to God, living and lasting evidence of God." Isaiah 55:12-14 The Message