**God and the Grandeur**

*Isaiah 55:8-9*

**Introduction**

1. While the contents of Isaiah 55 address those Jews who would experience Babylonian captivity as prophesied and their eventual release, its weightier focus is on the invitation of the Lord to partake in the blessings of the Messianic kingdom.
   1. **(v. 6)** – there is the call to pursue the Lord’s invitation while it is available – not to squander opportunities that God offers for salvation.
   2. **(v. 7)** – part of seeking the Lord is repenting of sin, and self-direction – ***“let the wicked forsake his way…the unrighteous man his thoughts”***
   3. **(vv. 8-9)** – The point is made concerning why one must turn from his own ways and thoughts in seeking the Lord for salvation.
      1. Man cannot find salvation through his ways and thoughts – **Jeremiah 10:23; Proverbs 14:12**
      2. God’s ways are superior to ours, and they are the only ways to follow for salvation.
   4. **(vv. 10-11)** – it is God’s word that must be submitted to, and it will accomplish its purpose. (Even for those who reject it – it judges them)
2. **Isaiah 55:8-9** – we all need to grasp this thought.
   1. Men sometimes like to subscribe to their thoughts as the best rather than God’s.
   2. Also, men sometimes undervalue what God has prescribed, and grow discouraged thinking God desires something grander than they can do, leading past discouragement to inactivity – not understanding what God requires is grand enough.
   3. **(vv. 10-11)** – instead, in either case we should just let God’s word do its wondrous work.
3. Let us not think that our ways possess grandeur, nor let us fail to see the grandeur in God’s ways.
4. Man’s Thoughts and Ways are Inferior to God’s
5. The Grandeur of God’s Wisdom
   1. We must beware of falling prey to the tendency of men to undervalue God’s wisdom – **1 Corinthians 1:18**
      1. Those who are perishing – **1 Corinthians 2:14** – the natural thinking man. (Carnal)
      2. Those who are being saved – **1 Corinthians 3:18** – the one who becomes a fool before God to gain His wisdom.
      3. An example of undervaluing God’s wisdom – **1 Corinthians 1:17** – preaching with wisdom of words – CONTRAST – **1 Corinthians 2:1-2**
   2. **1 Peter 4:11** – we must speak as the oracles of God.
   3. For some, God’s word lacks the pomp and splendor they seek:
      1. With this they take part in what Paul warned about – **Colossians 2:4, 8** – things not according to Christ.
      2. They are too worried about STYLE, instead of SUBSTANCE.
   4. This kind of undervaluing of the simplicity, yet profound wisdom of God will lead down the dangerous path of reasoning in our own opinions which seem to us to be better – INSTEAD WE NEED TO ACCEPT GOD’S WISDOM EVEN IF WE CANNOT YET COMPREHEND WHY IT IS BETTER.
6. The Grandeur of God’s Authorized Worship
   1. Jesus described true worship that is pleasing to God – **John 4:24** – in spirit and truth.
      1. Essentially, the worship God so richly desires is that which is sincere, from the heart, and that which is according to truth.
      2. We need not overcomplicate things, rather, simply do what God says to do from a sincere faith.
   2. The aggrandizement of emotion:
      1. Some think those who tend to be more emotional are more spiritual.
      2. With that thought, others seek to manufacture emotion to be more spiritual.
   3. The aggrandizement of form:
      1. Some make the mistake of simply going through the motions, thinking their worship is accepted on simply an outward basis.
      2. They have ***“the form of knowledge and truth” (Romans 2:20)*** but are not offering their hearts to the Lord in worship – ***“making melody in your heart to the Lord” (Ephesians 5:19).***
      3. As their heart is not set on the Lord, but mere outward actions, there is the danger of conflating tradition of man with the tradition of God. (Worship is more pleasing to God because we do it this way – time, order, etc.)
   4. The grandeur of God’s prescribed worship – **John 4:24**
      1. God sees value in worship that is brought forth from the heart set on pleasing God, and thus does exactly as He commanded.
      2. We need not undervalue sincere submission to God’s word.
7. God’s Thoughts and Ways are Superior to Man’s
8. When our heart is set on pleasing the Lord, we need not stop short of, nor go any further than the instruction in His word – **Isaiah 55:8-11**
   1. To think God desires less of us than what His word reveals is to fall short.
   2. To think God desires more of us than what His word reveals is to grow discouraged and be arrested by a spirit of intimidation leading to inactivity. (The “it’s not enough” mentality.)
   3. We need to find contentment in doing no less and no more than what God tells us to do in His word – we need to see the grandeur in that.
9. The Grandeur of Servitude
   1. **Matthew 10:40-42** – speaking of those to whom Jesus sent His disciples in the limited commission.
      1. Because they are in fellowship with Christ, and are doing Christ’s work, the one who receives them receives Christ.
      2. **(v. 41)** – thus will receive a reward.
      3. **(v. 42)** – indicating even the smallest action of service toward a disciple of the Lord by a disciple will be worthy of reward. (**cf. Mark 9:41**)
         1. **Matthew 10:9-10** – commanded not to take anything with them because they would be supported in their work by the faithful.
         2. **(vv. 40-42**) – thus, those who received them thusly would be contributing to the work of the Lord and serving the Lord themselves. (**cf. 3 John 8** – fellow workers for the truth).
   2. Jesus shows the grandeur of serving the brethren in His name – **Matthew 25:34-40** – when you did it to the brethren you did it to Christ.
   3. There is grandeur in service – **John 13:13-17** (after washing the disciples’ feet)
   4. Be encouraged that God sees, and is pleased with the acts of service toward others you perform – **Hebrews 6:10**
10. The Grandeur of Attendance
    1. Some do not attend as they should because they do not see the value in their attendance.
       1. They do not think they have anything to offer.
       2. They have the attitude described by Paul – **1 Corinthians 12:15-19**
    2. EVERY JOINT SUPPLIES – **Ephesians 4:16** – there is value in your presence and participation in the assembly.
    3. **Hebrews 10:24-25** – assembly is with the consideration of others, and a benefit you may bring them.
       1. By assembling, and participating in the worship, you stir others up to love and good works.
       2. You encourage (exhort) others to be steadfast in faith as the Day of judgement approaches.
    4. If you are incapable of doing something, whether being without authority or ability, do not be discouraged, but do what you can do!
    5. Having a gift, use it! – **Romans 12:4-8** – and see the grandeur of doing what you can do in service to God.

**Conclusion**

1. In our service to God we must let our thoughts and ways be directed by Him, for those of His are superior (**Isaiah 55:8-9).**
2. Let us never think our thoughts and ways are more in grandeur than God’s.
3. Let us never thing God’s thoughts and ways are somehow lacking in grandeur to the point of our forsaking them.
4. Let us see the value in God’s will for us and do what He has commanded us to do!