

# The Greatness of God's Providence

Isaiah 55:8-9

**Is. 43:1-3** But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: 'Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.'

**Is. 43:11** I, I am the Lord, and besides me there is no savior.

**Is. 44:6** Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts: 'I am the first and I am the last; besides me there is no god.'

**Is. 54:10** "For the mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you, and my covenant of peace shall not be removed," says the Lord, who has compassion on you.

**Is. 55:1-3** Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food. Incline your ear, and come to me; hear, that your soul may live; and I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David.

**Is. 55:6-7** Seek the Lord while he may be found; call upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the Lord, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

**Is. 55:8-9** For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

## I. The Superiority of God's Thoughts

**Is. 55:8-9** For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

**Ps. 147:5** Great is our Lord, and abundant in power; his understanding is beyond measure.

*God's omniscience means that He possesses infinite, complete, perfect, and immediate knowledge of all things—past, present, and future, actual and possible.*

**Ps. 92:5-6** How great are your works, O Lord! **Your thoughts are very deep!** The stupid man cannot know; the fool cannot understand this.

**Is. 40:28-31** Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; **his understanding is unsearchable.** He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength. Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted; but they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.

**Rom. 11:33** **Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God!** How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!

**Heb. 4:12-13** For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and **discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And no creature is hidden from his sight,** but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

**Job 38:1-4** Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind and said: 'Who is this that darkens counsel by **words without knowledge?** Dress for action like a man; I will question you, and you make it known to me. Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? **Tell me, if you have understanding.'**

**Job 42:1-3** Then Job answered the Lord and said: 'I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted. "Who is this that hides counsel without knowledge?" **Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know.'**

## II. The Superiority of God's Ways

**Is. 55:8-9** For my thoughts are not your thoughts, **neither are your ways my ways,** declares the Lord. **For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways** and my thoughts than your thoughts.

### It was necessary...

- for Jacob to have a special affection for Joseph;
- for Joseph's brothers, out of jealousy, to sell him into Egypt;
- for Joseph to be falsely accused there and thrown into prison;
- for him to go from there to Pharaoh's palace and become the second-in-command over Egypt;
- for Jacob's family to be saved from the famine through that and move to Egypt;
- for their descendants to multiply there while preserving their identity;
- for the Egyptians to enslave them;
- for God then to miraculously deliver the people of Israel;
- for God to lead them through the wilderness and give them the Promised Land;
- for Israelites to establish a kingdom in that land and build Jerusalem and the temple there;
- for them to turn away from God;
- for the Messiah to come to them one day;
- for the Israelites to reject Him and hand Him over to be crucified;
- for Him to die on the cross for our sins and rise again for our justification;
- for the Church to be established at the end of history and a remnant of Israel to be saved.

**Rom. 11:33-36** Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! **How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!** "For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor? Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?" For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

**Is. 55:1-3** Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food. Incline your ear, and come to me; hear, that your soul may live; and I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David.

**Is. 55:6-7** Seek the Lord while he may be found; call upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the Lord, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

**Is. 55:8-9** For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

### **III. The Superiority of God's Purposes**

**Is. 55:12-13** For you shall go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall break forth into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress; instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle; and it shall make a name for the Lord, an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

**Is. 55:3** Incline your ear, and come to me; hear, that your soul may live; and **I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love** for David.

**Is. 55:12-13** For you shall go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall break forth into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. 13 Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress; instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle; and it shall make a name for the Lord, an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

**Jer. 29:11** For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.

**Rom. 8:28-29** And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.