

**Isaiah 54:10-11 + 55:6-13**

**Isaiah 54:10** - "For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the LORD that hath mercy on thee."

- **Revelation 6:14-15** - "The heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together, and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains"

Some rabbis interpreted the "mountains and hills" as a stand-in for the kings of the nations.

"kindness" = *chesed* - kindness, favor, grace, mercy, good, pity, benevolence, desire toward, love, lovingkindness

(See also **Psalm 117**, paired with **Deuteronomy 6-7**)

"the covenant of my peace" - See **Numbers 25:12**, **Ezekiel 34:25**; **Ezekiel 37:26**, **Malachi 2:5**.

Compare **Matthew 24:35**, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away"

**Isaiah 54:11** - "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colors, and lay thy foundations with sapphires."

The mention of the "foundation" = *yacad* - here is important in light of **Psalm 118:21-23** (the other companion psalm for **Deuteronomy 7-8**) and the "stone that the builders rejected" that becomes "the head stone of the corner"

The same word is used in Ezra 3:10 - "And when the builders laid the foundation (*yacad*) of the temple of the LORD..."

- **Revelation 21:19** - "And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald"

The contrast is between mountains and hills - seemingly permanent but which can shake and be moved by earthquakes and titanic geophysical forces - and the "foundation" of Israel/ the Temple, New Jerusalem (the Messiah) that cannot be moved or changed at all.

**Isaiah 55:6** - "Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near"

Targum: "seek the fear of the Lord, while ye are alive."

The rabbis added "before the decree is gone forth" meaning "whilst the Shechinah is found in the sanctuary; before he hides his face, and causes his Shechinah to remove from you."

## Thoughts

**Isaiah 55:7-9** - "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith 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."

The "thoughts" and "ways" of God - This really concerns "ways of thinking" and the resulting actions- Humanity is locked in to self-seeking so we must "forsake" our thoughts = *ʾazab* - forsake, abandon, leave behind, refuse, neglect, relinquish.

"the unrighteous man" is the one who is *ʾaven* - from an unused root perhaps meaning properly, to pant (hence, to exert oneself, usually in vain) Self-exertion, self-effort, self-seeking.

We can't conceive of how God thinks not only because we are mortal but because we are fallen and in bondage to sin. Even our best thoughts are inevitably twisted and polluted by self-seeking.

But how do we forsake our thoughts? Trying to "stop" ourselves from thinking is futile.

Jesus describes the solution:

- **Luke 9:23** - "And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me."

"deny" = *aparneomai* - disown, abstain, leave behind, to forget one's self, lose sight of one's self and one's own interests.

Even when it means death on the cross:

- **Luke 22:42** - "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done."

Paul expanded this:

- **Romans 6:11** - "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

## God's Word

**Isaiah 55:10-11** - "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."

Human thinking results in actions that are ultimately without good fruit. All is vanity.

In contrast, God's word always accomplishes His will. And this is the commentary on the Shema and the covenant described in **Deuteronomy 7-8**.

## The Result in Us

**Isaiah 55:12-13** - "For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the LORD for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off."

At the end of history here will only be life, joy and praise issuing from both men and nature. But we can experience this now, by seeing through the thorns and briars of this life and glimpsing the hand of God behind it all, whose purpose is "to do thee good at thy latter end" (**Deuteronomy 8:16**).

- **Psalms 19:1** - "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork"