

THE TREES SHALL CLAP THEIR HANDS

① 7-15-84

Isaiah
55:12

This verse sounds like a scene out of Walt Disney's

FANTASIA: " The mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands". What a genius of animation could do with that word picture. Hills singing, Trees clapping their hands. Delirious with joy, that is what it is. This is it, This is what we've all been waiting for...hold your breath it is almost here the object of our hopes our dreams, our prayers. Can you not feel the emotion. What could possibly bring such utter and complete joy.

The answer is found in this 55th chapter of Isaiah. There are three principles which supply the joy we all seek.

1. The first is the accessibility of God. "Ho, everyone that thirsteth" writes Isaiah "come ye to the water..." Now it is obvious that Isaiah is not talking about the physical water any more than Jesus was talking about physical water when he told the woman at the well about living water. "Incline your ear, and come unto me ..." Isaiah writes in God's behalf. God is accessible. He is not only the source of our physical needs but our emotional and spiritual ones as well. He is waiting and he is willing.

Two little girls once studied a portrait of Queen Victoria

What's he doing, asked one little girl. The other gazed hard at the picture, then replied, "Oh, nothing. She's just reigning".

That is how we often think of God: "He is just reigning ...we think he is removed from human existence. What a difference it would make to some of our lives if we became conscious that God is alive and present in our world. His kingdom is within us. He is accessible to us regardless of our need, he is a friend whose love knows no bounds.

That is the first reason the hills sing and the trees clap their hands . . . the accessibility of God.

2. The second reason is this, it has to do with the covenant God has made with man. The Living Bible translates the third verse of this chapter like this: "Come to me with your ears wide open. Listen, for the life of your soul is at stake. I am ready to make an everlasting covenant with you, to give you all the unfailing mercies and love that I had for King David". We are heirs to a covenant relationship that God first made with Israel, and then to those who believe in Jesus Christ. We are his people, He us our God.

An elderly lady had never ridden in an airplane. Her grandson finally persuaded her to take a ride. With some fear, she agreed. After a short flight, the plane landed. As she deplaned, the grandson asked cheerily, "How did you like the flight, grandmother?" "Well", she unenthusiast

ically replied, "I went up in the plane, but I never let my weight down during the whole flight".

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We are like that lady, aren't we. We dare not rest our full weight on God's promises...and yet he is faithful to his covenant.

George Mcleod has a charming story about a young workman who was seen entering a RC church during every lunchtime and kneeling hastily at the altar for just a moment before hurrying immediately out again. This went on sometime before the curiosity of the local priest was aroused. One day he introduced himself and asked the young worker why he came so regularly when his devotions were so brief. The young man replied that he had to come during his lunch hour, and that the distance to and from his place of work was so great that he only had time for a brief prayer. The priest asked: "What do you say?".. The lad replied: "I say 'Jesus, it's Jimmie'". The priest was stirred by the his simple, yet eloquent faith. Sometime later the priest was called to stand by Jimmie's bed after there had been an accident. Jimmie's life was ebbing away. But there must have been a greater priest present, for the priest was certain that he heard a voice saying, "Jimmie, it's Jesus".

God is accessible. He is faithful to his covenant.

3. And finally God is at work in our world. "So shall

My word be that goes forth out of My mouth", says God, "it shall not return to me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and purpose; and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it". No wonder the hills are singing and the trees clapping their hands. God himself is passing by. He is involved in creation. Just as he spoke and behold "there was light" so he is speaking today. He is making things happen.

Victor Hugo In Les Miserables wrote of Waterloo: Was it possible that Napoleon should have won the battle? We answer no. Why? Because of Wellington, No, because of God. Napoleon had been denounced in the infinite, and his fall was decided upon. He embarrassed God.

We put our trust in the economy, in armaments, alliances. But don't count God out in the tide of human affairs/

Haven't you felt God at work in your life?

George Whitfield grew up in a pub..a British tavern. He lived with his brother and sister-in-law, In his childhood years he had to work in the tavern to help with the family business. He had a problem, he couldn't get along with his sister-in-law. Finally he left the pub. And later became one of the great preachers of all time. Was it just a coincidental set of circumstances? You would never convince George Whitfield of that. He said it was God's way of

"calling him from drawing wine for drunkards to drawing water out of the wells of savation for the refreshment of his Spiritual Israel"

God is at work in his world, he is at work in your life, are you letting him work?

The great composer Haydn was asked: "How does it happen that your church music is animated and lively and cheerful?" He unhesitatingly replied: "I cannot make it otherwise. I write according to the thoughts I feel; when I think of God, my heart is so full of joy that the notes leap and dance as they leave my pen; and since God had given me a cheerful heart. . . I serve him with a cheerful spirit"

Yes... the hills sing, the trees clap their hands.

God is alive... he is accessible, he is faithful to his promises. he is involved in his world today.