

Hooks to Hang Doubts On

#0388

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—February 4, 1972

Isaiah 55 verses 8–9:

“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” Isaiah 55:8–9.

Now, if we’re going to work with God, we need to understand how He works. It’s a great privilege to think God’s thoughts after Him. But our minds are not machines. We have a choice to make. There is a mystery, dear friends, in the human mind.

Two people can hear the same evidence, and one will decide one way and one the other. This happens all the time. And if you look out over the world, you’ll find that most of the people of this world do not believe in the Bible. They do not believe in Jesus Christ.

Is the majority right or wrong in this world? Well, you and I say they’re wrong. They say that we just are ignorant, or bigoted, or prejudiced, or something. My point is, we are in the minority of the world as a whole in believing the Bible and in believing in Jesus Christ. But of those who claim to believe in Jesus Christ, we’re in a very small minority among those because of the peculiar point of the third angel’s message. Is that correct? Yes.

Well, the majority must be right, aren’t they?

Well, we say, “No, no. According to the Bible, the seventh day is the Sabbath, and the dead are unconscious, and the judgment began in 1844, and Christ is coming soon for those that are prepared to meet Him.”

And we can go to the Bible, and we can prove all that, but the fact is, dear friends, that the great majority—don’t miss it—the great majority of people listen to that same thing, and they say, “No, we’re not going that road.”

Did you ever wonder why it is that there are such texts in the Bible as Luke 23:43? You might just like to turn to that. And you see, if I’m one of the majority in Christendom that believe that the soul is immortal and that people go to heaven when they die, why I’ll turn quickly to Luke 23:43, and I’ll read you what Jesus said to the dying thief. What did he say? Well, there it is:

“And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with Me in paradise” Luke 23:43.

And there it is, you see. The thief was going to be with Jesus in paradise that day. Of course, you probably will tell me, "Yes, but then Jesus didn't go to paradise that day because Sunday He said, 'I've not yet ascended to My Father.'"

And so, you have an answer. But my point is, if I want to believe what my father and grandfather and great grandfather believe, that people go to heaven when they die, this text helps me out, doesn't it?

And I can turn over here to Philippians to Paul's statement that he would rather depart and be with Christ. And I can go over to Luke's Gospel and read Jesus' story of the rich man and Lazarus.

"Well," you say, "Brother Frazee, what are you telling us all about that for?"

I'm telling it to you to point out this fact, friends, that God has put enough things in the Bible, left enough things in the Bible, so that people who want to believe that the dead are conscious find something to hang their opinions on.

Now, you and I wouldn't do that, would we? I'll just confess, I wouldn't do it, and when I say that, friends, I don't mean that I think I know better. I just admit that I don't know that much. I just admit that the way my mind runs, I'd like to shut a person up to the place where he had to see it the way I know it's right and there's no way to get out.

And you might be like I am in that. You might even lament that some of these things are there, but there they are. And what did our opening text say? God says:

"...My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways
My ways..." Isaiah 55:8.

God has a reason for letting these things be in the Bible. Would you like to study why it is? Well, that's what we want to study a bit tonight, because it isn't confined to this subject.

Take another subject, the Sabbath. You and I, we can read text after text from Genesis right on through about the Sabbath. And there it is:

"...The seventh day is the Sabbath..." Exodus 20:10.

It's the only day God ever rested on, the only day He ever blessed, the only day He ever sanctified, the only day He commanded us to keep. Is that all true? Yes. But then, why in the world does Paul say in Colossians the second chapter:

"Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in
respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath
days..." Colossians 2:16-17.

And all that's nailed to the cross [a paraphrase of Colossians 2:14]. And why did Luke put that in the 20th chapter of Acts in the seventh verse:

“And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread...” Acts 20:7.

Why, do you know, some people are so tickled when they find that verse. Yes. They're just so glad when they find that. Now, if I'd been writing it, I wouldn't have put that in.

And if I had foreknowledge, I'd say, “No, sir. I'm not going to say anything about that because somebody's going to stumble over that.”

And they do, they do. I wonder why He puts those things in there, wonder why.

Now, let's come a little closer home. Let's just come right within the ranks of those who claim to believe the third angel's message. Now, I suppose most of you folks could take some texts from the Bible, and I know you could take some statements from *Ministry of Healing* and *Counsels on Diet and Foods* and show that the best diet is a vegetable diet.

But oh, do you know, if I like to eat meat, do you know what I will ask you? “Well, why did Christ eat meat, then?”

Well, I wonder why He did. And I wonder why the Gospel writers put it down and make problems for people today that are trying to get people to see the advantages of a vegetarian diet.

You wouldn't do it that way, would you? No. I wouldn't, I wouldn't. I'd just freely admit what the text says:

“...My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways... For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts” Isaiah 55:8–9.

You know, I suppose there's a number of you here tonight that could take the Bible and the *Testimonies* and give quite a Bible study and testimony study on the dress question. And when you got through, you would prove that people ought to dress modestly and people ought to dress healthfully and simply and neatly. But somebody who knew the books and didn't like your conclusions, you know what they would come up with? The statement that says that Christians shouldn't take pains to make themselves a gazingstock. You've heard that statement, haven't you? That's right. It's there, it's there.

You know, in this matter of education, if you're acquainted with the counsels, you could bring quite a long list of very clear statements that because of the nearness of the end, and because of the peril of worldly education, that our young people should get a speedy yet thorough training and be out in the field witnessing for Christ.

But my dear friends, you'll find that if you attempt to read those things as an explanation for certain actions and programs, you'll find that somebody will begin to read statements about how we should develop every talent to the highest possible point. And that means at least you must get a degree. And if you have a degree, it means you must get another degree. And it means if you have that, you must get another degree because you're to develop every talent to the highest possible point and that God blesses intellectual attainments.

And these references I have given and the statements I've quoted about diet and dress and education, aren't they all in here? You know, you're trying to help somebody that's in an offshoot movement, they're either clear out of orbit, or they're getting out of orbit, and you try to help them with some clear statements about loyalty to the church. But they'll come back quick as a wink with some strong statements about how we mustn't let men be conscience for us and that everybody's got to study for himself and we must beware of following the papal method. And so, where are you? Where are you?

Well, I wouldn't want to leave you perplexed. And if I thought I had to close the meeting now, I never would have opened this subject. But we don't, we don't have to at all.

Let's turn to the 81st Psalm verses 11–12. When God brought His people out of Egypt, out of the iron furnace of slavery, He took them out there in the wilderness and gave them a wonderful program of life and health. He gave them a program of diet. He rained bread from heaven for them. But they didn't like it. And they cried.

“But My people would not hearken to My voice; and Israel would none of Me. So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust: and they walked in their own counsels. Oh that My people had hearkened unto Me, and Israel had walked in My ways!” Psalm 81:11–13.

Did God want to feed them meat? Did the same God that worked a miracle to give people bread from heaven bring quails for them to eat? Why? Well, they wanted it.

Let me tell you the key to this, my dear friends. God has set Himself to the task of satisfying every human soul. And He will give every person what he wants. It's around. You can find it.

The man that wants to go out here in the world and live the life of the sinner, although he knows he's going to destruction, God lets him find the things that he can satisfy his lust with. But the man that wants to satisfy his heart's desire in a selfish way and yet bear the name of religion and claim to be a student of the Bible, God will let him do *that*, too. And the man that wants to be a professed believer in the message of the remnant church and still wants to follow his own way, God won't catch him and pull him in the corner and say, “Now, if you're going to be a Seventh-day Adventist you've got to come into line on every point.”

No, no. God won't do that, friend. If we ever come into line on every point, it will be because we want to. That's right. It'll be because we want to.

Let's take another text, Psalm 106:15, talking about the same experience of Israel in the desert on this diet question. It says here about Israel:

"But lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert. And He gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul" Psalm 106:14–15.

Oh my dear friends, this is what's going on again and again, not merely on the diet question but in reading and in music, in education, in the choice of life work, in all sorts of things. People are getting their request, but with it they're getting leanness unto their souls.

The man that wants to be an open sinner, God lets him do that. The man that wants to be a hypocrite, God lets him do that. He lets him find the statements.

2 Peter the 3rd chapter, the 16th verse, Peter is writing here, and in this epistle right at the close, he refers to the epistles of Paul. He mentions him in the 15th verse:

"...our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you" 2 Peter 3:15.

Now, the 16th verse:

"As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which..." 2 Peter 3:16.

Paul's epistles.

"...are some things..." 2 Peter 3:16.

What?

"...hard to be understood" 2 Peter 3:16.

Did you ever run across any of them? Maybe what I read in Colossians 2 about what was nailed to the cross and don't judge people about the Sabbath. Maybe that's part of it. Could be. There are other things. At least Peter writing by inspiration, says that Paul wrote some things what? Hard to be understood. Question: why in the world did God let him write things hard to be understood? Why not make it easy? Why not make it simple? Why not make it so plain that nobody could get around it?

Let's read on:

"...in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as

they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction” 2 Peter 3:16.

My dear friends, there is no truth that God has given to man but what He allows men who want to do it to twist it for their selfish purposes. And He doesn't come down from heaven and stop them. Did you know that the first sermon that was preached by the Devil in this world, the first radio broadcast from the forbidden tree, started with quoting a text of Scripture:

“...Yea hath God said...” Genesis 3:1.

And from that text, the serpent began, and before he got through, he had twisted everything around. Eve went there a believer. She went away an unbeliever as far as what God had said because she believed what? What the serpent had said. And so, on and on and on it goes.

I want you to notice an interesting statement here in the book *Great Controversy*, page 527:

“While God has given ample evidence for faith, He will never remove all excuse for unbelief. All who look for hooks to hang their doubts upon will find them” *Great Controversy*, page 527.

Now, I want to read that again, and then I want you to say it with me because it's a vivid illustration.

“All who look for hooks to hang their doubts upon will find them” *Ibid.*

All together:

“All who look for hooks to hang their doubts upon will find them” *Ibid.*

Again:

“All who look for hooks to hang their doubts upon will find them” *Ibid.*

A number of years ago, I was holding a series of evangelistic meetings in a western city. And on one of my visits one Tuesday afternoon I was talking with a man who had been coming to the meetings, and he was telling me about a neighbor of his, an infidel, who had a book full of contradictions in the Bible so-called.

“Now,” he said, “Brother Frazee, I want to get that book and put it in your hands, and I want you to answer those for me so I can answer the infidel.”

And I said, “No, no, I won't be spending my time that way.”

“You won’t?” he said.

“No.”

“Well, why not?”

“Well,” I said, “listen. Suppose there was a blind man that had written a book in the braille, you know. And this blind man had written a book for other blind men to read with their fingers. And the message of that book was this: there are no such things as red roses or green trees or blue skies. Those are just ideas that people talk about. And the blind man had written that book at length to prove that, and other blind men read it. How much time would *you* take, wondering whether he was right or not? How would his arguments impress you?”

Oh, my dear friends, God wants to open our eyes so that we see His precious truth on every essential point. And then, the arguments of infidels or anybody else that’s trying to so confuse will not impress us at all.

Turn to John the 7th chapter and the 17th verse. Here’s a wonderful promise:

“If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself” John 7:17.

Another translation has it:

“If any man is willing to do his will...” John 7:17 (Unknown version).

We shall never know all that God wants us to do unless we’re willing to do it.

In a series of meetings that another minister and I were holding, there was an elderly woman who came night after night. She came to see the binding claims of the Fourth Commandment and in an altar call came forward to keep the seventh-day Sabbath. But soon I noticed that she wasn’t attending anymore. And I went down to her house to see her. I knocked at the door and nobody came. I knocked again. Finally, she came to the door and opened it just a little. She didn’t seem very glad to see me, but reluctantly she let me in. I told her we’d been missing her at the meetings. And finally, it came out.

She said, “You know, Mr. Frazee, I came down there to the tent, and I heard those meetings.” And she said, “It looked to me like I was going to have to keep Saturday for the Sabbath.” And she said, “You know, I thought about it, all my family are opposed, all my friends and the church I’ve grown up in. And I went to the Lord and I prayed earnestly. And I asked Him whether or not I had to do this.” And she said, “The Lord has shown me that I don’t have to.”

There was nothing I could say, nothing I could do could help her. And when I even raised the question as to whether somebody else besides God might have answered her prayer, I could see that she was irritated.

Oh, my dear friends, neither the study of the Bible nor prayer will take the place of a heart's attitude to want to know and do everything that God says.

"If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching..." John 7:17 (Unknown version).

And this is just as true in the realm of what we call the standards and reforms as it is the doctrines of the church. It's just as true in matters of diet and dress and education and music and reading as it is in the question of Sabbath and the state of the dead. It's true in every area.

Turn to 2 Thessalonians, the 2nd chapter verses 8 –12. See how far God will go in letting people have exactly what they want:

"And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish..." 2 Thessalonians 2:8–10.

Why?

"...because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved...that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness" 2 Thessalonians 2:10–12.

Oh my friends, what a warning. Do you know that we are in the time of the enchanted ground? Multitudes are sleeping not only in the world but in the church, not only in the popular movements but among the remnant. Jesus says:

"Strive to enter in at the straight gate..." Luke 13:24.

The narrow gate.

"...for many... will seek to enter in, and shall not be able"
Luke 13:24.

Do you know why? They want to go in with their baggage. They want to go in with their habits. They want to go in with their ideas. It is by being *changed* that we become like Jesus. Do you know we are told that there is much reading of the Bible that is not only without profit, it is a positive harm? *Volume 5*, page 704:

"There is much reading of the Bible that is without profit and in many cases is a positive injury. When the word of God is opened without reverence and without prayer; when the thoughts and affections are not fixed upon God or in harmony with His will, the mind is clouded with doubt; and

in the very study of the Bible, skepticism strengthens”
Testimonies for the Church, Volume 5, page 704.

“...skepticism strengthens” *Ibid.*

Just the other day, someone asked me about a certain statement in the Spirit of Prophecy writings relating to the use of a certain word which they supposed indicated a lack of scientific accuracy.

And they brought up the question, “Why was that word used?”

And that little thing, no bigger than a mosquito, will be used to outweigh the tons of evidence that in the writings of the Spirit of Prophecy, we have the mind of the Eternal speaking in our language in our day.

Oh, my dear friends, again and again, I am brought face to face with this fact. Unless the *heart* can be enlisted, all our efforts to convince the mind may be in vain. And I was talking with a young man about a certain movement that he had become infatuated with. He had come to talk with me.

And I said, “Brother, I’m going to be real frank with you. I don’t know whether I can help you or not.” I said, “I’d like to, but I don’t know whether I can or not.” I said, “I have learned by experience that there comes a point where that which the soul sees is what it wants to see.”

I said, “If you *want* to get out of this thing that the enemy has ensnared you in, I can help you. I *know* I can help you. I can help you see it. I can give you the evidence from the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy. But if deep down in your heart that isn’t what you want, you want to cling to it, you want to prove that you were right in the stand you took, I don’t think I can help you.”

“Ah, but,” somebody says, “Brother Frazee, you ought to be able to or somebody ought to be able to.”

No, friends, no. It isn’t that way. Six thousand years ago in Heaven, the brightest, smartest mind in all the created universe went astray from God. And by his sophistries, his arguments, his questions, his shrewd suggestions, he deceived one-third of the angels of God. And they weren’t dumb. They weren’t stupid. Perfect beings, their brain cells worked perfectly. One-third of them, my friends, listened to those suggestions.

And why didn’t God get them in a corner and line up the evidence and make them admit it? No. He gave them all the help that He possibly could and still leave them the power of choice. God will not force our muscles to obey Him, neither will He force our minds to believe Him. He gives evidence that must be investigated with a humble spirit, a teachable spirit, a willingness to be taught of God and to follow His counsels.

Ah then, with what reverence and with what longing we should approach the study of the Word of God. Let us never think as we go out to try to help others that

merely by lining up piles of references from either the Bible or the Spirit of Prophecy, we can convince people and get them to see. No. The Holy Spirit must send the truth home to the heart. And oh:

“...if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted...”
2 Corinthians 8:12.

Let us pray that God will teach us how not merely to reach the mind with evidence but to reach the heart with love. You see, this is what broke the heart of the Son of God in Gethsemane and on Calvary. He saw this mysterious, overpowering, delusive influence of the enemy. He saw how few would be willing to break from the power of Satan, and it broke His heart in agony.

Ah friends, it should break our hearts. Down on our knees before God, we should pray not merely for sharp minds to produce the evidence—we need that, that’s good, but oh for loving hearts, for longing hearts that shall love people to Christ. For without love, knowledge will never suffice, knowledge will never suffice.

Well, where are you tonight, dear friends? Do you remember a man by the name of Balaam? Do you remember Balaam? Do you remember the ministers of Balak came, and they wanted Balaam to come over there and curse Israel? And do you remember that Balaam, although he knew that Israel was God’s people, he went and did what? Yes, but before he ever went over there. What did he do right there in his home? He prayed. Oh, that’s a wonderful thing to do, isn’t it? Sometimes.

Do you know what Balaam prayed?

“Lord, tell me what to do, but I sure hope you’ll let me go.”

And did God finally let him go? Yes, He did. And Balaam went on and on and on, my friends, till he got what he wanted. He got the wages of unrighteousness. But he lost his life and died in battle, and he lost his soul, and he’ll be outside the golden city there with the hosts of hell. The prophet of God has gone to the enemy. Why? Because he dared to pray, to ask God about something that was already settled. It’s happening all the time, friends, within our ranks and outside.

I warn your soul tonight. Let us seek God that we may have an experience that will stand the test so that when the overwhelming delusions of the near future come to this world, we shall stand unmoved. It is written:

“Because thou hast kept the word of My patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which will come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth” Revelation 3:10.

Jesus says that the signs and miracles that are ahead of us will deceive, if possible, what? The very elect. Do you know why it won’t deceive the very elect? It isn’t possible. They’ve settled this thing that we’ve studied tonight. They’ve studied

that what they want is not their way, it's God's way. Instead of trying to bring God down to their will, they want to ask Him to lift them up to His will.

Friends, He's perfectly willing to do it. Jesus left Heaven and came to the cross that He might lift us up and bring us back into full harmony with God.

Now, this closing word: friend, no matter who you are and no matter where you are on the pilgrim pathway, there's another step for you to take. And you need not be perplexed or confused. There's a simple recipe which, if you follow it, will take you all the way to glory. It's this. Do the next thing that's clear in your mind. Take the next step that God has made plain. Never let what isn't clear keep you from doing what is clear. Are you doing tonight everything that you know that's clear? If you're not, ask Jesus through His grace to help you to do that.

Is there something that isn't clear? Tell God that what you want is not evidence to do what *you* would choose. Tell Him you want above everything else His highest and best will. Covenant with Him that you will do it no matter what it is. And friends, if you'll just do those simple things, day by day do what *is* clear and keep asking God for light on what isn't clear, you'll soon be with Jesus in the kingdom of God.

And meanwhile, He'll count you as perfect all the way along. Isn't that wonderful, friends? Isn't that simple? That's the way of life. That's what Jesus died to make possible.

How many of us would like to send Jesus the word tonight that we mean business about this? That instead of wanting Him to come down to our way, we want to come up to His way. We want His best will. Would you like to send Him that word tonight? All right.

Now, we're going to have just a few testimonies tonight, not a lot of them, but I'd like to hear from somebody that got something special in this meeting tonight and you'd like to just express a few thoughts that'll encourage somebody else. If you got something tonight that's been a blessing to you, come up here and speak your word of response to Jesus. He'll appreciate it.

[Testimony meeting follows]

All right. Let's sing number 267 [Old Adventist Hymnal (1941)].

"Jesus, I my cross have taken,
All to leave and follow thee."

John, will you come and lead it for me. And dear ones, as we sing this wonderful hymn of response if the arrow from the Lord's quiver has reached your heart, if you know that God is pleading with your soul tonight to make a full surrender, either because you've never made a full surrender in the past or because there's some surrender you need to make tonight, you come and kneel down here and seek God for yourself, and we'll seek God with you. There's help for you, friend. You can have light to walk in and strength to walk in that light.

“Jesus I my cross have taken,
All to leave and follow Thee;
All things else I have forsaken;
Thou from hence my all shalt be.
Perish every fond ambition,
All I’ve sought, or hoped, or known;
Yet how rich is my condition,
While I prove the Lord my own.

Let the world despise and leave me,
They have left my Savior, too;
Human hearts and looks deceive me,
Thou art faithful, Thou art true,
O, ‘tis not in grief to harm me,
While Thy love is left to me;
O, ‘twere not in joy to charm me,
If that love be hid from me.

Soul, then know thy full salvation;
Rise o’er sin, and fear, and care;
Joy to find in every station
Something still to do or bear.
Think what Spirit dwells within thee;
Think what Father’s smiles are thine;
Think that Jesus died to win thee;
Child of heaven, canst thou repine?

Haste thee on from grace to glory,
Armed by faith and winged by prayer;
Heaven’s eternal day’s before thee;
God’s own hand shall guide thee there.
Soon shall close thy earthly mission,
Soon shall pass thy pilgrim days;
Hope shall change to glad fruition,
Faith to sight, and prayer to praise.”
Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal (1986), #325.

My dear ones, God’s at work. And I know these seeking ones are going to get the help because it is written:

“Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find... For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth...” Matthew 7:7–8.

If somebody here was hungry and we had bread up here giving it away, wouldn’t it be a shame to leave without being fed? If there’s still another seeking one, come, friend. We’ll not sing more, but if God is calling you, come, seek the Lord.

“Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts...” Isaiah 55:6–7.

Yes, my brother. Kneel and seek God. God will hear you. I know He will. Friend, I know that God is just so happy to have us seek Him. Think of what He’s invested. He’s invested all Heaven in this one thing of reaching you and me with His truth and helping us have the power to live it out.

It’s simple, friends. It isn’t complex.

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