

Title: **“THE MULTITUDE OF HIS LOVINGKINDNESS”**
Text: Isaiah 63:7
Subject: *God’s Lovingkindness to His Elect*
Date: Sunday Evening — January 14, 2007
Tape # Z-18b

Introduction:

I want to pick up tonight right where I left off this morning, in Isaiah 63:7, and talk to you about “The lovingkindness of the LORD” and “the multitude of his lovingkindnesses.”

The prophet of God was ravished and overwhelmed by the marvelous works of grace revealed to him. When he realized what the Lord God promised to do for his chosen, as he beheld the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, the accomplishment of redemption by him, and the coming triumphs of the Savior, as he thought upon what the Lord had done for his people and what he promised to do in the preceding verses of this chapter, Isaiah felt that he had to speak a word of praise to the glory of God. He writes as though he were speaking to a crowd of people, and says...

(Isaiah 63:7) “I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the LORD, *and* the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his lovingkindnesses.”

Anticipating the future, he remembers the past. And, remembering the past, he encourages himself and us to believe God for the future.

*1st, **The prophet of God directs our attention to the fact that everything God does to us and for us, everything he bestows upon us is according to his lovingkindness toward us.*** — “*I will mention the lovingkindness of the LORD, and the praises of the LORD, according to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us.*” He means for us to understand that...

- Everything God does is a revelation of his love for his elect.
- Every blessing bestowed upon chosen sinners is a matter of free and sovereign grace. Nothing is earned, merited, or deserved by us, except the wrath of God.

*2nd, **Isaiah tells us that this fact, that “all things are of God” and that all reveal his love and grace to us, ought to inspire our hearts to give***

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praise to him alone. — “*I will mention the lovingkindness of the LORD, and the praises of the LORD.*” We ought to give unceasing praise to our God with unabated joy. We would never have time for complaining, if we were as busy giving praise to our God as we ought to be.

- • For His Being!
- • For His Grace!
- • For His Providence!
- • For His Promises!

3rd, God’s prophet then reminds us of the uniformity of all God’s works. Notice the next line of our text: — “*according to all that the LORD hath bestowed on us.*” — “*In everything give thanks*” because everything flows to us from his lovingkindness. We must not pick and choose our subjects for praise. God is to be praised when he *taketh away* just as fully as when he *giveth*. We must never bless the Lord for one thing and murmur against him because of another!

4th, Our text displays the grandeur of God’s goodness to us in Christ. Isaiah speaks of “*the great goodness toward the house of Israel.*” He speaks of everything God does as being *great*. Would to God we had such faith in him! Nothing God does for sinners is small! **Ingratitude makes great things seem little. But gratitude makes the smallest thing great.** Our God is a great God full of great mercies for great sinners through Jesus Christ our great Savior!

5th, God’s goodness to us is altogether undeserved by us. It comes to us, not according to our merit, but “*according to his mercies.*” Thank God for mercy! He deals with us in mercy. He has mercy on whom he will have mercy. He has compassion on whom he will have compassion. And he has willed to have mercy and compassion upon us!

6th, Next, God’s lovingkindnesses are a great multitude. Isaiah speaks of “*the multitude of his lovingkindnesses.*” His lovingkindnesses are more than can be numbered. Like the stars of the heavens and the sands of the shore, they are beyond human measure. They come to us in all shapes, at all times, and from every direction. Therefore, the man of God says, “*I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the LORD.*”

- I will mention them *to the Lord* in thankful praise.
- I will mention them *to you his people*, inspiring your hearts to worship, thanksgiving, and loving devotion to Christ.

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- And I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the Lord *to you who are yet lost and ruined without Christ*. — May God the Holy Spirit be pleased this hour to give you life and faith in Christ, drawing you to him by his own lovingkindnesses.

Proposition: The lovingkindnesses of the Lord are his acts of goodness, grace and mercy toward his people, by which we are saved and kept in grace, and by which God makes an everlasting and glorious name for himself.

Obviously, I cannot give a complete summary of God’s lovingkindnesses. That would be impossible. As I have already told you, they are beyond human calculation. Yet, I have no need to make a catalog of my own. If you will hold your Bibles open on your laps, I will show you “The Lovingkindnesses of the LORD” and “the multitude of his lovingkindnesses” Isaiah was inspired to speak of in this great chapter. These *ten acts of lovingkindness* will be sufficient, if blessed of God to our hearts, to inspire our hearts to worship him, praise him, and devote ourselves to him in grateful love.

REDEMPTION

The very first thing mentioned in this chapter is God’s crowning act of lovingkindness, — The redemption of our souls by Christ (vv. 1-5).

(Isaiah 63:1-5) “Who *is* this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this *that is* glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. (2) Wherefore *art thou* red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat? (3) I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people *there was* none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. (4) For the day of vengeance *is* in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. (5) And I looked, and *there was* none to help; and I wondered that *there was* none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me.”

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What can be more suitable to head the list of God’s lovingkindnesses to sinners than the sin-atonement sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ? (John 3:16; Romans 5:6-8; 1 John 3:16; 4:9-10).

*“The enormous load of human guilt
Was on my Savior laid;
With woes as with a garment, He
For sinners was arrayed.
And in the horrid pangs of death
He wept and prayed for me;
Loved and embraced my guilty soul
When nailed to the tree.
Oh love, amazing love, beyond
The reach of human tongue;
Love which shall be the subject of
An everlasting song!”*

William Williams

ELECTION

Next, Isaiah mentions God’s special election as an act of his great lovingkindness. Verse 8 reads, *“Surely they are my people.”* Thus, they are distinguished by God himself from all other people. But, a more accurate translation of the sentence makes the election of grace even more prominent. It should read, *“They only are my people.”* As God chose Israel alone to be his people, and bound himself to them by a covenant, so the Lord God has chosen us, you and I who are saved by his grace, and bound himself to us by a covenant of grace from eternity. Our election in Christ was the source and cause of our redemption by Christ. Christ is our Savior because he chose to save us.

*“Sons we are through God’ election,
Who on Jesus Christ believe;
By eternal destination,
Sovereign grace we now receive.
Lord, Thy grace does both grace and glory give.”*

How ravishing is the thought of God’s eternal love! Before the world began, he loved us. Try to think of it. Before ever there was anything but God, you were loved of God with an everlasting love, and chosen by him to

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be the recipient of his grace and his salvation! (Jeremiah 31:3; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 1:9-10; Ephesians 1:4-6)

- God’s election is the source and cause of every blessing of his grace and mercy in Christ.
- God’s election is the rule of his operations.
- God’s election is the security of our souls (2 Thessalonians 2:10-13; Revelation 13:8; 17:8).

CONFIDENCE

The next token of God’s lovingkindness displayed in our text is the gracious confidence he puts in us. I am not talking about the confidence of faith he gives us toward him, but about the confidence he has in us!

This is a genuinely astonishing thing. God Almighty, who knows us perfectly, places a kind of fatherly confidence in the people of his love. He says, “*Surely they are my people, children that will not lie*” (v. 8). Those words represent the trustful manner in which the Lord deals with us. Nothing is a more certain evidence of love among men than trust. “*Love thinketh no evil and believeth all things.*” When a wife trusts her husband, without suspicion or husband his wife, it is because love is genuine and strong. Husbands and wives prove their love to one another by trusting one another, by restful confidence in one another. A father, though he sees many imperfections and much fickleness in his child, proves his love to his child by placing confidence in him, refusing to look upon him with suspicion. That is how the Lord God trusted his people of old. He confidently, trustfully committed to them...

- His Law.
- His Temple.
- The Revelation of His Will.

In just that same way, the Lord God has trusted us, placed confidence in us, though he knows us. He knows how weak and sinful we are. Yet, he also knows that his grace makes his people to be, in the tenor of their lives, an honest people, “*children that will not lie.*”

- **He has put us in trust with the gospel.** The Lord God has graciously trusted this assembly with a position of tremendous influence over the souls of many (2 Corinthians 4:7).

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- **You parents have been trusted by God with children.** Never forget, your sons and daughters are not yours. They belong to God. He has simply trusted you with them, to raise them and train them for him.
- **I never cease to marvel at the fact that God has put me in trust with his Word.** — “*Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ*” (Ephesians 3:8).

Child of God, hear this and let it grip your very soul: God Almighty has trusted to you his name and his honor in this world! To every believer he says, *I have made thee a chosen vessel to bear my name.* You have some charge to keep, some talent to use, some influence to exert, some position to fill, some jewel to hold for the glory and honor of God’s name. I can think of nothing in this world more inspiring and more honorable than for God himself to trust me with something for him!

Illustration: A Child to a Father - *Trust me with that.*

SYMPATHY

Here is another gift of God’s great lovingkindness to us — His gracious sympathy with his people. Read the opening words of verse 9 and be astonished. — “*In all their afflictions, he was afflicted.*” Who could ever have imagined such a thing, had not God himself revealed it? (Zechariah 2:8; Hebrews 2:18)

(Zechariah 2:8) “For thus saith the LORD of hosts; After the glory hath he sent me unto the nations which spoiled you: for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye.”

(Hebrews 2:18) “For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.”

Our Savior does not sympathize with us as one man sympathizes with another. He sympathizes with us as the heart sympathizes with the body and the body with the heart. He knows what you are going through. He goes through it with you! The text does not say, *In some of their afflictions, but “In all their afflictions he was afflicted.”*

(Hebrews 4:15-16) “For we have not an high priest which cannot be

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touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are*, yet without sin. (16) Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”

GRACIOUS PRESENCE

The Lord’s intimate and gracious presence with us is another benefit of his lovingkindness toward us. — “*The angel of his presence saved them*” (v.9). The children of Israel were led through the wilderness by Christ himself. He was the pillar of cloud and of fire that led them through the lands of their enemies. He was the rock that followed them. Though often unseen, or unobserved by them, he was none the less present with them unceasingly. The Shechinah that blazed up between the cherubim over the mercy-seat was Christ, *the Angel of God’s presence*. In the types and shadows of that former dispensation, Christ was with the chosen nation and made manifest his redeeming love and grace.

Now, think of this and rejoice: The Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, our Redeemer and Savior abides with us even unto this day. Did he not say, “*Lo, I am with you alway?*” Did he not promise, “*I will never leave thee nor forsake thee?*” “*Rejoice,*” then. “*Let your moderation be known unto all men; the Lord is at hand.*”

- He was once here physically, in a real body of flesh (John 1:14; I John 1:1-3).
- He is now with us spiritually in a way that the world can never understand (John 14:21-23).
- He is with us in the assembly of his church and in the ordinances of divine worship (Matthew 18:20).
- And he is with us in all our trials, temptations, troubles, and sorrows (Isaiah 43:1-5).

(Isaiah 43:1-5) “But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called *thee* by thy name; thou *art* mine. (2) When thou passest through the waters, I *will be* with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. (3) For I *am* the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt *for* thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba

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for thee. (4) Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life. (5) Fear not: for I *am* with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west.”

Have you not seen him, when you could see no one else? Have you not known his presence, when you were all alone in this wilderness? Have you not often looked into his face and been overwhelmed by the fact that you could see him looking down upon you with the smile of a loving friend, a tender brother, and an all gracious Savior? Have you not walked with the Son of God in the cool of the day, leaned upon his arm in the rough road of adversity, and snuggled up to his heart in times of heaviness and sorrow? How I rejoice to know that Christ is here with me, *the Angel of God’s presence!*

GRACIOUS INTERVENTIONS

Here is another token of God’s great, marvelous, and multitudinous lovingkindnesses — His gracious interventions and deliverances. Look at verse nine again. “*The Angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them.*” As God brought Israel out of Egypt, through the Red Sea, and into the land of promise by his mighty hand and his stretched out arm and then delivered them time and again from the hands of their enemies, so he has saved us, is saving us, and shall yet save us by the sovereign interpositions of his grace (2 Corinthians 1:10).

(2 Corinthians 1:10) “Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver *us.*”

It was by the sovereign intervention of his grace that we were saved from the dominion of sin in regeneration and effectual calling (Ephesians 2:1-4).

(Ephesians 2:1-4) “And you *hath he quickened*, who were dead in trespasses and sins: (2) Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: (3) Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. (4) But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved

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us,”

It is only by God’s wise, gracious, and timely intervention that we are saved from our earthly troubles.

- The Secret Interventions of Providence by which He Preserves Us
- The Secret Angelic Interventions by which He Protects Us
- The Manifest Interventions by which He has Raised us Up From the Bed Of Sickness
- The Marvelous Interventions of Grace by which He has Restored Our Fallen Souls
- *“Hitherto hath the Lord helped us!”*

*“Here I raise mine Ebenezer,
Hither, by Thy help, I’ve come;
And I hope, by Thy good pleasure,
Safely to arrive at home!”*

SPECIAL PROVIDENCE

God’s special providence is to every believing soul a wonderful evidence of his lovingkindness. This is how Isaiah describes that special providence to the children of Israel — *“He bare them and carried them all the days of old”* (v.9). Like a mother carries an infant child, so our God carries his people through this world. The good Shepherd, our Lord Jesus Christ, when he has found his sheep, lays it on his back and carries it in his bosom all the way home.

- By special providence he provides for us.
- By special providence he protects us.
- By special providence he directs us.
- Romans 8:28

CHASTISEMENTS

Moreover, our God shows his lovingkindnesses toward his children by his loving, fatherly chastisements (v. 10).

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(Isaiah 63:10) “But they rebelled, and vexed his holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their enemy, *and* he fought against them.”

Yes, God’s chastening rod is a blessing for which we ought ever to be thankful to him. Let us sorrow that we need chastening. But let us ever give thanks to God that he does not leave us without chastisement (Hebrews 12:5-11; Psalm 119:67,68, 71; 1 Peter 1:7).

(Psalms 119:67-68) “Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word. (68) Thou *art* good, and doest good; teach me thy statutes.”

(Psalms 119:71) “*It is* good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes.”

(Hebrews 12:5-11) “And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: (6) For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. (7) If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? (8) But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. (9) Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected *us*, and we gave *them* reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? (10) For they verily for a few days chastened *us* after their own pleasure; but he for *our* profit, that *we* might be partakers of his holiness. (11) Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.”

(1 Peter 1:7) “That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:”

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C. H. Spurgeon said, to his congregation, “O, my brethren, how much we owe to the hammer and the anvil and the file and the fire. Thanks be to God for the little crosses of every day, aye, and for the heavy crosses which he sends us at certain seasons. He does not gather the twigs of his rod on the mountains of wrath, but he plucks them in the garden of love, and though he sometimes makes blue marks upon us as he smites us heavily, yet...

*‘His strokes are fewer than our crimes
And lighter than our guilt.’*

Love bathes all the wounds which it makes and kisses away the smart. Blessed be a chastening God! Set down your chastisements among your choicest mercies.”

GREAT FAITHFULNESS

When making mention of the lovingkindness of our God, we cannot fail to mention his constant covenant faithfulness (vv. 11-13).

(Isaiah 63:11-13) “Then he remembered the days of old, Moses, *and his people, saying, Where is he that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock? where is he that put his holy Spirit within him? (12) That led them by the right hand of Moses with his glorious arm, dividing the water before them, to make himself an everlasting name? (13) That led them through the deep, as an horse in the wilderness, that they should not stumble?”*

Isaiah is saying to us, *As God remembered what he had done for his people in the past, he resolved to do the same and be the same to his people again.* If the Lord God reasons thus with himself, may we not safely conclude that he who has done so much for us, who has kept us thus far by his grace, who has led us hitherto, will also bring us home to glory at last? If he had meant to destroy us, would he have done so much for us? (Psalm 36:5; 40:10; 89:1-8, 24-33; 92:1-2).

(Psalms 36:5) “Thy mercy, O LORD, *is in the heavens; and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds.”*

(Psalms 40:10) “I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy lovingkindness and thy truth from the great congregation.”

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(Psalms 89:1-8) “Maschil of Ethan the Ezrahite. I will sing of the mercies of the LORD for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations. (2) For I have said, Mercy shall be built up for ever: thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens. (3) I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, (4) Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations. Selah. (5) And the heavens shall praise thy wonders, O LORD: thy faithfulness also in the congregation of the saints. (6) For who in the heaven can be compared unto the LORD? *who* among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the LORD? (7) God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all *them that are* about him. (8) O LORD God of hosts, *who is* a strong LORD like unto thee? or to thy faithfulness round about thee?”

(Psalms 89:24-33) “But my faithfulness and my mercy *shall be* with him: and in my name shall his horn be exalted. (25) I will set his hand also in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers. (26) He shall cry unto me, Thou *art* my father, my God, and the rock of my salvation. (27) Also I will make him *my* firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth. (28) My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. (29) His seed also will I make *to endure* for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven. (30) If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; (31) If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; (32) Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. (33) Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail.”

(Psalms 92:1-2) “A Psalm *or* Song for the sabbath day. *It is a good thing* to give thanks unto the LORD, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High: (2) To show forth thy lovingkindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night,”

*God would not have taught me
To trust in His name,
And thus far have brought me
To put me to shame.
His goodness in the past*

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*Forbids me to think
He will leave me at last
In trouble to sink.
Each sweet Ebenezer
I have in review,
Confirms His good pleasure
To carry me through.*

(Lamentations 3:22-23) “*It is of the LORD’S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. (23) They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.*”

BLESSED REST

Once more, the prophet of God makes mention of God’s lovingkindnesses toward his elect by reminding us of the rest he gives to his chosen (vv. 13-14).

(Isaiah 63:13-14) “That led them through the deep, as an horse in the wilderness, *that they should not stumble? (14) As a beast goeth down into the valley, the Spirit of the LORD caused him to rest: so didst thou lead thy people, to make thyself a glorious name.*”

First, he describes the blessed rest of faith as a matter of utmost freedom in Christ. Being set free from the law’s curse and bondage, the believer is like a horse in the wilderness. That is how God led Israel through the Red Sea. What exultations, what triumphs, what freedom they enjoyed! And that is exactly what God gives every believing sinner in Christ - *The Blessed Rest of Freedom!* The Lord our God gives us both liberty and safety in this world in Christ, and thus gives us rest.

Then, the prophet compares our rest to that of horses, cattle, or oxen going down into the valley in the cool of the evening to rest. Standing knee deep in water, occasionally swishing their tails, and licking their foals or calves, they seem not to have a care in the world. They are resting. That is what faith in Christ brings (Matt. 11:28-30).

Believing Christ we enter into **the rest of forgiveness**, and begin to keep the sabbath in a spiritual sense. That is the only way we can or should keep

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the sabbath. We cease from our own works and trust Christ alone for acceptance with God. (Colossians 2:16; Hebrews 4:3).

(Colossians 2:16) “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*.”

(Hebrews 4:3) “For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.”

We enjoy **the rest of contentment** as we trust our God and Savior with the rule of our lives and of the universe for our souls’ good and the glory of his name (Philippians 4:12).

(Philippians 4:12) “I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.”

We enjoy **the rest of sweet obedience** as we follow our Master’s leading in all things (Matthew 11:30).

(Matthew 11:28-30) “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. (29) Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. (30) For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light.”

And, when we leave this world, when we enter into heaven’s glory, then we shall enter into **the rest which remains** for the people of God, (Hebrews 4:9).

(Hebrews 4:9) “There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.”

APPLICATION

I cannot imagine a better theme for our hearts’ meditation as we prepare now to observe the Lord’s Table again together than “*the lovingkindness of the LORD*” and “*the multitude of his lovingkindnesses*.”

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- May God the Holy Spirit use the lovingkindnesses of our God to draw you who are yet without Christ to surrender yourselves to him.
- I pray that the Lord’s lovingkindnesses to us will persuade each of us to give ourselves to him in unreserved devotion.

Amen.