

".....*But take heart; I have overcome the world.*" (John 16:33).
Be an *Overcomer* just like He is an *Overcomer*!

2ND DECEMBER 2012

THE THOUGHTS OF GOD

ISAIAH 55. 8,9, PSALMS 92. 5-9, PSALMS 139. 7-12

[Dr. John Joseph

Turn with me to the book of **Isaiah chapter 55** and I want you to look at **verses 8&9**.

"For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor 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. (Isaiah 55:8, 9 NASB).

The Bible declares that God has some thoughts on the mind. Many times we think that God has forgotten us. We can't understand how God can understand. Often times we exalt our thoughts above God's. The reason we exalt our thoughts is because our thoughts are comprehensible. Our thoughts are containable. Our thoughts can be reached, our thoughts can be broken down, our thoughts can be understood. But, when it comes to God's thoughts, we almost feel that, they are infathomable! Because, God hasn't explained it to us, you haven't seen Him or heard Him. We haven't heard Him, yet, we do know that we have sensed Him. Some of us have experienced, some of us have seen God coming into that situation. Some of us have heard God's voices coming in a very supernatural way.

A little before Dr. Benoy came to me, asking, "*Pastor, don't you think we need to look for a piece of land,*" it was around that time the Holy Spirit was beginning to speak to my heart about looking for a piece of land. But, because we didn't have money in the bank and because it was not the godly time, even though I knew it was God's plan, I wasn't sure it was God's time, I kept it to myself. But when Binoy came and asked that question, people started coming together, prayed about it, around that time. Sometimes some people come alongside, into our lives, because sometimes, even though we have an idea of God's thoughts or God's plans, it is the extra push that comes the way, which takes it forward.

My thoughts are not your thoughts, My plans are not your plans, when God begins to work something in our lives. We think how could God do this?

2 or 3 weeks later, he came asked me, "*Did you take a decision*"? I said, "*I haven't decided, you know, but, let's think about it. Let's get people together and let's go out and look for the land.*" Because people started coming together asking, 'is this God's time'. It was around that time, we had the IMPACT Conference happening. At the IMPACT

conference, we had Pastor Samachen coming and he said, "*The Lord has released a piece of land to you.*" Suddenly prophetic word came upon the godly thought, of the godly desire that God had put inside our hearts.

You see, **you have a godly thought. When you begin to align your thought to God's thoughts, God begins to send people, to let you know that this is the hand of God.** Some people say, "*If I had seen God, I would have known Him better.!*" Don't lie to yourself, because Adam and Eve, they had seen God, they walked with Him, they talked with Him in the garden, in the cool of the day, they heard His voice, and yet, when given a choice, they made a choice for their selfish need, so that they would become like God! Not only did they see God, they saw the devil too. As much as they saw God, they talked with the devil too. And they heard the devil say, "*You will not die surely. Surely you will not die and you will become like God!*" But, they liked the fact that they would become like God.

The devil comes to us, the way he comes to destroy our lives is by thoughts. And the way God builds our lives, is by thoughts! There is always a trying to reach out and understanding God's thoughts. *If I can see Him, if I can touch Him, if I can hear Him, I can obey Him.* You know what? The Pharisees, they saw Him, touched Him, heard Him, they experienced the miracles, yet, they didn't believe in Him. Because, **belief is not a matter of what you see, touch or hear, it is a matter of what you know!** It is the thought of the truth of God! Halleluiah! You see, when you believe, it has to do with His thoughts.

The Bible says, in the gospel of Luke, that in the land, Jesus was healing people and power was flowing out of Him. And yet, the Pharisees, who saw the miracles happening in front of their eyes, while the miracles were happening, were planning how to catch Him! You can be in the middle of a miracle atmosphere and yet it is the thoughts that begin to battle in our mind. There is a difference between our thoughts and His thoughts. His thoughts are true, our thoughts are presumptions. Our thoughts are as much as we can see or understand, while His thoughts are true. Bible says, *My thoughts are not your thoughts.* We think to the extent of what we can see here. That is why **Ephesians 3:20** says,

Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, (Ephesians 3:20 NASB).

We say, " *God, I want you to do this for me.*" Do you know what God says? "*My thoughts are far beyond all that.*"

When I was just 16, the Holy Spirit spoke to me and said that I was called to full time ministry. Now, I didn't know what full time ministry was, neither was I prepared to do it. I got baptized in the Spirit, I came out of that meeting and I heard in my spirit God telling me that I was called into full time ministry. So, I went up and asked the preacher what was full time ministry. He said that full time ministry means, *God is calling you to serve Him.* That night, I saw a vision, I saw myself wearing a white robe. So I thought God

wanted me to be a priest! So I decided that I would become a priest of the local parish where my father and brother had attended. I felt on fire for God and I thought of going to join a Bible school. The coming Sunday, I went to the local church and the priest was preaching on **John ch 15** and he said quoting Jesus, "*I don't call you servants anymore, I call you friends.*" Because the servants don't know what the master is doing, but the friends know. Sitting at the back of the church, I was crying. I was so excited that, Monday morning I went to the priest and told him that God had called me to be a priest and asked him what was the quickest way to become a priest. He said, *Study B. Th.* and when he said that it took four years, I asked him, "*Do you know how many people go to Christless eternity in four years?*" I asked him about the faster way to become a priest and he said, *'D. Th'*. When I came to know that it takes two years, I asked the fastest way and he said, *'C. Th'*, which takes one year. I went home and told Papa, "*I believe God is calling me to full time ministry.*" He was thinking, his eldest son and daughter were all doing MBBS and he was hoping I would also take up this, when I wanted to become a preacher! My father in 1957 was an unordained priest, a 'upadeshi' working for that church. My father had come almost close to becoming a priest and he had to give it up in order to shoulder the responsibility of the home. And here is his son after 30 or 40 years standing in the same place saying, "*I want to be a priest.*" He asked me to go and study. I wanted to be a priest because that was what I knew about serving God, or what I could comprehend. That was as far as I could see! That was as far as I knew! But, one thing in my heart I know that His thoughts are far higher than our thoughts and His ways are higher than our ways! **The things that God plans for is far beyond what we can see, far beyond we can experience, far beyond we can envisage, far beyond we can understand. God's plans are higher! God's plans for you and me are higher!**

I remember, one day, I walked into a small meeting in Tiruvella, Kattode, a place 4 Kms. from Thiruvella. This was near the house of a cousin of mine and he asked me to go there and said he would join a little later. I sat there; it was a Pentecostal, Spirit filled fellowship, nobody knew me and I didn't know anyone. There, an eighteen year old girl, an illiterate girl, sitting over there, began to prophecy. She asked, "*Who is John Joseph?*" I said, "*Well, I am John Joseph.*" She looked at me and said, "*You are going to be a doctor. And after that, you will come into full time ministry. Then the Lord says, I have not called you to be a priest, I have called you to a royal priesthood!*" That, just set me free. Suddenly, I knew in my spirit that there were other ways to serve God. **The plans you have for yourselves, are limited.** His plans are higher. His thoughts are far greater

Psalms 92:5

How great are Your works, O LORD ! Your thoughts are very deep. (Psalms 92:5 NASB).

Your thoughts are very deep! **Sometimes, we don't understand, why God is doing what He is doing.** Why I have gone through, what I have gone through! There are lots of people who have gone through even worse than we have gone through, but because

they were connected to the resources of heaven, their end times have been greater than their beginnings! The plans that God has for you -

For I know the plans that I have for you,' declares the LORD, 'plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope. (Jeremiah 29:11 NASB).

How big are your thoughts? Your thoughts are very deep, that the stupid man cannot understand, the fools can't understand this, that though the wicked sprout like grass and all evil doers flourish, they are doomed to destruction forever!

The stupid man cannot know; the fool cannot understand this: that though the wicked sprout like grass and all evildoers flourish, they are doomed to destruction forever; but you, O Lord, are on high forever. For behold, your enemies, O Lord, for behold, your enemies shall perish; all evildoers shall be scattered. (Psalms 92:6-9 ESV).

Once you come in touch with the thoughts and plans of God, you will never be the same again! There is a wonderful Christian movie called 'Amazing Grace'. It is the story of the person who was responsible for the abolition of slavery, Sir, William Wilberforce. He was caught up between knowing the will of God and his passion to be come a preacher. But, he knew God was calling him into politics. In one part of the movie, he would go out into the fields and pray to God asking His will for his life. Finally, he decides to go into politics. Because he went into politics, he was the man who was instrumental behind the abolishing slavery in the UK! God just picked him up. **Our plans are so different from God's plan and even if we have the best of our plan, it is still imaginable.**

Ephesians 3:20 says,

Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, (Ephesians 3:20 ESV).

Our plans are best imaginable! When God has weaved into our plans, it is beyond our imagination. If we can fall in line with His thoughts, it says, first,

As heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts higher than your thoughts.

Many times when we come to God, one of the greatest challenges is the clash of our thoughts. What are God's thoughts? Come to God and ask Him, *God, what are your thoughts? What are Your desires?* Many of us have made plans and many of us have desires too. **God's plans are just amazing!** One who went to study Cardiology, ended up being a Pastor! His wife, who went to NIT, Gwalior, was picked up by Him to become this man's wife! **Sometimes road blocks that come into our lives, are part of God's plans!** Sometimes, dead ends also become part of His plans! Sometimes, wildernesses that we go through, are part of God's plans. Bible says, *I drew them into the wilderness, so that I could speak to them.* You can be in the heart of New York City and can be in the wilderness. You can be right at the heart of London city and be in the wilderness. **Sometimes God takes us away to places, so that He can put His thoughts in our**

hearts, so that He can put His plans into our hearts. God's thoughts are higher than our thoughts.

Now, look at **Isaiah 54:2**. I remember the year 2001, when we were planning the TROTB ministry. Before we formally launched it, one day God asked me to take a time of prayer, one month before TROTB was planted. Out of nowhere God gave me a Word. God had given many scriptures and at that time we couldn't understand even half of those scriptures, we couldn't understand what God was planning. In those days, if God were to tell me that He was going to do this, and this and this, partnering with me, trust me, I wouldn't have believed Him! I would have maximum thought of doing some B. Th in some Bible college and spend the rest of my days teaching in a Bible college!

Isaiah 54:2 says,

"Enlarge the place of your tent, and let the curtains of your habitations be stretched out; do not hold back; lengthen your cords and strengthen your stakes. (Isaiah 54:2 ESV)

*Enlarge the place of your tent....*I believe God is speaking to some of you today - Enlarge your tent. Some people are willing to obey God, in the first part - pitch your tent. You may be saying I have been blessed, but, you may not be blessed enough - enlarge your tent. God wants you to enlarge your tent. He wants you to spread out, He wants you to *stretch out*.

*and let the curtains of your habitations be stretched out
Spare not, lengthen your cords and strengthen your stakes*

For you will spread abroad to the right and to the left, and your offspring will possess the nations and will people the desolate cities. (Isaiah 54:3 ESV).

Here God literally begins to prophecy. By 1997,98 I was living in the city of Trivandrum, very happily, in very comfortable situations. I was well taken care of, as a little preacher boy. Suddenly, God asked me to pack my bags and go to North India. I couldn't understand, how God could do that to me. I said to God, "*Lord, I will pray for the North, I will pay for the North and I will send people North. But, I am not going.*" And The Lord said, "*I want you to pack your bags and go North.*" I didn't understand then that the next move for me was to pack my bags and go. I even said to Him, "*Why can't I live in South India and preach in North India?*" And The Lord told me, "*You live in North India and preach in South India. Now, pack your bags and go.*" I couldn't understand Him, then. So, one day I went to the preacher Rambabu and said, "*Everything is good. But one question. Who will provide for your meal?*" Then he said that God will provide. I again asked him how God would provide. Because they had walked in faith, he could tell me not to worry about it. He couldn't explain to me the things in the Spirit. You got to taste and see that The Lord is good! You got to experience the Word of God. You got to experience the thought of God. **How will somebody know about the supernatural provision, unless we have walked with God and seen that supernatural provision of God!**

Last time when I was in UK, one real estate guy, when he heard that we were buying land for church, asked me how much our land costed. I said it was about 2 crores Rupees which was roughly equivalent to 225,000 pounds. He was astonished. We were standing then on a 270 acre plot of land and I asked him how much one acre of land in UK costed. He said only 10,000 pounds! He asked me, " *How are you going to do it?*" I looked at him and said, "*I don't know how we were going to do it, I don't know how it was going to happen. But, mark my words, on the 30th of November, we will have the money in our hand and we will, buy that piece of property, in the Name of Jesus!*" And, it happened!

When I had been to US, around the same time, there also, people asked me how we were going to make it. They thought we had all that money! It is not that we had all that money. If you promised me 10kgs of gold and faith, I will not take gold, but, will only take faith! Because, by faith, we can have all things, for this year and the next years! 10kgs of gold will be run out, but, **faith will keep us going till the end!**

Spread out, spread out your tent..extend your borders. Prophetically tell The Lord, "*Lord I know you can do it, in Jesus name*". In our spirit, sometimes we may understand that we are going to the next level. For that we may have to take the next level of obedience. Some of you have to go to the next level of expansion, Some of you have to go to the next level of education, Some of you have to go to the next level of ministry. ***Stretch out.*** But, stretching is God's will. God wants you to stretch out.

Stretch out and spare not......which means, stretch out and don't spare. If you want one more into play, stretch a little more. If you can do a little more, do a little more. If you can go an extra mile, go the extra mile.

Stretch out, spread out, strengthen, extend for what God is calling you for. God is not calling you for small things. I believe with all my heart today and I am prophetically speaking over the church today, **God has not called us for small things, He has called us for mighty things.** He has called us to be World Impacters. What small part you do in that, will be recorded in glory. It doesn't matter how big it is or how small it is. **But, be obedient to the part God is doing in your generation.** Many times we are not able to believe that God is able to do it. Therefore, God is saying, "*My thoughts are far higher.*"

Lengthen your cord...firstly, He says, spread out. After spreading out, He says, stretch, a little more. After stretching, He goes on to say, Spare not. Then He says, ***Lengthen your cords, get an extra room.*** God wants the church to go to the next level of what God is calling. They want to go into a level of obedience. We have been speaking about people, trusting God, character and godliness. We are doing this because, once we spread out, we don't want to break down. Yet, on the other hand He wants us to rise up and say He has great plans for us, that He longs to bless us.

Then He says, ***you shall spread abroad....!***

For you will spread abroad to the right and to the left, and your offspring will possess the nations and will people the desolate cities. (Isaiah 54:3 ESV).

When we land up abroad, we have that size problems!

You will spread out, i.e. you will go abroad, to the right and to the left! And, your descendants will possess the nations. When I wrote down this prophecy in January 2001, I did not think it was connected. In 2003, when I was in Nepal, praying for a land there, suddenly, God spoke to me from Genesis 28, about a prophecy God had given me, where He tells Jacob, *"I will not leave you till I bless you and bring you back to this land."* Jacob was running away from his father, running away from his brother and God is prophesying and telling him, *I will not leave you till I fulfill everything I have promised you.* That is the thought of God! If you are alive, He will have thoughts for you.

and your offspring will possess the nations and will people the desolate cities. (Isaiah 54:3b)

"Fear not, for you will not be ashamed; be not confounded, for you will not be disgraced; for you will forget the shame of your youth, and the reproach of your widowhood you will remember no more. For your Maker is your husband, the Lord of hosts is his name; and the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer, the God of the whole earth he is called. (Isaiah 54:4, 5 ESV)

For The Lord has called you....(Isaiah 54:6a).

Many people, are afraid of God's thoughts. So, what people try to do is this, they try to run away from God, either because of failure, or because of road block in life, or simply because of a spirit of confusion in life. You know, the spirit of confusion is one of the spirits, that was talked about over the Egyptians. In broad light they will be confused. Amalekite, it was an attack from the back, which you were not expecting, and then you are discouraged. **There is nothing that has happened in your life, that God has not known about!** When we allow this to go on with temptation, He has made a way of escape. There is nothing outside God's plan. Many do something wrong and want to run away.

In **Psalms 139**, David writes, **v:7-12**

Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? (Psalms 139:7 ESV).

It also speaks about God's plans. David says, *Where can I go from your thoughts, your plans?*

Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there! If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me. If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light about me be night," even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is bright as the day, for darkness is as light with you. (Psalms 139:7-12 ESV)

I thought God was living in the inner courts of life. Some say, "*You don't know how much I have gone through or in what sin I have lived. How much I have walked away from God. How much I have disobeyed you!*" This makes no difference to Him because, He has called you. Darkness or light makes no difference to Him, because He has called you.

Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there!

Some people say, to avoid God, let's go heaven. You ascend to heaven, He is there. Some ran away from church, to escape Him, but, He is there! You go to your work place, He is there! You go to the pub, He is there! You can't run away. You say, you are messed up. He is there in the beginning, He is there in the end. His thoughts are far higher! Before you ever did one sin, God had good thoughts for you. He knew your ending, before you began. Therefore, it's better that you walk with God. Don't lose years and allow them to go by, pick up from where you are.

He doesn't give up on you and me.

V:8 If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there! (Psalms 139:8 ESV).

David thinks that to please God he will go to heaven, but there He is! You don't run away from God, by running into His house. Sometimes we think that in the midst of the crowd nobody will notice.

"If I die, even there," David says, *"I will meet God"*. He is there in the grave. You can't run away from God.

V:9 If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, (Psalms 139:9 ESV).

If I say, I am going to the remotest parts of the seas, even there, He will be there. Even there, God's hands will lead me! You think you are running away, but, God says, *"Don't worry, I'll be there!"*

And that is how God is! He doesn't have any problem. He is Omniscient! He is Omnipresent! You disobey and run away, He doesn't have any problem. He is there! The farthest you run away from God is your bedroom. But, He is there!

V:10 *even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me.* (Psalms 139:10 ESV).

His right hand will lead him and the other hand will grab him.

V:11,12 *If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light about me be night," even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is bright as the day, for darkness is as light with you.* (Psalms 139:11, 12 ESV).

How great are your thoughts towards us! God has the plans for your life and mine. When God begins to prophesy and tell us about things to come, little did we imagine at that time, what God is looking for, what God is looking forward to.

Isaiah 55:10, 11 says,

"For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it. (Isaiah 55:10, 11 ESV).

God is preparing us to dream. God is releasing the word concerning you and me, word concerning this church. He is releasing the plan for our lives. I want you to know that, no matter what happens, **God has His thoughts. God is committed to His plans.**

I heard **TD Jakes** say, *Your messing up may surprise you, but, not God!* He is not surprised, because He knows the beginning from the end. He keeps it for those who know Him. That's why Paul says, *I want to know Christ, I want to know the power of His resurrection, I want to know the fellowship of His sufferings, being likened unto death.* Some people want to know Him. Some want to have fellowship of His sufferings, becoming like Him in death, somehow attaining resurrection.

Philippians 3:10,11

that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead. (Philippians 3:10, 11 ESV)

The thoughts of God are far higher, far deeper, far wider,

The Bible says in **Deuteronomy 33:27a**

The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.

If you want to fall back, go ahead and fall - underneath are His everlasting arms.

Psalms 91:1,2

He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say to the Lord, "My refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust." (Psalms 91:1, 2 ESV).

He will surround you on every side. His shield shall protect you in the front, His glory will cover you in the back, thousands shall fall on your side and tens of thousands on your right hand. But, nothing shall come beside you. His favour shall be upon you, His arms

shall surround you. He has surrounded you on every side, because He knows the thoughts for you, thoughts of blessing and not of harm.

At this point church, I want us to look forward. I want us to look forward to the next five, ten, fifteen years. God wants us to reach out to the nations. He wants us to train people, disciple people. **Favour is not the absence of failure. Favour is the presence of God, in the midst of failure. With favour comes responsibility.** With great favour, comes great thoughts. With great favour comes, great dreams from God! God says He has great dreams for you and me. With great favour comes great responsibility. God gave Jesus great favour, but, He gave Jesus great responsibility. God gave Joseph favour, but, He gave him responsibility. God gave Daniel favour, but, He gave him responsibility. If ever God gave you favour, you are who you are, living where you are, where He has planted you, because He wants you to take responsibility for your life and for your generations.

For I know the thoughts I have for you, thoughts of blessing and not of harm

Let's say to the Holy Spirit - *I want to know your thoughts.*

How do I know His thoughts?

King David was very upset one day. He was thinking why all these problems were happening. Then he said,

Psalms 73:17

until I went into the sanctuary of God; then I discerned their end. (Psalms 73:17 ESV)

When he beheld the glory of God, he got the answer.

God says, ***Ask of me, and I shall give you the nations as your inheritance.***

Church, you have for to ask for nations, you have to ask for responsibility over nations and people groups, that the church will arise and go into nations. That we will equip people, with a passion for missions, will equip people with a burden for nations. All those who are coming here will be blessed. They are coming here, so that they can have the thoughts of God.