

Theme interpretation: Let love flow



“God also says:

*‘When the time’s ripe, I answer you. When victory’s due, I help you.
I form you and use you to reconnect the people with me,
To put the land in order, to resettle families on the ruined properties.
I tell prisoners, ‘Come on out. You’re free!’
and those huddled in fear, ‘It’s all right. It’s safe now.’
There’ll be food stands along all the roads, picnics on all the hills—
Nobody hungry, nobody thirsty, shade from the sun, shelter from the wind,
For the Compassionate One guides them, takes them to the best springs.
I’ll make all my mountains into roads, turn them into a superhighway.
Look: These coming from far countries, and those, out of the north,
These streaming in from the west, and those from all the way down the Nile!’”
—Isaiah 49:8-12, The Message*

During the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, it became clear that many of the western world constructs intended to create a sense of safety had actually created a false sense of security. In a global crisis, we were faced with a danger that defied our usual protective hedges. While some were made more vulnerable by economic and geographical factors, everyone was affected by the virus.

As it turns out, lines on a map don’t stop the spread of disease; a pandemic does not recognize human-made boundaries. Whether we like it or not, our lives are deeply intertwined. Our well-being is bound, inextricably, to that of neighbors close to home, and those halfway around the world.

The sooner we recognize that human codependency, the better we are able to *let love flow*--generously and indiscriminately-- to those who need it most.

When water comes to a village, everything changes. It touches every area of life-- literally and figuratively! Having clean water closeby means that women in Nicaragua don’t have to spend their whole day walking to the source, so they might have other opportunities for learning or vocational growth. Children in Kenya no longer spend their days carrying heavy buckets, so they can go to school instead. Improved sanitation slows the spread of disease, so there is less preventable illness. Crops thrive in Vietnam, meaning that food security and nutrition improve in the whole community. Families can spend more time together. People of all ages around the world are empowered to provide for their families today, while also planning for the future of their communities.

Isaiah 49:8-12 articulates a stunning vision for a world of justice and equity; a world where everyone has enough, and all live in safety and abundance. It is also a vision for a world of *interconnectedness*. In this vision, what is good for you is also good for your neighbor; what is good for one country is good for the whole world; and what harms any one of us harms us all.

That Kingdom kind of vision runs through the work that we share in together through One Great Hour of Sharing--much like the stream that runs through Isaiah’s Kingdom vision. Human-made constructs of one sort or another too often hinder human thriving, shoring up

resources for some while leaving many to suffer. A world built on that sort of imbalance is counter to God's dream for creation. In order to help bring about that more just, abundant vision for humanity, One Great Hour of Sharing supports projects around the world that create opportunity and empower communities. Through global partnerships, your offerings promote food security; enable health and wellness programs; support education and vocational training; and of course-- provide access to clean, safe water.

Water, after all, is life.

In many ways, our world was not prepared for the weight of the COVID-19 pandemic. But because of your past generosity through One Great Hour of Sharing, many communities were better prepared to meet the challenges presented by COVID-19. Through the projects that you've supported in the past, more people were equipped for the crisis with improved sanitation; access to clean, safe water for handwashing; and were empowered to prevent the spread of disease among their family and neighbors.

And when you continue to give generously, you continue to give life-- in the form of water and so much more-- to people in need around the world. You continue to build on the dream of a world in which there is no thirst, no hunger, no suffering... just the abundance of life in a living stream.

But you aren't just sharing water... when you share what God has given, you "let love flow." That love crosses all sorts of spaces and dividing lines, knitting together a better human story, and bringing the Kingdom of God about in our time.

When you give to One Great Hour of Sharing, you support water and other sustainable development projects all over the world. When you "let love flow," lives are not just saved-- they are transformed.

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shade from the sun, shelter from the wind,
For the Compassionate One guides them,
takes them to the best springs.*

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