

The Universal Outreach: Isaiah 56:3-8

THESE SIX VERSES form a fitting conclusion to the section of Isaiah that we have been studying.

(3) Let not the foreigner who has joined himself to the LORD say, The LORD will surely separate me from his people. Let not the eunuch say, Behold, I am a dry tree. (4) For thus says the LORD, To the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths, and choose the things that please me and take hold of my covenant, (5) to them I will give in my house and within my walls a place and a name better than that of sons and daughters. I will give them an everlasting name that will not be cut off. (6) Also the foreigners who join themselves to the LORD, to serve Him and to love the name of the LORD, to be His servants, everyone that keeps the Sabbath from polluting it and takes hold of my covenant, (7) I will bring these to my holy mountain and make them joyful in my house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be acceptable on my altar, for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples. (8) The Lord GOD, who gathers the dispersed of Israel, proclaims, I will gather to him still others, along with those already gathered.

In order to keep alive the knowledge of the true God and to prepare the way for the coming of His Son, it was necessary for a time that God keep Israel strictly separate, while leaving most of the other peoples of the world outside. Now that the great atonement has been performed, as described in Isaiah 53 such barriers can be dropped. In accordance with Paul's analogy in Romans 11, the wild olive branches are grafted into the olive tree of God's true people. The stranger, with no