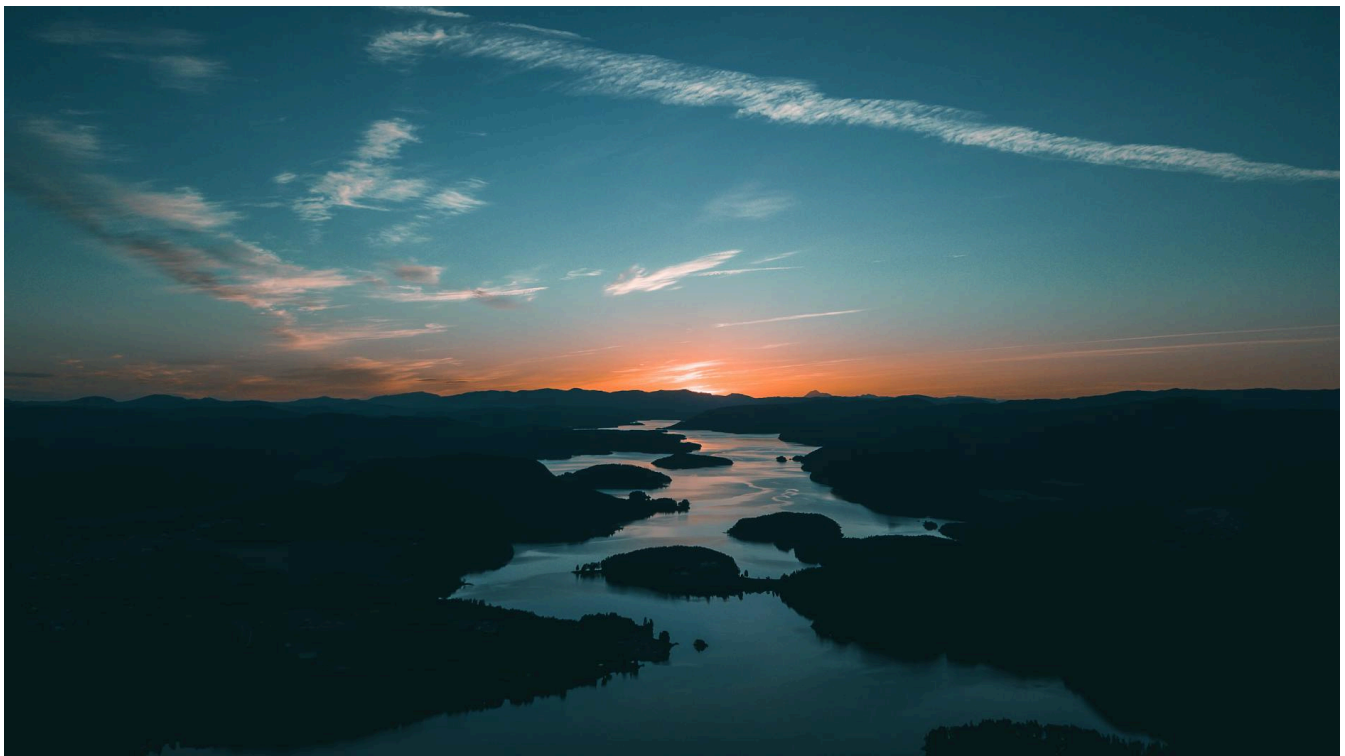


## Salt: Seasoned Theology

Poetic presence, pedagogical reflection, and the long arc of becoming

# She Sings, and the River Rises

What songs are stirring in your spirit these days? What rivers are you listening for in the midnight hush?



### Poetic Theology in the Key of Thirst

The world feels parched these days, literally and metaphorically.

Summer days in my city have been sizzling so far, and many places around the world are facing water shortages.

Too many places also feel parched in other ways. Justice, kindness, breath—these are in short supply as wars rage and people seek hope for the future.

In these days, I find myself turning not to answers but to songs. An ancient biblical song, Isaiah 55, speaks of wisdom that quenches thirst. I hear that wisdom, that word, as a river-song. Not a lecture. Not a system. But a shimmering breath that calls us to be braver, more courageous, in our everyday lives.

Poetic theology, for me, flows in this key, in the ache of longing, in the improvisation of grace, in the rhythm of rivers that rise again and again to call us to *be* bearers of justice-making and transformation in this dry, desert land.

## IN THE KEY OF THIRST: A RIVER RISES

*an improvisatory poem based on Isaiah 55*

Listen.

She calls.

Sings.

Full of ache—

And mercy.

She sings—

Come—you with dry tongues

And empty pockets.

A table is set—enough

And more.

No ticket. No toll.

Just the hush of a listening heart.

She calls.

Sings.

Justice

Falling,  
Cascading,  
Rolling away stones,  
Saturating—dry souls.  
Soaking into fields cracked open  
From heaped-on  
Loads of dusty promises  
That weigh almost nothing  
But choke out life—

She sings.  
And the river rises up—

Singing.

Opens her arms,  
Not to cleanse,  
But to claim.

Can you hear her?  
Feel her misty breath  
On your tear-soaked face?

Jazz notes played in reverse,  
Riding a single reed,  
Curling through the serpentine horn,  
Up and out a tilted bell  
Into this old world's midnight.

No chart—just a shimmer to inhale  
And follow—  
Sometimes running,  
Sometimes stumbling,  
Sometimes dancing

Toward freedom,  
Toward home.

She sings—  
Rain finding splintered openings,  
Soaking hardened places.

She sings—  
Spirals outward,  
Inward,  
Sounds circling up,  
Embracing stormy skylines  
With rainbow arms,  
Greening the earth  
With sprouts of life.

Listen.

The river rises.  
She always does.

The smoky voice of longing—  
And loss.  
The holy heartbeat of memory—  
And desire.

It shall not return empty—  
Not the song,  
Not the breath,  
Not the longing  
That brought you here.

The river will rise.  
She always does.

The river rises

She always does.

Always—

In silence

In song

In you and me

What songs are stirring in your spirit these days? What rivers are you listening for in the midnight hush? May the river rise in us to water the world.

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