

## Only the Redeemed Walk on “The Way of Holiness”

Isaiah 35:1-10 (vv. 8)

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### I. Historical Background & Biblical Context

#### A. Historical Background

During Isaiah’s ministry, the kings mentioned in Isaiah 1:1 - Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah - played significant roles in Judah’s spiritual and political journey. King Uzziah’s reign was mostly prosperous and strong, but his later years were marred by his pride and disobedience that led to his downfall (2 Kings 15:1-6; 2 Chronicles 26). His death marked a turning point and Isaiah’s prophetic ministry emerged as Judah drifted further into moral and political decline (Isaiah. 6:1). King Jotham’s reign was generally good, as he upheld righteousness and sought to please God. However, he was unable to stop Judah’s growing corruption, rebellion, and spiritual complacency (2 Kings 15:32-38; 2 Chronicles 27). King Ahaz’s reign took Judah in a darker direction. He rejected God’s guidance, turned to idol worship, and relied on foreign alliances rather than trusting in the Lord. His leadership deepened Judah’s spiritual decline and invited judgment upon the nation (Isaiah 7; 2 Kings 16; 2 Chronicles 28). In contrast, King Hezekiah’s reign brought reform and renewal to the people of Judah (2 Kings 18-20; 2 Chronicles 29-32). He restored the temple, reinstated proper worship, and demonstrated unwavering faith in God, particularly during the Assyrian invasion. His faith in the Lord brought deliverance and hope to Judah, yet his later decisions foreshadowed the Babylonian exile.

These reigns took place during the era of Isaiah’s prophecy - a time of ongoing political conflicts, moral and social decline, and threats from foreign powers. Judah had already seen the northern kingdom of Israel fall to the Assyrians and now lived in fear of the same fate. Amid this uncertainty, God sent Isaiah to deliver both warnings of judgment and promises of hope. Isaiah 35 shines as a powerful message of restoration and a vision of a sacred and safe path, ***The Way of Holiness***, reserved only for the redeemed.

## **B. Biblical Context**

Despite Judah's struggles, God's redemptive plan remained at work. Through Isaiah, He continually reminded His people that even in their disobedience and the judgment they faced, His faithfulness never wavered. His covenant with them was unbreakable, and His promises of restoration stood firm. These promises carried a dual significance. In the immediate sense, they provided Judah with hope and encouragement, reassuring them that God had not abandoned them. Yet, on a broader scale, they pointed to a future of ultimate redemption, justice, and the coming of a righteous King who would establish a kingdom of eternal peace.

## **II. Lesson: Only the Redeemed Walk on "The Way of Holiness" (Isaiah 35)**

In previous lessons, particularly in Isaiah 34, we saw God's wrath and judgment declared against all nations that placed their trust in foreign powers and false gods, rather than in the one true God. The consequences would be so severe that the lands were left barren, desolate, abandoned, and silenced. We, too, must recognize that, at some point in our lives, each of us, influenced by our human nature, has chosen to trust in the ways of the world rather than relying on God's faithfulness, just as the Israelites. In doing so, we were led into our own spiritual deserts, places of emptiness and struggle where we may have felt disconnected and lost. Just as He promised to lead the Israelites out of the desert, He also promises to guide us out of our spiritual deserts and bring us into a place of restoration, abundance, peace, and renewed intimacy with Him. This promise of restoration and renewal is powerfully reflected in Isaiah 35, where we see a dramatic shift from desolation to hope:

### **A. The Transformation of The Desert (vs. 1-2,7)**

The "desert and parched land" represented the nations that opposed God - those whose rebellion and wickedness had transformed their lands into desolate wastelands. Isaiah 34:8-15 vividly describes this desolation and divine judgment where once-thriving places are reduced to chaos and ruin and only inhabited by wild creatures. In this promise for Judah, the barren desert will burst into bloom, much like the fertile, abundant, and beautiful regions of Lebanon, Carmel, and Sharon. Instead of the fire and sulfur that once consumed the land, refreshing springs and pools of water will

emerge. Where thorns and brambles once spread across the barren ground, lush grass, reeds, and papyrus will flourish in abundance.

The "desert and parched land" also signifies spiritual dryness, places of emptiness and distance from God. God does not desire for us to remain in these desolate places and promises that those who have wandered in spiritual deserts will experience a great transformation and reversal too.

### **B. Encouragement for the Weak (vs. 3-4)**

The people who have endured hardship, fear, and suffering are encouraged to be strong and fearless, for God will come to rescue them. He will arrive with vengeance against their oppressors and with divine retribution. Yet, God's vengeance also brings salvation and deliverance, offering comfort, strength, and restoration to those who have suffered as they await His intervention. Weak hands will be strengthened, and fearful hearts will be comforted. This assurance is both immediate and future - while it certainly resonated with the people experiencing the terror of the Assyrian threat, it also pointed forward to a more complete and eternal salvation through Jesus Christ.

### **C. Healing and Restoration (vs. 5-6)**

This promise carries both physical and spiritual significance. On one hand, it meant the physical healing, allowing the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the lame to walk, and the mute to speak. On a deeper level, it means the opening of hearts and minds so people can understand and embrace the truth of God's Word. This ultimate healing was made possible through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ that offered redemption and restoration to all people. These miracles are seen in the ministry of Jesus, who referred to these signs as proof of His identity and the fulfillment of prophetic promises (Matthew 11:5; Luke 7:22).

### **D. The Way of Holiness and Joy of Redeemed (vs. 8-10)**

This chapter concludes with a powerful vision of hope, restoration, and divine promises for the redeemed - those who have embraced God's truth, experienced His healing, and received His restoration and redemption.

Central to this vision is the **Way of Holiness**, a sacred and spiritual highway that leads to God's presence and eternal peace. It is a path for those who have been purified, set apart, and redeemed - cleansed from sin and made righteous in the eyes of God. Only those who are redeemed can walk this path. The unclean - sinners or those who refuse to follow God's ways - will not be able to enter this sacred road. Anyone who seeks God sincerely will find their way onto this path of holiness. The righteous, though imperfect, are granted access to this highway through God's grace and faithfulness. The promise is that for those who travel on the Way of Holiness, the journey will be secure and guided.

This marks the ultimate restoration and the glorious reward of trusting in the Lord. In the end, God's people will be crowned with everlasting joy, and sorrow and sighing will cease forever (Revelation 21-22).

### III. Conclusion

In Isaiah 35, we see God's promise to restore His People as he transforms our spiritual desolation into abundance. Through spiritual healing and restoration, God prepares His people to walk on the **Way of Holiness**, a path reserved for the redeemed. This path leads to everlasting joy, where sorrow and suffering are replaced with eternal peace in God's presence.

Let us:

- Examine ourselves to ensure we are walking on the Way of Holiness.
- Trust in His promise to restore and renew, even in the driest places of our lives.
- Strengthen others with encouragement and the hope found in Christ.
- Commit today to live as the redeemed and walk faithfully with God.