

Proofs of True Joy

Text: Isaiah 35

Date: 3-20-22 @ 10:30 AM

Truth: Now that the land has been judged, God will be able to transform and renew His land for His people through His Son, their Messiah. The change will be both physical and spiritual and will lead to a land that is filled with all the finest blessings of the coming kingdom.

I. **Great Contrast (Isa. 35:1-2).**

Israel, the promised land of milk and honey, had turned into a briar patch of thorns and thistles. Israel had passed and would pass through a wilderness of trials and devastation, but in due season it would become a glorious place.

The formerly barren desert will become a luxuriant home of abundant blossoms.

Just as the waves and ocean roar, the psalmist implores all those who live in the world (that's you and me) to shout loud praises to the Lord.

The picture of the land prior to this was one of total destruction of people and land. Assyria's conquest had dominated the land causing it to become still, cold, and lifeless.

God will be the One who will lift the glory of the desert and restore it to its place of rightful honor. This will truly be a blessing of salvation, the hope of the redeemed, and the reward for the believing remnant.

The land that the believing people of Isaiah's day thought had no chance of becoming anything worthwhile will be transformed by God Himself into a precious gift of blooms and a garden of glory.

II. **Great Encouragement (Isa. 35:3-4).**

Isaiah encourages the people that God will right the wrongs, bless the remnant, and redeem the land.

The people addressed here may have been some of the remnant, but like us, they expect God to do His work now or without delay. This is an attempt to take God's place and portrays dissatisfaction with God's plans and the ways He carries them out.

To these people, Isaiah says "you need to stand firm and do not be terrified. God has everything under control! Encourage one another in the promises of God. The Lord will avenge the enemy. The Lord will enact divine retribution as He delivers you."

III. **Great Transformation (Isa. 35:5-7).**

The lives that had been lived for themselves and in opposition to God will be so in tune with God that true heart change will become a reality. "The eyes that have been closed to God's appeal will be opened to see the salvation offered by Him; the ears that have been deaf to His call will be unstopped to hear and heed His word" (Hailey 295).

IV. **Great News (Isa. 35:8-10).**

This highway will be very special for it will be for a specific use by a specific people.

- **The name of the roadway is called the Way of Holiness.**
- **The unclean will not be able to use this road.** These people who are not allowed on this road are not ceremonially unclean. Rather, they are unholy because they failed to conform to the Law of the Holy One of Israel. They have chosen to not belong to the Holy One.
- **Only the redeemed will be the ones to use it (v. 9).** Those who journey on this road will do so in perfect safety and security.
- **The highway of holiness then is a desert road set apart for a specific use by specific people for a road to a special place. This is no ordinary road for nothing impure or unholy may travel on it.**

The road is reserved for those who have partaken in the abundant fullness of salvation. The fool will not mistake it for his own path.

What makes this such great news that produces great joy? Our great God is the Source of all of these future kingdom blessings. He transforms the land from barrenness to fruitfulness, from judgment to joy. Our God strengthens the weak and encourages the fainthearted. Our God opens the eyes of the blind, makes the deaf to hear and restores the land. Our God will provide a way for the redeemed to worship Him in His city and set apart this road for those whose lives are characterized by purity and godliness.