



ISAIAH 35

THE REDEEMED RETURN TO ZION

Commentator, John A. Martin says, **“The description in this chapter of the land and the people is a highlight of the first half of the book.”** I have to agree. After months of rebuke and discipline from God to his people and the surrounding nations, the picture being painted is beautiful to behold! So, now the question is, what do we “do” with this revelation? What insight can we gain into the hope that God is breathing into the hearts of his remnant people?

English Standard (ESV)	Passion Notes	Passion Translation (TPT)
<p>Isaiah 35:1 The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus; ² it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God. ³ Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. ⁴ Say to those who have an anxious heart, “Be strong; fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you.”</p>	<p>a 35 This chapter is recognized as a Hebrew poem of rare and superb beauty, one of the most glorious chapters in the Bible. It is a picture of the last-days church rising up out of the wilderness to shine in all the radiance of its glory. It is a picture of Eden restored as the kingdom-realm of God brings hope to the weak and struggling. “The Sacred Way” is the way of life in Christ as we live in heaven’s power and virtue.</p> <p>b 35:2 Or “Blossoming it will blossom.” The Hebrew word (parach) implies breaking forth and blooming. It can also mean to “spread (the wings) and fly.” This is what will happen to God’s people in the last days. Once confined in the wilderness, they will break forth and blossom with beauty and glory as saints of the Most High.</p> <p>c 35:2 The Hebrew word giyl implies spinning with delight and dancing. See Ps. 149:3; Jer. 31:13; Zeph. 3:17.</p> <p>d 35:2 Carmel, a mountain range near Israel’s Mediterranean coast, means “fruitful, plentiful, orchard, garden, vineyard, or any fruitful field.” See Song. 4:11–15; 7:5.</p> <p>e 35:2 Sharon, a coastal plain in Israel, means “an open, sweeping plain, straight, upright, pleasant, prosperous.”</p> <p>f 35:2 As translated from the Septuagint. The Hebrew is “they.”</p> <p>g 35:3 Or “strengthen the weak hands.” See Heb. 12:12–13.</p> <p>h 35:3 Or “Make firm those with feeble knees.”</p> <p>i 35:4 See Ps. 149:4, 7.</p>	<p>The Redeemed Return to Zion a</p> <p>Isaiah 35:1 The wilderness and dry land will be joyously glad! The desert will blossom like a rose and rejoice! ² Every dry and barren place will burst forth with abundant blossoms, b dancing and spinning with delight! c Lebanon’s lush splendor covers it, the magnificent beauty of Carmel d and Sharon. e My people f will see the awesome glory of Yahweh, the beautiful grandeur of our God. ³ Strengthen those who are discouraged. g Energize those who feel defeated. h ⁴ Say to the anxious and fearful, “Be strong and never afraid. Look, here comes your God! He is breaking through to give you victory! He comes to avenge your enemies. With divine retribution he comes to save you!” i</p>

English Standard (ESV)	Passion Translation (TPT)	Passion Translation (TPT)
<p>⁵ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; ⁶ then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy. For waters break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; ⁷ the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; in the haunt of jackals, where they lie down, the grass shall become reeds and rushes.</p> <p>⁸ And a highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Way of Holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it. It shall belong to those who walk on the way; even if they are fools, they shall not go astray. ⁹ No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. ¹⁰ And the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.</p>	<p>j 35:6 See Acts 3:7–8.</p> <p>k 35:6 See Ps.</p> <p>l 10:7; Judg. 15:18–19. 35:7 Or “serpent, monster, jackal.”</p> <p>m 35:8 Or “It is for those who walk the walk.”</p> <p>n 35:8 Or “Fools will not trespass on it.”</p> <p>o 35:9 The lion is a frequent metaphor for Satan. See 1 Peter 5:8.</p>	<p>⁵ Then blind eyes will open and deaf ears will hear. ⁶ Then the lame will leap j like playful deer and the tongue-tied will sing songs of triumph. Gushing water will spring up in the wilderness and streams will flow through the desert. k ⁷ The burning sand will become a refreshing oasis, the parched ground bubbling springs, and the dragon’s l lair a meadow with grass, reeds, and papyrus.</p> <p>⁸ There will be a highway of holiness called the Sacred Way. The impure will not be permitted on this road, but it will be accessible to God’s people. m And not even fools will lose their way. n ⁹ The lion o will not be found there; no wild beast will travel on it— they will not be found there. But the redeemed will find a pathway on it. ¹⁰ Yahweh’s ransomed ones will return with glee to Zion. They will enter with a song of rejoicing and be crowned with everlasting joy. Ecstatic joy will overwhelm them; weariness and grief will disappear!</p>

BIBLE KNOWLEDGE COMMENTARY

JOHN A. MARTIN

THE LORD’S DAY OF BLESSING (CHAP. 35)

The description in this chapter of the land and the people is a highlight of the first half of the book. This is the desired millennial state for which the nation has longed since God first promised it to Abraham. This is the state that mankind constantly longs for—a utopia in which peace and fertility prevail. This condition will not come, however, till after God’s judgment on the world (chap. 34). This emphasis in Isaiah rules out postmillennialism, which teaches that the world will get increasingly better thus bringing in the kingdom which will be followed by the Messiah’s return. The amillennial teaching that there will be no earthly kingdom at all because the Old Testament promises to Israel are being fulfilled in the church today is also foreign to Isaiah’s thought. Isaiah taught that the Lord will regather believing Israel, Abraham’s physical descendants, and will establish God’s long-awaited kingdom on earth. That promised restoration is not being fulfilled in the church today in any sense.

- **35:1-2.** In the Millennium the parched land will become rich agricultural land (cf. 32:15). The dry areas of the nation will become fertile (figuratively expressed as being glad) and will blossom. Apparently God will bring about climatic changes that will result in more rain in those areas. Lebanon ... Carmel, and Sharon,

which were becoming barren (see 33:9 and comments there), will once again become fruitful areas of agriculture. People in those areas will see the Lord's glory, that is, they will see the fruitfulness that comes because of righteousness; they will see Him who will be dwelling in their midst as King (cf. comments on 33:17).

- **35:3-4.** Isaiah now spoke again to the people in his day. He encouraged the believing remnant to live according to God's covenantal stipulations. They should encourage the depressed (those with feeble hands), the terrified (those whose knees ... give way), and the fearful, for God in divine retribution will ... save (deliver) them.
- **35:5-7.** Changes will occur in the people and the land. Because of God's healing power (cf. 33:24) those who are blind will see, those who are deaf will hear (cf. 32:3; 42:7) those who are lame will leap (cf. 33:23), and those who cannot talk will shout. The Messiah will bring this about. The land will change from dryness to a well-watered condition (cf. 35:1-2; 41:18; 43:19-20; 44:3-4). Water will be plentiful, helping grass ... reeds, and papyrus ... grow, all of which require much water. Though some interpreters take these statements as figurative of spiritual blessings, it seems preferable to take them as literal statements, especially in view of the covenant promises (Deut. 28:1-14). With the Lord living among His people and with righteousness being practiced by them, the Lord will provide physical healing and agricultural fecundity.
- **35:8-10.** Righteous pilgrims will once again travel to Jerusalem. They will go on a highway known as the Way of Holiness, for it will lead to God's city where His ways will be followed. It will not be traveled by the unclean or wicked fools. No ferocious animals will hinder the travel of the redeemed on that highway. In the millennial kingdom God's people will once again be involved in certain aspects of Old Testament formal worship (Zech. 14:16-19; Ezek. 40-44). Since righteousness and a desire to do the will of God will be esteemed, the people will willingly follow His instructions for worship. Also the redeemed will be indwelt by the Holy Spirit (Ezek. 36:24-28). The ransomed of the LORD will have everlasting joy, with no sorrow, for they will realize what God has done for them. They will rejoice that He will have saved them from destruction and brought them to peace and prosperity, in fulfillment of His promises.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Chapter 35 talks about what biblical leaders describe as a "Highway of Holiness." Let's break this idea down a bit. Why a "highway?" What is the significance of this description of "the Way," this way? What is the nature of a highway that helps us understand what God is communicating to his people?
2. Now, let's look at the word, "Holiness." What does the word holiness stir up in you? In this context, holiness is being used as an adjective, describing the type of highway being discussed. How would you describe the "road" you and your family are on? What would it the road you're on be called?
3. Verses 5 through 7 of Chapter 35 speak of a land full of healing and restoration. Obviously, this is a picture of the end of the age. The Millennial reign of Jesus. Many of us have seen some of these types of manifestations in our own city, state and region. What are some of the difference we see at say the Seattle Revival Center and in our local gatherings when it comes to faith, expectation and taking risks?

4. What do you think a move of God noted for “holiness” actually look like if it happened in our region? What would change in your church? What adjustments would you need to make in your own walk with God?

5. What would you change in your life that might open the door for signs, wonders and miracles to begin to happen? How would your “quiet time” change if God started to move like in verses 5-7? How would your relationship with Jesus change if these kinds of manifestations began to increase dramatically?