

CRAWFORD BIBLE COMMENTARY

BIBLE STUDY

Isaiah Chapter 35 — The Highway of Holiness and the Joy of the Redeemed

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 35 is one of the most beautiful chapters of hope in the entire book of Isaiah.

Isaiah 34 described:

Judgment.

Desolation.

Burning.

Ruined kingdoms.

Wild creatures occupying abandoned lands.

Isaiah 35 now answers that darkness with:

Life.

Healing.

Holiness.

Restoration.

Joy.

The chapter opens with:

A wilderness.

A dry land.

A desert.

But something happens.

The desert:

Rejoices.

The wilderness:

Becomes glad.

The barren land:

Blooms.

The chapter then moves from:

Creation restored.

To:

People strengthened.

Weak hands become:

Strong.

Feeble knees become:

Firm.

Fearful hearts hear:

“Be strong, do not be afraid!”

Why?

Because:

God is coming.

He comes with:

Justice.

Retribution.

Salvation.

Then Isaiah describes dramatic healing.

Blind eyes:

Open.

Deaf ears:

Hear.

Lame people:

Leap.

Mute tongues:

Shout.

The New Testament later uses this kind of language in connection with the ministry of:
Jesus Christ.

When John the Baptist asked whether Jesus was truly the Coming One, Jesus pointed to:

The blind seeing.

The lame walking.

The deaf hearing.

The good news being proclaimed.

Isaiah's promise therefore belongs within the larger messianic hope fulfilled in Christ and ultimately completed in God's final restoration.

Then the wilderness itself is transformed.

Waters break out.

Streams cross the desert.

Burning sand becomes:

A pool.

Thirsty ground becomes:

Springs.

The chapter then introduces one of Isaiah's most memorable images:

“The Way of Holiness.”

God does not merely:

Restore a land.

Heal bodies.

Remove fear.

He creates:

A road.

The redeemed travel toward:

Zion.

This highway is:

Holy.

Safe.

Clear.

Reserved for:

The redeemed.

No ravenous beast can:

Attack.

Destroy.

Prevent their arrival.

The chapter ends with:

Singing.

Everlasting joy.

Gladness.

And one final reversal:

“Sorrow and sighing will flee away.”

Isaiah 35 begins with a:

Desert.

It ends with:

Joy.

The central truth of Isaiah 35 is:

The Lord transforms barren places, strengthens fearful people, heals what is broken, provides a safe Highway of Holiness for His redeemed, and brings the ransomed home to Zion with everlasting joy while sorrow and sighing disappear.

I. THE WILDERNESS BECOMES GLAD

Isaiah 35:1 — The Desert Blooms

“The wilderness and the dry land will be glad; the desert will rejoice and bloom like a rose.”

The chapter begins with:

Impossible-looking transformation.

Wilderness becomes:

Glad.

Desert becomes:

Joyful.

Dry land:

Blooms.

Cross References

Isaiah 51:3

The Lord promises to comfort Zion and transform her ruined places so that wilderness becomes like Eden and desert becomes like the garden of the Lord, filled with joy and thanksgiving.

Isaiah 41:18

God promises to open rivers on barren heights, springs in valleys, and turn dry ground into sources of water.

Psalms 107:35

God transforms wilderness into pools of water and dry land into flowing springs.

Spiritual Principle

Barrenness is not beyond:

God's transforming power.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never judge what God can produce by what the ground looks like today.

II. THE DESERT BLOOMS ABUNDANTLY

Isaiah 35:2 — Glory Replaces Barrenness

“It will bloom abundantly and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon will be given to it, the splendor of Carmel and Sharon. They will see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God.”

The desert does not merely produce:

A few flowers.

It blooms:

Abundantly.

Three famous places symbolize:

Beauty.

Fertility.

Splendor.

Lebanon.

Carmel.

Sharon.

But the climax is not:

Flowers.

Forests.

Fields.

It is:

“They will see the glory of the Lord.”

Cross References

Isaiah 60:13

The glory of Lebanon comes to beautify the place God has appointed for His dwelling and worship.

John 1:14

The Word became flesh and lived among humanity, and His followers beheld His glory, the glory of the Father’s unique Son.

Isaiah 40:5

The glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all humanity will ultimately witness what God has spoken.

Spiritual Principle

Creation’s restoration points beyond itself toward:

The glory of God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The greatest beauty in the restored world is not the blooming desert.

It is the revealed glory of the Lord.

III. STRENGTHEN THE WEAK HANDS

Isaiah 35:3 — Encouragement for the Weary

“Strengthen the weak hands; make firm the feeble knees.”

God gives His people a responsibility toward:

One another.

Some hands are:

Weak.

Some knees:

Feeble.

Faithful people should:

Strengthen.

Support.

Encourage.

Cross References

Hebrews 12:12

Believers are urged to strengthen weak hands and feeble knees so they can continue walking faithfully.

Job 4:3

Job is reminded that he had often instructed others and strengthened hands that had become weak.

2 Chronicles 15:7

God’s people are told to remain strong and not give up because faithful labor in the Lord is not without reward.

Spiritual Principle

Hope should become:

Something we give to others.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not merely notice weak hands.

Help strengthen them.

IV. SPEAK COURAGE TO FEARFUL HEARTS

Isaiah 35:4 — “Be Strong, Do Not Be Afraid”

“Say to those with fearful hearts, ‘Be strong, do not be afraid! Behold, your God will come with vengeance; with divine retribution He will come and save you.’”

Fearful people need:

Truth.

Not empty reassurance.

Isaiah does not say:

There is no danger.

He says:

“Your God will come.”

Their courage rests on:

God’s arrival.

God’s justice.

God’s salvation.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 31:6

God’s people are commanded to be strong and courageous because the Lord goes with them and will not abandon them.

Philippians 4:6

Believers are instructed not to live under controlling anxiety but to bring requests before God with prayer, thanksgiving, and trust.

Isaiah 43:1

God tells His redeemed people not to fear because He has redeemed them, called them by name, and claims them as His own.

Spiritual Principle

Biblical courage is not pretending danger is absent.

It is believing:

God is present.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The answer to a fearful heart is not always:

“Nothing bad can happen.”

It is:

“Your God is coming.”

V. THE BLIND WILL SEE

Isaiah 35:5 — Eyes Opened, Ears Unstopped

“Then the eyes of the blind will be opened, and the ears of the deaf will be unstopped.”

This promise carries both:

Physical.

Spiritual.

Messianic.

Restorative significance.

God reverses what had been:

Closed.

Dark.

Silent.

Cross References

Matthew 11:5

Jesus tells John’s messengers that the blind receive sight, the lame walk, the deaf hear, and the poor receive good news.

Luke 7:22

Jesus points to His works of healing as evidence that the messianic promises are being fulfilled in His ministry.

Mark 7:37

Those witnessing Jesus' healing ministry declare that He does all things well, even making the deaf hear and those unable to speak communicate.

Spiritual Principle

The Messiah brings:

Sight.

Hearing.

Restoration.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When the King comes, darkness and silence begin losing their grip.

VI. THE LAME LEAP AND THE MUTE SHOUT

Isaiah 35:6 — Healing Produces Joy

“Then the lame will leap like a deer, and the mute tongue will shout for joy. For waters will break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert.”

The healing is not:

Barely functional.

The lame:

Leap.

The mute:

Shout.

Restoration becomes:

Celebration.

Then Isaiah connects human healing with:

Creation renewal.

Cross References

Acts 3:8

A man unable to walk is healed through the power of Jesus' name and begins walking, leaping, and praising God.

Matthew 11:5

Jesus points to the lame walking and other works of healing as signs of God's kingdom breaking into human suffering.

Exodus 17:6

God brought water from a rock in the wilderness, providing for Israel where natural resources were absent.

Spiritual Principle

God's salvation does not merely restore function.

It produces:

Joy.

VII. BURNING SAND BECOMES A POOL

Isaiah 35:7 — Thirst Gives Way to Water

“The burning sand will become a pool, the thirsty ground bubbling springs. In the haunts where jackals once lay, grass, reeds, and rushes will grow.”

The image is:

Total reversal.

Burning sand:

Pool.

Thirsty ground:

Springs.

Desolate animal habitat:

Green growth.

Cross References

Psalms 107:35

God turns desert into pools of water and dry land into springs.

John 7:38

Jesus speaks of rivers of living water flowing from those who believe in Him, which John connects with the Spirit.

Isaiah 41:18

God promises rivers, fountains, pools, and springs in places previously barren and dry.

Spiritual Principle

God does not merely help people survive the desert.

He can transform the desert itself.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The place that made you thirsty can become the place where God gives you water.

VIII. A HIGHWAY OF HOLINESS APPEARS

Isaiah 35:8 — The Way for the Redeemed

“And a highway will be there—it will be called the Way of Holiness. The unclean will not travel on it; it will be for those who walk in the way. Even if they are fools, they will not go astray.”

Now Isaiah gives:

A road.

A highway.

A clear way toward:

Zion.

Its name is:

“The Way of Holiness.”

The road belongs to:

Those made fit to walk upon it.

The destination is:

God’s presence.

Cross References

Isaiah 43:19

God promises to make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.

John 14:6

Jesus identifies Himself as the way, the truth, and the life and declares that access to the Father comes through Him.

Isaiah 62:10

God's people are told to prepare the highway, remove obstacles, and raise a banner for returning peoples.

Spiritual Principle

God not only tells the redeemed where to go.

He provides:

The way.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Salvation does not leave the redeemed wandering without a road.

IX. THE WAY IS HOLY

The highway is not called:

The Way of Comfort.

The Way of Popularity.

The Way of Self-Expression.

It is:

“The Way of Holiness.”

Spiritual Principle

The destination of redemption is not merely:

Safety.

It is:

Holiness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not redeem us merely from danger.

He redeems us for a holy walk.

X. THE UNCLEAN DO NOT TRAVEL THERE

The language emphasizes:

Purity.

Separation.

Fitness for:

God's presence.

This should not be interpreted as salvation earned through moral perfection.

Throughout Scripture, cleansing is ultimately:

God's work.

Those He redeems are then called to:

Walk in holiness.

Spiritual Principle

Grace does not make holiness unnecessary.

Grace makes holy life possible.

XI. EVEN THE FOOLISH WILL NOT GO ASTRAY

Isaiah emphasizes:

Clarity.

Safety.

God's guidance.

The road is not a maze.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God is able to make His way clear enough for the humble traveler to follow.

XII. NO LION WILL BE ON THE HIGHWAY

Isaiah 35:9 — The Redeemed Walk Safely

“No lion will be there, nor will any ravenous beast go upon it; they will not be found there. But only the redeemed will walk there.”

Travel through wilderness could involve:

Danger.

Predators.

Fear.

But this highway is:

Secure.

Cross References

Isaiah 11:6

Isaiah pictures the coming kingdom as a place where former hostility within creation gives way to peace.

Ezekiel 34:25

God promises a covenant of peace in which dangerous beasts are removed and His people dwell securely.

Isaiah 65:25

Predatory violence is removed in Isaiah’s vision of restored creation under God’s rule.

Spiritual Principle

God knows how to bring His redeemed:

All the way home.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who provides the road also guards the road.

XIII. ONLY THE REDEEMED WALK THERE

The key identity is:

Redeemed.

Not:

Strong.

Wealthy.

Educated.

Powerful.

Religiously prestigious.

But:

Redeemed.

Spiritual Principle

Entrance into God's salvation depends upon:

Redemption.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Highway of Holiness is traveled by people who belong to the Redeemer.

XIV. THE RANSOMED RETURN TO ZION

Isaiah 35:10 — Everlasting Joy

“The ransomed of the Lord will return, they will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.”

This is the climax.

The people are called:

Ransomed.

They:

Return.

Enter Zion.

Sing.

And joy becomes:

Everlasting.

Notice the reversal.

Earlier:

Enemies pursued.

Now:

Joy overtakes them.

Sorrow:

Flees.

Sighing:

Runs away.

Cross References

Isaiah 51:11

Isaiah repeats this promise that the redeemed of the Lord will return to Zion singing, crowned with everlasting joy while grief and sighing disappear.

Revelation 21:4

God wipes every tear from His people's eyes, and death, mourning, crying, and pain finally pass away.

Psalms 126:5

Those who sow in tears are promised a harvest accompanied by songs of joy.

Spiritual Principle

Sorrow is:

Real.

But for the redeemed:

Not eternal.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sorrow may accompany you for part of the road.

It does not get through the gates with you.

XV. TEN GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 35

1. God Brings Life to Barren Places

Principle:

The desert is not too dry for God.

2. God's Glory Is the Goal of Restoration

Principle:

The greatest blessing is seeing the majesty of the Lord.

3. God's People Should Strengthen the Weak

Principle:

Hope should be shared with tired people.

4. Fear Is Answered by God's Presence

Principle:

Courage grows when the fearful heart remembers who is coming.

5. The Messiah Brings Healing

Principle:

The works of Jesus reveal the kingdom Isaiah anticipated.

6. God Can Transform the Wilderness

Principle:

He does not merely provide water in dry places; He can change the nature of the landscape.

7. Salvation Has a Holy Way

Principle:

Redemption leads to holiness, not lawlessness.

8. God Protects the Redeemed

Principle:

The One who opens the road also secures the journey.

9. The Redeemed Are Going Home

Principle:

The Christian journey has a destination.

10. Everlasting Joy Will Outlast Sorrow

Principle:

Grief belongs to the present age; everlasting joy belongs to the redeemed future.

XVI. WHAT ISAIAH 35 TEACHES ABOUT BARRENNESS

Wilderness.

Dry land.

Desert.

All speak of:

Lack.

Need.

Emptiness.

Yet:

God transforms all three.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never call permanently barren what God has not finished touching.

XVII. WHAT ISAIAH 35 TEACHES ABOUT ENCOURAGEMENT

The strong are told:

Strengthen the weak.

The confident are told:

Speak to the fearful.

Spiritual Principle

Biblical encouragement is not:

Flattery.

It is truth spoken into:

Weakness.

XVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 35 TEACHES ABOUT FEAR

Fear says:

The enemy is coming.

Faith says:

“Your God will come.”

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Fear shrinks when God becomes larger in our thinking.

XIX. WHAT ISAIAH 35 TEACHES ABOUT GOD'S VENGEANCE

Verse 4 combines:

Vengeance.

Retribution.

Salvation.

This reminds us:

God's judgment against evil is part of His deliverance of the oppressed.

Spiritual Principle

The God who saves His people must ultimately deal with what destroys them.

XX. WHAT ISAIAH 35 TEACHES ABOUT HEALING

Blind.

Deaf.

Lame.

Mute.

All experience:

Transformation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's kingdom confronts brokenness at every level.

XXI. WHAT ISAIAH 35 TEACHES ABOUT JESUS

Jesus intentionally pointed to:

Blind eyes opened.

Lame people walking.

Deaf people hearing.

As evidence of:

His messianic identity.

Isaiah's hope therefore finds decisive fulfillment in:

Christ.

Yet the chapter's picture extends toward:

Complete restoration.

Because sickness, sorrow, danger, and sighing have not yet entirely disappeared from the present world.

Spiritual Principle

Christ's miracles are:

Signs.

They reveal what His kingdom is like and anticipate what His final restoration will complete.

XXII. WHAT ISAIAH 35 TEACHES ABOUT THE SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

The redeemed do not wander:

Aimlessly.

There is:

A highway.

A way.

A destination.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Biblical faith is not wandering through life hoping somehow to reach God.

God provides the road.

XXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 35 TEACHES ABOUT HOLINESS

The road is:

Holy.

Spiritual Principle

Holiness is not an optional side road of salvation.

It belongs to the main highway.

XXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 35 TEACHES ABOUT REDEMPTION

The travelers are called:

Redeemed.

Ransomed.

These words communicate:

Deliverance at cost.

Freedom.

Ownership transferred.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The redeemed walk differently because they belong to Someone different.

XXV. WHAT ISAIAH 35 TEACHES ABOUT JOY

Joy appears:

In creation.

In healing.

In worship.

At Zion.

And finally becomes:

Everlasting.

Spiritual Principle

God's salvation moves His people toward:

Joy.

XXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 35 TEACHES ABOUT SORROW

Sorrow is not:

Denied.

Minimized.

Mocked.

It is:

Defeated.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Christian hope never says:

“You did not really hurt.”

It says:

“Your hurt will not last forever.”

XXVII. THE DESERT THAT SINGS

The desert itself is pictured:

Rejoicing.

Spiritual Principle

When God restores, even places associated with death can become testimonies of life.

XXVIII. THE GLORY OF LEBANON

Lebanon symbolized:

Majestic beauty.

Carmel:

Fruitfulness.

Sharon:

Splendor.

All become pictures of:

Restored abundance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's restoration is not reluctant.

Isaiah describes it as:

Abundant.

XXIX. "THEY WILL SEE THE GLORY OF THE LORD"

This is the true goal.

Not merely:

Better circumstances.

Spiritual Principle

Every blessing is incomplete if it does not direct us toward:

God Himself.

XXX. WEAK HANDS

Hands become weak when people feel unable to:

Continue.

Work.

Fight.

Serve.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sometimes people need another believer to hold hope in front of them until their hands become strong again.

XXXI. FEEBLE KNEES

Weak knees picture:

Instability.

Fear.

Exhaustion.

Spiritual Principle

God's people are called to help one another stand.

XXXII. FEARFUL HEARTS

Fear begins:

Inside.

God sends His Word:

Inside.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Speak God's promises where fear has been speaking the loudest.

XXXIII. "BEHOLD, YOUR GOD"

Not merely:

Help is coming.

But:

Your God.

Spiritual Principle

Salvation is personal because the Savior belongs in covenant relationship with His people.

XXXIV. THE BLIND EYES OPEN

Blindness had been a major theme in:

Isaiah 6.

Isaiah 29.

Now:

Eyes open.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's final word over His redeemed is not blindness.

It is sight.

XXXV. THE DEAF EARS OPEN

Earlier:

They would not hear.

Now:

Hearing is restored.

Spiritual Principle

Grace can open what rebellion once closed.

XXXVI. THE LAME LEAP

Isaiah does not say:

The lame barely walk.

They:

Leap.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God restores, He is not limited to barely repairing what was broken.

XXXVII. THE MUTE SHOUT

Silence becomes:

Praise.

Spiritual Principle

The tongue once unable to speak becomes an instrument of:

Joy.

XXXVIII. WATER IN THE WILDERNESS

Water symbolizes:

Life.

Provision.

Refreshment.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God knows where every dry place is.

XXXIX. STREAMS IN THE DESERT

A stream means:

Continuing supply.

Not merely:

A cup.

Spiritual Principle

God can provide ongoing grace in places that seem incapable of sustaining life.

XL. THE BURNING SAND BECOMES A POOL

What looked like:

Water.

But was actually:

Heat.

Becomes:

Real water.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God can replace mirages with reality.

XLI. THE HIGHWAY

Highways connect:

Places.

People.

Destinations.

Spiritual Principle

Redemption creates access where exile created separation.

XLII. THE WAY OF HOLINESS

The road has:

A name.

Its name identifies:

Its character.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If the path continually leads away from holiness, it is not the road Isaiah describes.

XLIII. THE WAY AND CHRIST

Jesus says:

“I am the way.”

Isaiah says:

A holy way leads the redeemed home.

These themes beautifully converge in:

Christ.

He is not merely:

A guide standing beside the road.

He is:

The Way.

Spiritual Principle

Salvation is ultimately not found in:

A system.

But:

A Person.

XLIV. NO LION ON THE ROAD

The danger is removed.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God’s final salvation does not leave predators waiting around the last corner.

XLV. THE REDEEMED WALK

Notice:

They still:

Walk.

God provides:

Road.

Safety.

Destination.

They travel.

Spiritual Principle

Grace provides the way and calls us to walk in it.

XLVI. THE RANSOMED RETURN

The word:

Return.

Suggests:

Homecoming.

Exile ends.

Distance ends.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Redemption is God bringing His people home.

XLVII. THEY ENTER WITH SINGING

Not:

Silence.

Not:

Fear.

Not:

Sighing.

Singing.

Spiritual Principle

The journey of redemption ends in worship.

XLVIII. EVERLASTING JOY

Most earthly joys are:

Temporary.

This joy:

Everlasting.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Temporary sorrow cannot defeat everlasting joy.

XLIX. JOY OVERTAKES THEM

Usually:

Trouble overtakes people.

Enemies overtake.

Fear overtakes.

Isaiah reverses it.

“Gladness and joy will overtake them.”

Spiritual Principle

For the redeemed, joy eventually becomes the pursuer.

L. SORROW FLEES

Earlier the redeemed:

Fled from enemies.

Now:

Sorrow flees from them.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

There is coming a day when grief will have to leave because it no longer belongs where God's redeemed dwell.

LI. SIGHING FLEES AWAY

Sighing is the sound of:

Weariness.

Frustration.

Grief.

Longing.

It disappears.

Spiritual Principle

God's final restoration removes even the exhausted breath of sorrow.

LII. ISAIAH 34 AND ISAIAH 35

These chapters belong together.

Isaiah 34

Judgment.

Fire.

Desolation.

Thorns.

Wildness.

Isaiah 35

Restoration.

Water.

Flowers.

Highway.

Joy.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's story does not end in Isaiah 34.

Judgment is real.

So is restoration.

LIII. EDEN-LIKE RESTORATION

The imagery of:

Water.

Fruitfulness.

Safety.

Joy.

Echoes:

Creation restored.

Spiritual Principle

Redemption includes God reversing the damage of:

Sin.

Curse.

Death.

LIV. THE HIGHWAY AS A NEW EXODUS

Isaiah frequently uses imagery of:

Return.

Road.

Wilderness.

Water.

Homecoming.

This recalls:

The Exodus.

God once brought Israel:

Out of Egypt.

Through wilderness.

Toward the land.

Isaiah now pictures a greater return.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who made a way through the sea can make a highway through the wilderness.

LV. CHRIST AND THE NEW EXODUS

In the larger biblical story, Christ leads a deeper deliverance:

From sin.

Death.

Condemnation.

Into:

Life.

Holiness.

God's presence.

Spiritual Principle

The Exodus was a great salvation.

Christ accomplishes the greater redemption toward which salvation history points.

LVI. SIX GREAT REVERSALS IN ISAIAH 35

1. Desert → Blossoming Garden

2. Weakness → Strength

3. Fear → Courage

4. Disability → Healing

5. Wilderness → Highway

6. Sorrow → Everlasting Joy

Key Truth

God's salvation is a great reversal in which barrenness, weakness, fear, brokenness, danger, and sorrow give way to life, strength, healing, holiness, safety, and everlasting joy.

LVII. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

What happens to the wilderness?

It becomes glad.

Question 2

What happens to the desert?

It rejoices and blooms.

Question 3

What ultimately becomes visible in the restored land?

The glory and majesty of the Lord.

Question 4

What should be done for weak hands?

They should be strengthened.

Question 5

What should be done for feeble knees?

They should be made firm.

Question 6

What should fearful hearts be told?

“Be strong, do not be afraid!”

Question 7

Why should they not fear?

Because God is coming with justice and salvation.

Question 8

What happens to the blind?

Their eyes are opened.

Question 9

What happens to the deaf?

Their ears are unstopped.

Question 10

What happens to the lame?

They leap like a deer.

Question 11

What happens to the mute?

Their tongues shout for joy.

Question 12

What happens in the wilderness?

Waters break forth.

Question 13

What happens to burning sand?

It becomes a pool.

Question 14

What is the highway called?

The Way of Holiness.

Question 15

Who walks on that highway?

The redeemed.

Question 16

What will not be found there?

Lions and ravenous beasts.

Question 17

Where are the ransomed going?

Zion.

Question 18

How do they enter?

With singing.

Question 19

What crowns their heads?

Everlasting joy.

Question 20

What happens to sorrow and sighing?

They flee away.

LVIII. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 35 asks several searching questions.

What Wilderness Am I Looking At?

A:

Broken relationship?

Dry ministry?

Discouraged heart?

Family struggle?

Season of grief?

Do I believe God can:

Bring life?

Whose Weak Hands Can I Strengthen?

Who around me needs:

Encouragement?

Prayer?

Help?

Truth?

Who Has Feeble Knees?

Am I helping them:

Stand?

What Fearful Heart Needs to Hear:

“Be strong, do not be afraid”?

Am I Focusing More on the Threat Than on:

“Your God will come”?

Do I Believe Jesus Is Still the Messiah Who Restores?

Is There a Dry Place in Me That Needs Living Water?

Am I Walking the Way of Holiness?

Or merely claiming to know where the road goes?

Have I Confused Grace with Permission to Wander?

Am I Living like a:

Redeemed person?

Do I remember that my present sorrow is not:

Permanent?

Am I walking toward Zion with:

Hope?

LIX. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

**“God Can Build a Highway Through the Place You Thought
Was Only a Desert”**

The wilderness looks like:

An obstacle.

God sees:

A road.

The desert looks like:

Death.

God sees:

Flowers.

The thirsty ground looks:

Empty.

God sees:

Springs.

Principle:

God's greatest roads are sometimes built through places where we thought there could never be a way.

LX. THE DESERT HAS A FUTURE

Dryness may describe:

Today.

It does not necessarily describe:

Tomorrow.

Spiritual Principle

Never confuse a season with a destiny.

LXI. GLADNESS IN THE WILDERNESS

Joy appears before:

The city.

In:

The wilderness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not always wait until you leave the wilderness before He teaches you to rejoice.

LXII. BLOOMING ABUNDANTLY

God's restoration is not:

Barely enough.

Isaiah says:

Abundantly.

Spiritual Principle

Divine renewal can exceed merely returning things to their former condition.

LXIII. STRENGTHEN SOMEBODY

Verse 3 is directed toward:

People helping people.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

One of God's methods for strengthening the weak is another believer who refuses to let them fall alone.

LXIV. SPEAK TO FEAR

Isaiah does not say:

Ignore the fearful.

He says:

Speak.

Spiritual Principle

Encouraging words grounded in truth can become instruments of grace.

LXV. YOUR GOD WILL COME

These words change:

Everything.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The believer's hope is not merely that circumstances will change.

It is that God comes into the circumstances.

LXVI. VENGEANCE AND SALVATION

The same coming means:

Judgment for evil.

Salvation for God's people.

Spiritual Principle

God's justice and salvation are not competing purposes.

His defeat of evil is part of His rescue of the oppressed.

LXVII. JESUS AND ISAIAH 35

Jesus' miracles deliberately resemble:

Isaiah's promised restoration.

Blind eyes.

Deaf ears.

Lame legs.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Every healing miracle of Christ was a preview of the kingdom He came to bring.

LXVIII. WATER BREAKS FORTH

Not:

Drips.

Breaks forth.

Spiritual Principle

God can produce sudden abundance after prolonged dryness.

LXIX. THE HIGHWAY GOD PROVIDES

A highway suggests:

Access.

Direction.

Purpose.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not save people and then leave them without direction.

LXX. HOLINESS AS A JOURNEY

Holiness is both:

Position in God's saving work.

And:

A walk.

Spiritual Principle

The redeemed life moves in:

God's direction.

LXXI. SAFETY ON THE ROAD

No lion.

No predator.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Nothing God has defeated will ultimately prevent His redeemed from reaching home.

LXXII. THE JOURNEY TO ZION

The travelers know:

Where they are going.

Spiritual Principle

Hope becomes stronger when we remember:

The destination.

LXXIII. SONGS ON THE WAY HOME

Singing accompanies:

Return.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Redemption gives people a song because grace gives people a future.

LXXIV. JOY AS A CROWN

Isaiah pictures joy resting:

On their heads.

Spiritual Principle

What once crowned them with:

Grief.

Shame.

Fear.

Is replaced with:

Joy.

LXXV. SORROW'S EXPIRATION DATE

Sorrow feels:

Permanent.

Isaiah says:

It flees.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never give eternal status to something God says is temporary.

LXXVI. SIGHING'S FINAL BREATH

Sighing eventually:

Ends.

Spiritual Principle

The redeemed future contains no exhausted lament.

LXXVII. EIGHT GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 35

- 1. Wilderness → Gladness**
- 2. Desert → Blossoming**
- 3. Weak Hands → Strength**
- 4. Fearful Hearts → Courage**
- 5. Blindness → Sight**
- 6. Dry Ground → Springs**
- 7. Dangerous Wilderness → Highway of Holiness**
- 8. Sorrow and Sighing → Everlasting Joy**

Key Truth

Everything the curse has made barren, fearful, broken, dangerous, and sorrowful is placed under the transforming promise of God's salvation.

LXXVIII. ISAIAH 35 AND THE GOSPEL

The chapter gives us several gospel themes:

God comes to save.

Healing accompanies the Messiah.

A way is provided.

The travelers are:

Redeemed.

Ransomed.

Their journey toward:

God's presence.

Their destination is:

Joy.

The New Testament shows that:

Jesus Christ.

Is central to this salvation.

He came.

He healed.

He called Himself:

The Way.

He gave His life as:

A ransom.

And through His resurrection He guarantees the final restoration in which:

Sorrow.

Sighing.

Death.

Will not remain.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah's highway ultimately leads us toward the saving work and kingdom of Jesus Christ.

LXXIX. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 35 comes immediately after:

Isaiah 34.

That matters.

Isaiah 34 was:

Judgment.

Fire.

Desolation.

Ruins.

Isaiah 35 is:

Flowers.

Water.

Healing.

Highway.

Singing.

That is a powerful reminder.

God's story does not end with:

The desert.

The desert blooms.

God's story does not end with:

Weak hands.

They are strengthened.

It does not end with:

Feeble knees.

They become firm.

It does not end with:

Fearful hearts.

They hear:

“Be strong, do not be afraid!”

Why?

Not because:

There is no enemy.

Not because:

Nothing hurts.

Not because:

Everything already makes sense.

But because:

“Your God will come.”

That is the heart of hope.

Then:

Blind eyes open.

Deaf ears hear.

Lame people leap.

Mute tongues shout.

Jesus later points to these very kinds of miracles as evidence that:

The Messiah has come.

His miracles were not:

Random acts of power.

They were signs saying:

God’s restoration has begun.

But Isaiah looks beyond individual healings toward:

A restored world.

Desert becomes:

Water.

Dryness becomes:

Springs.

And then:

A highway.

Maybe today you are standing in:

A wilderness.

You see no:

Road.

No:

Water.

No:

Flowers.

Isaiah says:

God sees possibilities the desert cannot see.

He can build:

A road.

Where you see:

Sand.

Then notice the road's name:

“The Way of Holiness.”

God is not merely trying to make your life:

Easier.

He is making His people:

Holy.

He wants us:

Redeemed.

Clean.

Walking His way.

And the road is protected.

No lion ultimately stops:

The redeemed.

Why?

Because God intends:

To get His people home.

Then comes:

Verse 10.

The ransomed return.

They enter:

Singing.

Joy crowns:

Their heads.

Gladness overtakes:

Them.

Sorrow and sighing:

Flee.

Maybe sorrow has overtaken you before.

Maybe grief has chased you.

Maybe fear has followed you.

But there is coming a day when:

Joy does the overtaking.

And:

Sorrow does the fleeing.

That is the hope of the redeemed.

So strengthen:

Weak hands.

Steady:

Feeble knees.

Speak courage to:

Fearful hearts.

Look for:

God's glory.

Walk:

The Way of Holiness.

Keep moving toward:

Zion.

And remember:

The desert does not get the last word.

The lion does not get the last word.

Sorrow does not get the last word.

God does.

And His last word over the redeemed is:

Everlasting joy.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You that You can make:

The wilderness glad.

The desert bloom.

The dry land rejoice.

Where our lives feel:

Barren.

Dry.

Empty.

Pour out:

Your grace.

Bring life where we see:

No possibility.

Father, strengthen:

Weak hands.

Steady:

Feeble knees.

Encourage:

Fearful hearts.

Teach us to say to one another:

“Be strong, do not be afraid!”

Not because trouble is imaginary.

But because:

You are greater.

Thank You for Jesus Christ.

Thank You that through His ministry:

Blind eyes saw.

Deaf ears heard.

Lame people walked.

Mute tongues spoke.

Thank You that these signs point toward:

Your greater restoration.

Father, bring living water into:

Dry places.

Turn burning sand into:

Pools.

Thirsty ground into:

Springs.

Lead us onto:

The Way of Holiness.

Keep us from wandering.

Make our lives:

Clean.

Faithful.

Obedient.

Thank You for redeeming us.

Thank You for ransoming us.

Thank You that the journey has:

A destination.

And thank You that one day:

Your redeemed will enter Zion with singing.

Everlasting joy will crown their heads.

Gladness will overtake them.

Sorrow and sighing will:

Flee away.

Until that day:

Keep us walking.

Keep us trusting.

Keep us holy.

Keep us encouraging one another.

And keep our eyes fixed upon:

Jesus.

In His name,

Amen.

Key Verse

“The ransomed of the Lord will return, they will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.” — Isaiah 35:10

Central Truth

The Lord transforms barren places into places of life, strengthens the weak and fearful, brings messianic healing and restoration, provides a holy and protected highway for His redeemed, and promises that the ransomed will finally come home to Zion with everlasting joy while sorrow and sighing flee forever.

Isaiah 35 in One Sentence

Isaiah proclaims that God will transform the wilderness into a blooming land, strengthen weak and fearful people, open blind eyes and deaf ears, cause the lame to leap and the mute to shout, provide the redeemed with a safe Highway of Holiness, and bring His ransomed people home to Zion with singing, everlasting joy, and the permanent end of sorrow and sighing.