

THE HIGHWAY OF HOLINESS

- A. **I want us** to consider the spiritual blessings we have in Christ, & to do that we're going to notice a prophecy in the book of Isaiah.

Isa 35:8-10 (KJV) – And ***an highway shall be there, & a way, & it shall be called The way of holiness***; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. 9 No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: 10 And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, & come to Zion with songs & everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy & gladness, & sorrow & sighing shall flee away.

- B. **This beautiful reading** described for the Jews the blessed future state of the Messiah's kingdom.
- C. **This highway** is a road cleared & paved by Jesus in the long ago. But where does it lead?

John 14:6 – Jesus said to him, "I am the ***way***, the truth, & the life. No one comes to the ***Father*** except through Me.

Heb 2:10 – For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things & by whom are all things, in ***bringing many sons to glory***, to make the captain of their ***salvation*** perfect through sufferings.

Heb 10:19-20 – Therefore, brethren, having boldness to ***enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus***, 20 by ***a new & living way*** which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh,

Acts 3:26 – To you first, God, having raised up His Servant Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in ***turning away every one of you from your iniquities***.

[**Let's** take a few moments to consider this Highway of Holiness, which we know as the kingdom of Jesus Christ, & more specifically, the church or body of Christ.]

I. FOUR CHARACTERISTICS OF THIS HIGHWAY

- A. **Holy**: "*the unclean shall not pass over it...but the redeemed shall walk their*" (35:8, 9b).

1. No one may travel this road with the uncleanness of their willful & unforgiven sins.

Gal 5:16-21 – I say then: Walk in the Spirit, & you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. 17 For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, & the Spirit against the flesh; & these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. 18 ~~But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.~~ 19 **Now the works of the flesh are evident**, which are: adultery, fornication, **uncleanness**, lewdness, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, 21 envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, & the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that **those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.**

Eph 5:1-7 – Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. 2 And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us & given Himself for us, an offering & a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma. 3 But fornication & all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; 4 neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. 5 **For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ & God.** 6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. 7 Therefore do not be partakers with them.

1 Thess 4:3-7 – For **this is the will of God, your sanctification**: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; 4 that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification & honor, 5 not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God; 6 that no one should take advantage of & defraud his brother in this matter, because the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also forewarned you & testified. 7 **For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness.**

1 Pet 1:13-17 – Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, & rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; 14 as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; 15 but **as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct**, 16 because it is written, “Be holy, for I am holy.” 17 And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one’s work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear;

B. **Accessible (35:8)**: *“it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.”*

2. The only sinners allowed to travel this road are penitent sinners...

- a. Forgiven by God at their baptism into Christ (**Acts 22:16**).
- b. Forgiven by God by confessing their sins (**1 Jn 1:9, 7**) & then walking in the light (**1 Jn 1:7**).

1. The “wayfaring men” are those who chose to travel this road, & who prepared themselves for the journey; they were not forced...

- a. “It will be for those who walk in that way” (**NIV**).
- b. “It will be only for those who walk in God’s way” (**NLT**).

2. The “fools [who] shall not err” on this road are NOT the foolish who won’t take instruction.

- a. Isaiah refers to the simple minded & the uneducated.
- b. The road is so clearly marked that even they can follow it.

3. In other words, no one need miss this road, unless they follow the wrong guideposts.

- a. Feelings, opinions
- b. Perceived independence
- c. Families, friends
- d. Religious traditions

2 Cor 4:3-4 – But even *if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing*, 4 whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.

Matt 11:25-26 – At that time Jesus answered & said, “I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven & earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise & prudent & have *revealed them to babes*. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight.

Matt 13:14-16 – And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: ‘Hearing you will hear & shall not understand, & seeing you will see & not perceive; 15 For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, & their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes & hear with their ears, lest they should understand with their hearts & turn, so that I should heal them.’ 16 But *blessed are your eyes for they see, & your ears for they hear*,

C. **Safe (35:9)**: “No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there.”

- 1. Isaiah is not saying that we will not have to face the Tempter, or a false teacher, or even a hypocrite in the church.
- 2. He is saying that are safe from spiritual harm as we travel the Highway of Holiness, because no one can take us off that road unless we comply with their wishes.

John 10:27-29 – My sheep hear My voice, & I know them, & they follow Me. 28 *And I give them eternal life, & they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand*. 29 My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; & no one is able to snatch them out of My Father’s hand.

3. In the kingdom of our Lord we are safe from all that may harm our souls, because we “*are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation*” (1 Pet 1:5).

4. But if we get off that road, BEWARE! The enemy is waiting nearby.

a. “*Like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour*” (1 Pet 5:8).

b. Ready to ensnare & to take us captive to do his will (2 Tim 2:26).

D. Highway (35:8): “*And an highway shall be there,*”

1. The word “highway” refers to a raised way; a made way, one actually lifted up, leveled & prepared for travel.

2. This road is not a path; it is more like a royal road where men were sent ahead to pick up stones & clear away the debris before the King passed by.

Luke 3:5-6 [the work of John] – Every valley shall be filled & every mountain & hill brought low; the crooked places shall be made straight & the rough ways smooth; 6 & all flesh shall see the salvation of God (Matt 11:28-30).

II. THE BLESSINGS ON THIS HIGHWAY

A. Godly Associations (35:9b, 10): “*the redeemed shall walk there: and the ransomed of the LORD shall return.*”

1. “Redeemed” – ga'al (gaw-al'); to be the next of kin (and as such to buy back a relative's property, marry his widow, etc.):

2. “Ransomed” – padah (paw-daw'); to sever, to release, preserve:

3. For centuries, the righteous in Israel had to put up with all manner of evil in the nation.
4. Today, denominational churches find themselves in fellowship with homosexuals, adulterers, fornicators, drunkards, covetous, & women in leadership roles.
5. But in the kingdom of our Lord, Jesus will not allow these things; He will only allow the redeemed & the righteous in His kingdom.
6. What an incentive this is to travel the Highway of Holiness; we do not walk that road with the evil, the unbeliever or those who practice lawlessness (1 Cor 15:33; 2 Cor 6:14-18; 2 Jn 9).
7. There is something wrong with the thinking of a person who would not value above all his earthly possessions the friendship of Christians (Rom 12:10; 1 Pet 4:9).

B. **Songs of Joy & Hope** (35:10): *“And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, & come to Zion [the place where God dwells: the church His house] with songs & everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy & gladness, & sorrow & sighing shall flee away.”*

1. Isaiah said they’re going to be happy on this Highway, & their going to be singing because they’re happy.
2. James taught us, *“Is anyone cheerful, let him sing psalms”* (Jas 5:13).
3. There can be no one more cheerful, than one who is traveling the Highway of Holiness.
4. Christians have every reason to be cheerful.
 - a. Redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus (1 Pet 1:18-19).
 - b. Ransomed from the power of the grave (Rom 6:5-11).

- c. Waiting to be like Jesus at His coming (1 Jn 3:1-2).
- d. Living with the promise of everlasting life & joy in Heaven (Col 1:5; Heb 10:34; 12:33; Titus 1:2).
- e. The crown of life promised to those who are faithful 'till death (Rev 2:10).
- f. The incorruptible/undefiled inheritance, reserved in heaven for you (1 Pet 1:4).
- g. These blessings are the ones that bring us true joy & gladness.
- h. These blessings are the ones in which we hope.
- i. These blessing are the ones we sing about (Col 3:16; Eph 5:19-20).

2 Cor 4:16-18 – Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. 17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us **a far more exceeding & eternal weight of glory**, 18 while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

[Who will follow Jesus down this Highway of Holiness?]