

**Isaiah 35:3-10  
and Ezekiel 18:17-23, 30-32**

**Haftarah for Leviticus 25:35 – 26:2**

The link with the Torah readings is redemption in verse 10 - "the redeemed shall walk there and the ransomed of the LORD shall return"

**Leviticus 25:47-55** commands that an Israelite who is sold into slavery under a heathen master should be redeemed. Targum: "His redemption must be effected forthwith!"

This Isaiah passage describes the results of spiritual redemption, of which the Leviticus passage was a picture.

**Isaiah 35:3** - "Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you."

Knowing that God will recompense the evils Israel has endured and come and save us is what will strengthen our hands to "do" His work, and our knees to continue in the Way. In fact, for us, we know He has done this on the cross! This is a prophesy of Messiah.

The final recompense will come at the end of time, when Babylon is destroyed:

- **Revelation 18:20-21** - "Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you saints and apostles and prophets; because it is for you that God has pronounced His judgment against her. Then a mighty angel picked up a stone the size of a great millstone and cast it into the sea, saying: "With such violence the great city of Babylon will be cast down, never to be seen again...."

- **Isaiah 35:5-6** - "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.

Christ opened the eyes of the blind (**Matthew 9:27, John 9:1**) and opened the ears of the deaf (**Matthew 11:5**) A lame man was healed by Peter and John (**Acts 3:1-7**)

- **Matthew 15:30** - "And great multitudes came unto him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet; and he healed them:"

Also, the spiritually deaf and blind -

Rashi - "and the ears of the deaf": Who did not hearken to the voice of the prophets until

now, will be opened and unstopped, for I will give them a proper spirit to fear Me. He says this concerning Israel, whom he called blind and deaf, as the matter is stated (Isaiah 42:18) "You deaf ones, hearken, etc."

Targum: "then shall the eyes of the house of Israel be opened, who were as blind men as to the law; and the ears of them that are as deaf men, to attend to the words of the prophets shall hear; then when they shall see the captives of Israel gathered to go up to their own land as the swift harts, and not tarry"

**Isaiah 35:7** - "And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons (jackals), where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes."

Rashi - it is not customary for reeds and rushes to grow except in a watery place, as the matter is stated (**Job 8:11**): "Can the rush shoot upwards without mire?"

Compare with **Joel 3:18** - "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters, and a fountain shall come forth of the house of the LORD, and shall water the valley of Shittim."

**Isaiah 35:8** - "And an highway shall be there, and a way, and 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."

John the Baptist and the same "highway" for our God:

- **Matthew 3:3** - "For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."

Quoting from this:

- **Isaiah 40:3** - "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God."

Preaching "prepares" the way by causing repentance.

- **Isaiah 35:9-10** - "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: And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

Lion or ravenous beast - i.e. predators. For instance, Rashi points out that Nebuchadnezzar was represented as a lion (**Jeremiah 4:7**).

Targum: "there shall not be there a king doing evil, nor an oppressive governor"

"everlasting" joy - a joy that has its basis in eternity, not time dependent

The Jews apply this passage to the world to come (Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin, fol. 110. 2.)

- **Revelation 21:4** - "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

### **Ezekiel 18:17-23, 30-32**

Describes and defines iniquity and obedience in terms of what we read in Leviticus 25, especially relating to usury and wronging the poor.

**Ezekiel 18:17** - "...That hath taken off his hand from the poor, that hath not received usury nor increase, hath executed my judgments, hath walked in my statutes..."

**Ezekiel 18:20-21** - "The soul that sins, it shall die; a son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, and a father shall not bear the iniquity of the son; the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself. And if the wicked man repent of all his sins that he has committed and keeps all My laws and executes justice and righteousness, he shall surely live, he shall not die."

### **Repentance is what God wants:**

**Ezekiel 18:23** - "Do I desire the death of the wicked? says the Lord God. Is it not rather in his repenting of his ways that he may live?"

A new heart and a new spirit

**Ezekiel 18:31-32** - "Cast away from yourselves all your transgressions whereby you have transgressed, and make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit, and why should you die, O house of Israel! For I do not desire the death of him who dies, says the Lord God: so turn away and live!"