

COMMUNITY GROUP GUIDE

③ Christmas series – the Book of Isaiah

INTRODUCTION | the Glory of the Lord

Isaiah 35 describes the moment God will come to reveal his glory and accomplish his plan of salvation, as well as how our lives and world will be restored. From the following three points, let's see how God accomplishes his plan of salvation by his coming. Firstly, when God will come, our lives will change to be full of joy. Secondly, human beings and nature will live in harmony together and be restored. Thirdly, thanks to the price paid by Jesus, we can be transformed, everything will be renewed. God's glory is revealed through renewal, restoration and redemption.

SCRIPTURE | Isaiah 35:1-10

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." 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. 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.

QUESTIONS |

- 1: (verses 3-6) What is the main theme in Isaiah 35? How did Jesus accomplish the prophecy of Isaiah? (reference: Matthew 11:4-6)
- 2: (verses 3-4) When God will come, our lives will be transformed. What kind of changes and renewal will happen? Especially, what kind of transformation can we see in verses 3 and 4?
- 3: (verses 1-2) The prophet Isaiah wrote about God's magnificent and beautiful vision. What is this vision? How do you think this world will be beautifully restored?
- 4: The prophet Isaiah talks about the restoration of the world into something magnificent and beautiful, but it is currently full of grief and tears. What can you do in your everyday life, even if it is just a small step, to live according to these expectations for the future, based on the plan of salvation accomplished by Jesus? (reference: Romans 8:19-22)
- 5: (verse 4) This verse says that God will come with vengeance and to accomplish salvation. How was this prophecy accomplished for us by Jesus?
- 6: (verses 8-10) People whose lives were transformed, who rejoice in this beautiful world restored by God, are called "the redeemed". Who are they? What life do the redeemed live? What about you?

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REFERENCES |

Matthew 11:4-6

4 And Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: 5 the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. 6 And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.”

Romans 8:19-22

19 For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. [...] 21 that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. 22 For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now.

PRAYER |

- God comes to us, he transforms our lives and he will restore a beautiful world. Let's be thankful for this promise and praise Jesus Christ. Discovering God's glory and singing our joy, let's think again about all the wonderful things he did for us and worship him.
- God came to us, but we often act as if nothing happened, led by our fears, and living in grief and despair. We have to deeply question ourselves and repent. What is wonderful about what God accomplished by sending Jesus is that he transforms your heart, your life and your world into an oasis in the desert, a river in a dry land. Pray that your heart, your life and your world may overflow.

UPCOMING EVENTS | This Week & Next Week

Lunchtime meeting (15 Akasaka, 16 Kasumigaseki, 17 Otemachi), obento project (19)

Worship & fellowship (20, @KDDI hall, baptism ceremony), Grace kids Christmas party (23), Christmas worship (25, @KDDI hall)

Worship & fellowship (27, @KDDI hall)