How Can a Sinner Walk upon the Highway of Holiness?

Isa 35:8-10 A highway shall be there, and a road, and it shall be called the Highway of Holiness. The unclean shall not pass over it, but it shall be for others. Whoever walks the road, although a fool, shall not go astray. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast go up on it; 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 singing, with everlasting joy on their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Again being mindful that within the pale of the national Israel, there were those who were ungodly idolaters and because of these rebellious citizens, Isaiah warned of a coming judgment of God that would fall upon the land, yet, once again, he provides comfort for the elect within the nation. God will provide a way for a remnant to return. At the same time, as we have seen so many times in this book, these promises not only speak comfort to Israel in Isaiah's day, but there is also a promise of a coming King and an enlarged and most glorious coming kingdom. As we consider this "Highway", it is not to be confused with the path of return to national Israel. God did provide a way of return for the exiled remnant. God did use both Cyrus and Darius even though pagan kings to bring about the return of the exiles to Jerusalem. But as we pointed out before this was God's plan to provide that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem of Judea, of the linage of David; that Seed of Abraham in whom all the nations of the earth would be blessed

The "Highway" of which Isaiah writes about here has several characteristics that set it apart from that return of the exiles to Jerusalem in Ezra and Nehemiah's day. This "Highway" is called a "Highway of Holiness". On this "Highway", nothing that defiles shall pass over it. No ravenous beast shall hinder the completion of one's journey. The redeemed and ransomed of the Lord travel upon it. They will enter Zion with singing and everlasting joy and they will never know sighing or sorrow again. Let us then consider this Highway called the Highway of Holiness.

A. The Highway is a Highway of Holiness - *A highway shall be there, and a road, and it shall be called the Highway of Holiness*

   1. This Highway is not a literal highway in the sense that it is built of earth and rock
   2. In a very real sense this highway is the path leading into heaven itself

      a. Even as the exiles from the captivity would be returning to an earthly Jerusalem
      b. The pilgrims upon this road are traveling to the New Jerusalem, the heavenly Jerusalem

   3. The title, the "Highway of Holiness" is significant for it would instruct us that only those who are holy can enter the heavenly Jerusalem

   4. This becomes quite clear when Isaiah adds, "no unclean thing shall pass over it".

      a. It bars all men born of Adam in their natural state from entrance into heaven
      b. To enter heaven one must be absolutely sinless

   5. We read in the Book of Revelation that nothing that defiles will enter heaven (Rev. 21:27)

Rev 21:27 But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

B. This title "Highway of Holiness" then speaks of the absolute necessity of Jesus Christ for entrance into God's kingdom

   1. This is true because by nature all men are sinners

      a. By Adam's disobedience we have all been made sinners (Rom. 5:19)
      b. Through Adam's offense judgment fell upon all men, resulting in our condemnation (Rom. 5:18)
      c. Because of that sinful nature that is ours at conception we have *sinned and therefore fall short of the glory of God, (Ps. 51:5; Rom 3:23)*

   2. Since nothing unclean can pass upon this roadway to heaven, man in his natural state cannot enter heaven therefore two things are necessary to gain entrance to this pathway to heaven

      a. Sinful man needs a covering for his sin
      b. The ungodly stand in need of an imputed righteousness

   3. Here is the good news, Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners and this is accomplished by two means

      a. Jesus by His shed blood provided a covering, an atonement for our sins

The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. 1 John 1:7

My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He Himself is the ***propitiation for our sins*** *1 John 2:1-2*

b. By imputing His righteousness to us we become perfectly holy in His sight

Rom 4:5-8 But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness, just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works: "Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; Blessed is the man to whom the Lord shall not impute sin."

c. One must understand if they would walk this highway and enter heaven they must enter it only by repentance toward God and faith in Jesus Christ

4. Even the fool will not go astray who enters upon the road

a. This was our previous state - Titus 3:3 For we ourselves **were also once foolish**, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another.
b. Unto Him who is able to keep us from falling - we are kept by the power, grace and mercies of God
c. The fool, the poorest saint will not go astray
d. Not because he is so smart or has great knowledge or some inward ability, but because he will be kept by the power of God through faith. 1 Peter 1:5

5. No ravenous beast is allowed upon this highway

Rom 8:37-39 Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, 39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

C. The travelers upon the road are the redeemed and the ransomed who have been purchased by the blood of Christ

1. Those who have entered this highway of holiness have been redeemed from the curse of the law

Gal 3:13 Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us.

2. They have been purchased by the precious blood of the Lamb of God

1 Peter 1:18-20 Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

3. Little wonder then that it is written *the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with singing, with everlasting joy on their heads*

Rev 5:9-10 And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth."

D. In a very real sense our Lord Jesus, the Christ is this "Highway"

1. When Jesus told the disciples He was going to prepare a place for them, and Thomas had responded asking, "How can we know the way?" (Jn. 14:3-5)

2. The response of Christ was "**I am the Way**, the Truth, and the Life, no man comes to the Father except through Me."

3. Speaking of Jesus Christ in Acts 4:12 Peter said, *"Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."*

CONCLUSION: We who are traveling this "Highway of Holiness" will enter that heavenly Zion where all sorrow and pain forever removed - *sorrow and sighing shall flee away.*

We read in the Book of Revelation that *God shall wipe away every tear*

Let us give God thanks for providing for us a "Highway of Holiness" leading us to Zion, the City of our God

Providing a means whereby we, though sinners, might enter upon that way

Heb 10:19-22 Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, and having a High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.