

WARM-UP

- If you could fix one broken object you owned in the past, what would it be and why would you want to fix it?
- Have you experienced going to a place for the first time, relying completely on a navigation tool? Describe the experience and what happened when you arrived at the place.
- What keeps your home safe from strangers and burglars? How effective are these objects in making you feel safe?

WORD *Thus says the LORD: "In a time of favor I have answered you; in a day of salvation I have helped you; I will keep you and give you as a covenant to the people, to establish the land, to apportion the desolate heritages . . ."* **ISAIAH 49:8**

(Read also **ISAIAH 49:9-17**.)

As a result of sin and disobedience, God's people were taken to Babylon in chains. Defeated, they found themselves in a new land with no place to worship their God. It was for this difficult time that Isaiah spoke a word of hope, a promise of restoration from God. God wanted to assure His people that He had not forgotten them nor would He ever abandon them. In this passage, we will look at what God promised to restore for His people.

1 | God promised to restore light for His people.

⁸Thus says the LORD: "In a time of favor I have answered you; in a day of salvation I have helped you; I will keep you and give you as a covenant to the people, to establish the land, to apportion the desolate heritages, ⁹saying to the prisoners, 'Come out,' to those who are in darkness, 'Appear.' They shall feed along the ways; on all bare heights shall be their pasture . . ." **ISAIAH 49:8-9**

Living in a foreign land as exiles, the Jews faced a very uncertain future. They didn't know what would happen to them as a people. Isaiah's words assured them that God will not only set them free from captivity; He will take them from darkness to light. The same God is at work in our lives today. He is bringing freedom by inviting people into a relationship with Him that is full of faith, hope, and love amidst uncertainties we may face. How have you experienced the restoration of God's freedom and light in your own life?

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2 | God promised to restore the inheritance of His people.

"And I will make all my mountains a road, and my highways shall be raised up." **ISAIAH 49:11**

Sometimes, we find ourselves in situations that are the exact opposite of what God promised. This was the situation of the Israelites. God promised them fruitfulness and abundance in their own land, yet because of their own disobedience, they found themselves defeated in war and exiled in another nation. But God said that He will make His mountains a road and *His highways shall be raised up*, signifying the clear path that will restore His people to their homeland. God

had not abandoned them and was in fact leading them to receive the inheritance and blessings He had promised to their forefathers. Likewise, we can be confident that as we allow God to lead us, we will receive our inheritance—what He promised in His word to fulfill in our lives, no matter our present circumstance. How has God’s path led you to eventually receive His blessings?

3 | God promised to restore the protection of His people.

¹⁵“Can a woman forget her nursing child, that she should have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you. ¹⁶Behold, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands; your walls are continually before me.” **ISAIAH 49:15–16**

God was telling His people to look beyond their present situation. Their city may have been destroyed, but He had not forgotten them. He is always mindful of His people and is full of compassion. He is their protection. He will rebuild His people and they will feel safe again. In our own lives, things may happen that make us wonder if God is against us. But just like the Israelites, God wants to show us His compassion and protection. He will even enable us to rebuild. Why do you think God used the picture of a mother caring for her child to show His people His love and concern for them? How is God greater than even the best mom in the world?

APPLICATION

- Are you experiencing hopelessness and fear in some areas of your life? Which passages in Scripture show God's promises to His people that relate to your life and family right now? Write them down so you can meditate on them this week and speak hope into your situation.
- Do you have faith to see beyond present circumstances and trust that God will restore His light, inheritance, and protection for you? What are you willing to do in response to today's message?
- Think of someone who needs to be reminded of God's compassion and protection. Ask Him to give you the words to encourage and speak hope to him or her this week.

PRAYER

- Thank God for His promise of restoration. Pray for peace and assurance that God will lead you to receive what He promised no matter what you are experiencing.
- Ask God to help you dispel any doubt from your heart, trusting that He will restore whatever the enemy has tried to take away from you. Pray that God will open your eyes and enable you to see your life through eyes of faith.
- Pray that God will give you opportunities this week to share to others how you have experienced His freedom and light.



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