

December 9th

Isaiah 35:1-10

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Joy of the Redeemed

These verses from Isaiah are so full of yearning for redemption, for the great homecoming the prophet envisions for the Israelites. The highway God will create from the desert even has a name, the "Way of Holiness" and it will be reserved for the redeemed, who will walk singing, with no "ravenous beasts" or "wicked fools" in sight.

I love the images of nature rejoicing, the land being glad, of the wilderness blossoming, the crocus bursting into bloom. That redemption and transformation is extended to nature, not just humans.

We can relate to that longing, as we wait for Christ's birth, to redeem the whole world.

As a climate activist, it's hard not to see images of climate change in the "parched land" and the gushers suddenly opening in the desert. Even in the promise of "divine retribution" and the "eyes of the blind being opened" makes me think of climate skeptics or deniers – how satisfying it would be to have their eyes opened to the reality of climate change!

As a Christian climate activist, I am comforted by the knowledge of the divine. Even now, in the midst of this seemingly intractable crisis we have created for Earth and all our fellow creatures, God is with us and knows the way out.

"Lord thank you for being with us as we work to redeem ourselves and to protect and restore your Creation. Help us to find the Way of Holiness where we will one day join with all of nature in shouting and singing for joy."

Suggested Action: urge your Senators to vote yes on the Recovering America's Wildlife Act. This legislation will invest \$1.3 billion to address the extinction crisis. Here's a sample letter:
<https://interfaithpowerandlight.salsalabs.org/rawaemail/index.html>