

Isaiah 55:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

Analysis

For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. This verse describes the exodus from Babylon as joyful procession, contrasting with Egypt's hurried flight. "Go out" (tetse'u, תֵּצֵאוּ) references exodus language. "With joy" (besimchah, בְּשִׂמְחָה) and "with peace" (beshalom, בְּשָׁלוֹם) depict celebratory departure, not desperate escape. The passive "be led forth" (tubalun, תּוּבָלוּן) indicates divine guidance.

The cosmic celebration—mountains, hills breaking into singing; trees clapping hands—personifies creation participating in redemption's joy. This echoes Psalm 98:8, Isaiah 44:23. The imagery depicts nature itself rejoicing at God's redemptive work, recognizing creation's stake in human salvation. Patsach (פָּצַח, "break forth") suggests sudden, uncontrollable outburst; "clap hands" (yimcha'u-khaph, יִמְכְּאוּ-כָפַח) depicts rhythmic celebration.

From a Reformed perspective, this anticipates Romans 8:19-22 where creation groans awaiting redemption. The return from exile foreshadows ultimate redemption when Christ returns and all creation participates in restoration. The joy and peace reflect covenant blessings (Galatians 5:22—fruit of the Spirit). This verse teaches that redemption has cosmic scope—not merely individual souls but entire created order finds restoration, all celebrating God's saving work.

Historical Context

The return from Babylonian exile (538 BCE onward) involved months of travel from Mesopotamia to Judea. Psalm 126 captures the joy: "When the LORD turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream." Though the journey was physically arduous, spiritually it represented joyful liberation, God leading His people home.

The poetic personification of nature celebrating recalls ancient Near Eastern literary conventions but transcends them theologically—creation isn't divine but participates in worshipping the Creator. The ultimate fulfillment awaits Christ's return when "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth" (Romans 8:22) will cease, giving way to liberation and celebration. Church history anticipates this in worship that engages creation—music, architecture, art—all creation's elements employed in celebrating redemption.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does your worship reflect the joy and peace of redemption Isaiah describes?
2. What would it look like for creation around you to 'sing' and 'clap' at God's work?
3. How should the cosmic scope of redemption affect your environmental stewardship?

Interlinear Text

פִּי	בְּשִׂמְחָה ה	תֵּצֵא או	וּבְשָׁלוֹם וְ	תִּזְבָּל וְ	הַהָרִים יִם
H3588	with joy H8057	For ye shall go out H3318	with peace H7965	and be led forth H2986	the mountains H2022
וְהַגְּבָעֹת וְ	יִפְצְחוּ ו	לִפְנֵיכֶם	רְנֵה ה	וְכָל	עֵצֵי י
and the hills H1389	shall break forth H6476	before H6440	you into singing H7440	H3605	and all the trees H6086
הַשָּׂדֶה ה	יִמְחָאוּ	כָּף:			
of the field H7704	shall clap H4222	their hands H3709			

Additional Cross-References

Galatians 5:22 (Peace): But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

Psalms 105:43 (Parallel theme): And he brought forth his people with joy, and his chosen with gladness:

Isaiah 44:23 (Sin): Sing, O ye heavens; for the LORD hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the LORD hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel.

Isaiah 49:13 (Sin): Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains: for the LORD hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted.

Romans 15:13 (Peace): Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.

Isaiah 35:10 (Parallel theme): 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.

Psalms 65:13 (Sin): The pastures are clothed with flocks; the valleys also are covered over with corn; they shout for joy, they also sing.

Isaiah 48:20 (Sin): Go ye forth of Babylon, flee ye from the Chaldeans, with a voice of singing declare ye, tell this, utter it even to the end of the earth; say ye, The LORD hath redeemed his servant Jacob.

Jeremiah 33:6 (Peace): Behold, I will bring it health and cure, and I will cure them, and will reveal unto them the abundance of peace and truth.

Romans 5:1 (Peace): Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

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