

# Isaiah 57:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

## Analysis

**For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.** This verse presents one of Scripture's most profound paradoxes: the transcendent God chooses intimate fellowship with the broken. The Hebrew ram venissa (רָם וְגָשָׁא, "high and lofty") emphasizes God's absolute elevation above creation, while "inhabiteth eternity" (shoken ad, עַד שָׁׁכֵן) literally means "dwelling in perpetuity"—existing outside temporal limitations.

"Whose name is Holy" (qadosh shemo, קָדוֹשׁ שְׁמֹו) declares God's essential otherness and moral perfection. Yet this incomprehensible deity condescends to dwell with "the contrite" (daka, דָּקָא—crushed, broken) and "humble" (shefal-ruach, שְׁפָלָרָעַח—low in spirit). The verb "dwell" (eshkon, אַשְׁכּוֹן) is the same used for God's eternal habitation, indicating equally authentic presence.

"To revive" (lehachayot, לְהַחְיוֹת) means to bring to life, restore vitality. God's purpose in dwelling with the broken is restorative, not condemnatory. This verse refutes both human pride (God is infinitely above us) and despair (He intimately

near the humble). It establishes the theological foundation for incarnation—the High and Holy One tabernacling among humanity in Christ (John 1:14).

## Historical Context

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Isaiah prophesied during tumultuous times (740-681 BC) spanning reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. Israel had divided into northern (Israel) and southern (Judah) kingdoms. The northern kingdom fell to Assyria in 722 BC during Isaiah's ministry. Judah faced constant threat from surrounding nations and internal corruption.

Isaiah 57 forms part of the book's latter section (chapters 40-66), often called "Comfort" or "Deutero-Isaiah" by critical scholars, though traditional scholarship maintains unified authorship. These chapters address both immediate exile concerns and distant messianic hope. The contrast between God's transcendence and immanence would profoundly comfort exiled or threatened Israelites, assuring them that the Creator who seems distant actually draws near to the humble and contrite.

Ancient Near Eastern religions typically portrayed gods as capricious, demanding appeasement through elaborate rituals. Isaiah's revelation that Yahweh seeks the broken-hearted, not the externally religious, was revolutionary. This theme continues through prophets (Micah 6:6-8, Hosea 6:6) and culminates in Jesus' ministry to sinners and outcasts. The New Testament explicitly connects this passage to Christian humility (James 4:6, 1 Peter 5:5-6).

## Related Passages

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**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

## Study Questions

1. How does God's transcendence (high and holy) combined with His immanence (dwelling with the humble) shape our worship?
2. What constitutes true contrition and humility versus false or performative humility?
3. Why does God specifically choose to dwell with the broken rather than the confident or successful?
4. How does this passage inform our understanding of God's grace in the gospel?
5. In what ways does modern culture resist the humility that invites God's presence?

## Interlinear Text

בְּהִכְפִּי	אָמַר	בְּמִצְרָיִם	וְגַם	אָשָׁכְךָ וְלֹא	עַד	וְשָׁקֵד
H3588	H3541	For thus saith	the high	and lofty One	I dwell	eternity
		H559	H7311	H5375	H7931	H5703
whose name	in the high	and holy	I dwell	H854		
H8034	H4791	H6918	H7931			
place with him also that is of a contrite	Dָּקָא					
H1793						
and humble	וְתַּתְּפַנִּי	רַקְעַם	שְׁפָלָם	רַקְעַם	וְתַּתְּפַנִּי	רַקְעַם
H8217		H8217	H7307	H2421		H7307
and to revive	וְתַּתְּפַנִּי	רַקְעַם	שְׁפָלָם	רַקְעַם	וְתַּתְּפַנִּי	רַקְעַם
H2421						
the heart	לְבָב					
H3820						
of the contrite ones	גַּדְפָּאִים					
H1792						

## Additional Cross-References

**Psalms 34:18** (Spirit): The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.

**Psalms 138:6** (Parallel theme): Though the LORD be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly: but the proud he knoweth afar off.

**Psalms 147:3** (Parallel theme): He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.

**Exodus 15:11** (Holy): Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?

**Daniel 4:34** (Parallel theme): And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation:

**Isaiah 52:13** (Parallel theme): Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high.

**Isaiah 40:28** (Parallel theme): Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding.

**Psalms 90:2** (Parallel theme): Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.

**Psalms 83:18** (Parallel theme): That men may know that thou, whose name alone is JEHOVAH, art the most high over all the earth.

**Deuteronomy 33:27** (Parallel theme): The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them.