

Luke 3:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth;

Analysis

John's quotation from Isaiah 40:4-5 promises that 'every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth.' This prophetic imagery describes spiritual preparation for Messiah's coming. 'Valleys filled' and 'mountains brought low' symbolize pride humbled and need elevated—God exalting the humble and humbling the proud. 'Crooked made straight' indicates moral reformation, while 'rough ways smooth' suggests removing obstacles to receiving Christ. John's preparatory ministry levels spiritual terrain, making hearts ready to receive the King. This work is ultimately the Holy Spirit's, as human pride and sin create impassable barriers only God can remove.

Historical Context

Ancient practice for royal visits involved road preparation—filling ravines, smoothing rough paths, straightening curves. Isaiah's prophecy uses this imagery for spiritual preparation. John's ministry of repentance performed this spiritual roadwork, preparing hearts to receive Messiah.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. What spiritual 'mountains' of pride must be brought low for Christ to enter hearts?
2. How does repentance 'fill valleys' and 'straighten paths' in preparation for receiving Christ?
3. What role does conviction of sin play in preparing hearts to welcome the Savior?

Interlinear Text

πᾶν	φάραγξ	πληρωθήσεται	καὶ	πᾶν	ὄρος	καὶ	βουνὸς
Every	valley	filled	and	Every	mountain	and	hill
G3956	G5327	G4137	G2532	G3956	G3735	G2532	G1015
ταπεινωθήσεται	καὶ	ἔσται	τὰ	σκολιὰ	εἰς		
shall be brought low	and	shall be	G3588	the crooked	shall be made		
G5013	G2532	G2071		G4646	G1519		
εὐθείαν	καὶ	αἱ	τραχεῖαι	εἰς	ὁδοὺς	λείας·	
straight	and	G3588	the rough	shall be made	ways	smooth	
G2117	G2532		G5138	G1519	G3598	G3006	

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 40:4 (Creation): Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain:

Isaiah 42:16 (Parallel theme): And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light

before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.

Isaiah 45:2 (Parallel theme): I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron:

Isaiah 49:11 (Parallel theme): And I will make all my mountains a way, and my highways shall be exalted.

Ezekiel 17:24 (Creation): And all the trees of the field shall know that I the LORD have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have dried up the green tree, and have made the dry tree to flourish: I the LORD have spoken and have done it.

James 1:9 (Parallel theme): Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted: