

Shalom AZ Ministries

In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption



"The Not-So-Secret Passageway to the High and Exalted Place"

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Devotion and Discussion Questions

Key Texts (TLV): *Isaiah 57:14-15; Isaiah 40:3; Isaiah 62:10; Isaiah 8:13-9:1; Isaiah 52:13; Isaiah 53:5, 10; Isaiah 6:1; Isaiah 14:13-15; James 4:6-10; Psalm 51:1-19*

There's a question sitting underneath this passage that we don't always say out loud, but it's there: if God's ways are higher than my ways, and His thoughts are higher than my thoughts—as *high as the heavens are above the earth*—then how do I get there? If He is the One who is high and exalted, dwelling in a high and holy place, how does someone like me—ground-level, broken, inconsistent—ever find my way into His presence? That's the tension this passage begins to answer.

Because on one hand, we've seen what happens when people try to make their own way. They climb their own "high and lofty" places. They give lip service to God, but their hearts are attached to other things—power, control, security, approval. And the result is exhaustion, emptiness, and ultimately no rescue. But now, in *Isaiah 57:14*, the tone shifts. No longer is the testimony being sealed while people are left to their own stumbling (*Is. 8:16-17*). Now the call is: "*Build up, build up, prepare the way. Remove every stumbling block out of the way of My people.*" God Himself is making a way back—and the question becomes: what is that way?

1. GOD IS MAKING A WAY BACK TO HIMSELF

"*Build up, build up... prepare the way... remove every stumbling block out of the way of My people.*" The language is intentional. This is not a hidden path. This is a raised highway—clear, visible, accessible. Every obstacle is being removed so that nothing stands in the way of God's people returning to Him. And what's striking is that the focus isn't even on who is speaking—it's on the message itself. God, in His mercy, is making it possible for people to come back.

That seems to stand in sharp contrast to what we saw earlier in Isaiah. In *Isaiah 8*, the Lord Himself had become a stumbling block—not because He had moved, but because the people refused to give Him His rightful place. And because they insisted on their own way, they stumbled into darkness, distress, and anger. But here, something has changed. The Servant has come. The One who was "*crushed*" (*Is. 53:5, 10*) has intervened. The light has entered the darkness (*Is. 9:1*). And now, instead of sealing things up, the call is to clear the way. God is not looking to keep people out—He is making a way for them to return.

2. THE HIGH AND EXALTED ONE CANNOT BE REACHED BY CLIMBING

"*For thus says the High and Exalted One, who inhabits eternity, whose Name is Holy...*" This is the same language we've seen before—*Is 6:1* and *52:13*. He is high and lifted up. His Name—His character—is holy. Everything about Him is set apart, complete, lacking nothing. And He dwells in a place that reflects that—a *high and holy place*. His dwelling matches His nature.

And that's where we have to be careful, because everything in us still wants to climb. We want to ascend. We want to figure it out, prove ourselves, justify ourselves, make our way upward. But Scripture is clear—that is not the way. Whether it's Babel, the false worship in *Isaiah 57*, or the declaration in *Isaiah 14*—"I will ascend... I will exalt myself"—that path always leads downward. Self-exaltation never brings you into the presence of God. It always leads to distance, no matter how spiritual it may look on the outside.

3. THE WAY UP IS FOUND IN THE LOWEST PLACE

This is where the passage turns—and this is the heart of it: *“I dwell in a high and holy place, and also with the contrite and humble in spirit.”* That’s the passageway. That’s the way in. Not up—but down. Not climbing—but being brought low. The very place we assume would distance us from God—our brokenness, our failure, our recognition that *“my way has not worked”*—is actually the place where He says, *“I dwell **there...** in your contrition and humility.”*

And not just to sit there with you—but *“to revive the spirit of the humble, and revive the heart of the contrite.”* His intention is life. This is not about “performing” repentance or offering surface-level apologies. This is about that moment where something becomes real—where you recognize, “What have I done? My way has led me here, and I need You.” That’s Psalm 51. That’s David not managing the situation, but being undone by it. *“For I know my transgressions... Create in me a clean heart, O God.”* And it’s in that place—not of pretending, but of truth—that the presence of God becomes real.

CONCLUSION

The not-so-secret passageway to the high and holy place is not something hidden—it’s just something we often overlook. We assume the way to God must be upward, impressive, strong. But the Lord says the opposite. The way into His presence is through humility, through brokenness, through a heart that finally stops defending itself and simply says, “I need You.” That’s where He dwells.

And the beauty of it is this: when He meets you there, He’s not there to push you further down. He’s there to lift you up. *“God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble... humble yourselves... and He will lift you up” (James 4:6–10).* His goal is not to leave you in the dust—it’s to revive you there. To make your spirit live. To restore your heart. To bring you into the very place you could never reach on your own. The high and exalted place is entered through the lowest place—and once you see that, everything changes.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What does it look like in your life to “try to climb” into God’s presence rather than receive His way?
2. How does *Isaiah 57:14* change the way you view God’s heart toward people who have wandered?
3. Why is humility so difficult, even when we know it’s the way to God?
4. What is the difference between surface-level repentance and the kind described in *Psalm 51*?
5. Where have you experienced God meeting you in a low place—and what did He do there?

CLOSING PRAYER:

Avinu Malkhenu, Our Father, Our Kings, You are the High and Exalted One, the One who dwells in eternity, whose Name is Holy. And yet, You have made a way for us—not by asking us to climb to You, but by meeting us in the place of humility and truth. Thank You that You do not leave us in our stumbling, but that You remove the obstacles and call us back to Yourself.

Lord, search our hearts. Expose the places where we are still holding onto pride, still trying to make our own way, still giving You words without giving You ourselves. Bring us to that place of honesty, that place of true humility—not to shame us, but so that You can revive us. Create in us clean hearts. Renew steadfast spirits within us. And let us know the reality of Your presence—not in our strength, but in our surrender.

B’Shem Yeshua, In the name of Yeshua, amen.