

Isaiah Chapter 65

Verses 1-16

In response to the prayer of the previous chapter, God speaks to the Gentiles who have come to trust in Him.

“I am found of them that sought me not” refers to the unconditional election of the Gentiles as the bulk of the New Testament church of God. (See Romans 10:20).

While the Jews themselves are called a “rebellious people”, God still promises to bring a “seed out of Jacob ... mine elect.”

The language here is reminiscent of Romans 11:1-5, where Paul insists that God has not forsaken His people Israel.

The references to the plain of “Sharon” and the “valley of Achor” blossoming abundantly look forward to the prosperity Israel will enjoy during the millennial kingdom.

Verses 1-7

In response to the prayer of (63:7-64:12), the Lord repeated the warning of His judgment.

Isaiah 65:1 “I am sought of [them that] asked not [for me]; I am found of [them that] sought me not: I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation [that] was not called by my name.”

“Asked not ... sought me not ... not called”:

Though Israel sought the Lord, they did so only superficially.

They did not genuinely seek Him.

The New Testament assigns an additional sense to the words in Romans 10:20, applying them to Gentiles who find Him through the work of His sovereign grace.

This verse is speaking of God coming to the Gentiles.

Praise God!

All can be saved.

We see the great mercy of God reaching beyond the physical house of Israel to all of mankind.

God will now reveal Himself to the Gentiles.

We know that Jesus was accepted much more readily by the Gentiles, than He was by the natural house of Israel.

We see, in this verse, God reaching out to all mankind.

The word “behold” is calling the nations to recognize God, and come to Him.

Isaiah 65:2 “I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walketh in a way [that was] not good, after their own thoughts;”

The rebellious people of course are the natural house of Israel.

God had been patient with them.

He had reached out to them over and over again.

He had sent judges, prophets, and even gave them His law, yet they rejected Him.

God had never left them, but they had left Him.

They had committed spiritual adultery by seeking false gods.

They were determined to walk in ways that were right in their own sight, and not in the path God had given them.

Verses 3-4

Here Isaiah gave more references to Israel’s sins, such as defiance by practicing idolatry, communing with the spirits of the dead (a forbidden practice according to Deut. 18:10-11), eating in ways forbidden by the Mosaic Law (Lev. 11:7-8), consuming food connected with idol sacrifices, and the arrogance of self-righteousness (Matt. 9:11; Luke 5:30; 18:11).

Isaiah 65:3 “A people that provoketh me to anger continually to my face; that sacrificeth in gardens, and burneth incense upon altars of brick;”

This is a description of some of their false worship.

“That sacrificeth in gardens” was the same as the grove worship, which promoted feel good religion.

It was a sensual false religion connected with goddesses.

They pleased their flesh in these religions.

I have said over and over, we must crucify the flesh and live in the Spirit to please God.

To burn incense to false gods was blasphemy.

Isaiah 65:4 “Which remain among the graves, and lodge in the monuments, which eat swine’s flesh, and broth of abominable [things is in] their vessels;”

The eating of swine’s flesh had been forbidden to the Jews.

It was one of the dietary laws in Leviticus.

It seems the eating of the swine flesh had something to do with this abominable worship.

They remained near graves of the dead, somehow planning to communicate with the dead.

This is an abomination even today, but is a commonly practiced ritual in Satan worship.

Isaiah 65:5 “Which say, Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou. These [are] a smoke in my nose, a fire that burneth all the day.”

“Smoke in my nose”:

This alluded to the smoke of their self righteous sacrifices, an endless irritation to God who responds in judgment.

This was an abomination that had risen up to heaven.

It was not a sweet smelling savor to God.

It was an abomination.

Most people, who practiced this heathenistic worship, thought they would become above those around them.

Some people today who take drugs do it for the feeling of power they get.

This is a false hope.

There is nothing in drugs, but death and hell.

Isaiah 65:6 “Behold, [it is] written before me: I will not keep silence, but will recompense, even recompense into their bosom,”

“I will not keep silence”:

The Lord's response to the prayer asking Him not to restrain Himself in granting deliverance (64:12), was that He will act in judgment, not deliverance, to punish sin (verse 7).

God keeps records in heaven.

There is a book that contains all the sins of each person on this earth.

When the books are opened, each person has to give an account to God.

Praise God, when you receive Jesus as your Savior, the sins in the book are all blotted out.

You become a new creature in Christ.

God blots out our sin, and writes our name in the Lamb's book of life.

Isaiah 65:7 “Your iniquities, and the iniquities of your fathers together, saith the LORD, which have burned incense upon the mountains, and blasphemed me upon the hills: therefore will I measure their former work into their bosom.”

There is a day of judgment coming.

Revelation 20:13 “And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.”

Those who have not repented of their sins and come to Jesus will be doomed.

Revelation 20:14-15 “And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.” “And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”

Verses 8-10

In the midst of the final fury of judgment when the time of Jacob's trouble comes (Jer. 30:7), and God purges out the rebels in Israel (Ezek. 20:38), there will also be the restoration of the faithful remnant to the Land.

Though judgment comes to the nation as a whole, God will spare and save (Zech. 12:10-13:1; Romans 11:25-27), the faithful remnant, “My servants” (1:9), in the future kingdom.

This will include a physical return of God's elect, believing Jews, to the land of Israel (57:13).

Isaiah 65:8 “Thus saith the LORD, As the new wine is found in the cluster, and [one] saith, Destroy it not; for a blessing [is] in it: so will I do for my servants' sakes, that I may not destroy them all.”

God has always had a remnant of the natural Jew which have not bowed the knee to Baal (false gods).

1 Kings 19:18 “Yet I have left [me] seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.”

Romans 11:4 “But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to [the image of] Baal.”

Isaiah 65:9 “And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains: and mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there.”

Jesus is the Lion of the tribe of Judah.

He is the One spoken of here.

The “mountains” are speaking of the area of Palestine, which is actually a group of mountains.

God had chosen Israel to be His elect.

We will find in these lessons, there is a physical Israel, and there is a spiritual Israel.

Spiritual Israel is comprised of those who belong to Christ.

The following Scripture says it very well.

Romans 9:6 “Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they [are] not all Israel, which are of Israel:”

To be Abraham’s seed (in the spirit), you must belong to Christ.

Galatians 3:29 “And if ye [be] Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”

Isaiah 65:10 “And Sharon shall be a fold of flocks, and the valley of Achor a place for the herds to lie down in, for my people that have sought me.”

“Sharon ... valley of Achor”:

Sharon was the western fertile territory on the Mediterranean coast, south of Mt. Carmel (35:2).

The eastern Valley of Achor was near Jericho and the Jordan River (Joshua 7:24, 26).

Together they represented the whole land.

Sharon will no longer be a wilderness.

Jesus makes this area bloom again.

He is called the Rose of Sharon.

Song of Solomon 2:1 “I [am] the rose of Sharon, [and] the lily of the valleys.”

Verses 11-12

Another pronouncement of judgment was given on the rebellious Israelites, who resorted to the worship of pagan gods, like Fortune (Hebrew – Gad), and Destiny (Hebrew – Meni), and had no one to blame but themselves for the sword of damnation that fell on them.

Isaiah 65:11 “But ye [are] they that forsake the LORD, that forget my holy mountain, that prepare a table for that troop, and that furnish the drink offering unto that number.”

This has reverted to the unfaithful house of Israel.

They sought false gods.

Isaiah 65:12 “Therefore will I number you to the sword, and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter: because when I called, ye did not answer; when I spake, ye did not hear; but did evil before mine eyes, and did choose [that] wherein I delighted not.”

God is tired of their unfaithfulness and has turned His wrath toward them.

They rejected God as their Savior, therefore He will destroy them.

Verses 13-14

Continuing to address the rebel idolaters, the Lord Himself gave contrasts between the faithful and unfaithful of Israel.

Isaiah 65:13 “Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, my servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry: behold, my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty: behold, my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed:”

God is separating those who obey Him, and those who do not.

Blessings to those who obey, and curses to those who do not.

Isaiah 65:14 “Behold, my servants shall sing for joy of heart, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall howl for vexation of spirit.”

Those who chose the world, and the false gods, would go hungry and not have anything to rejoice about.

They will cry and be vexed in their spirit, but it will be too late.

Those who choose to serve God, will not hunger, or thirst, and they will rejoice in the bountiful blessings the Lord bestows upon them.

Isaiah 65:15 “And ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen: for the Lord GOD shall slay thee, and call his servants by another name:”

“Your name for a curse ... another name”:

Israel’s new name was to reflect her favored status among the nations (62:2-4).

Delinquent Israelites, on the other hand, were to endure the reproach of men, so that the very name “Jew” would be disclaimed.

It is not Satan that destroys those who have turned away from God, it is GOD.

GOD, in the verse above, is Jehovah.

Calling His servants by another name, is speaking of the new name they are given.

They will be called Christians.

Isaiah 65:16 “That he who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth; and he that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of truth; because the former troubles are forgotten, and because they are hid from mine eyes.”

“God of truth”:

Literally this is “God of Amen,” referring to the very God, the True God, who will honor His promises to Israel, thus vindicating Himself in the eyes of all people.

Someday the rebels will be purged out and the redeemed remnant will be left.

In that time, all blessing and swearing will be by the one and only True God, because all idols will be vanquished and forgotten in the glory of the kingdom of the Messiah.

If God says it, it is so.

God is absolute Truth.

God keeps all of His promises.

God is the only Truth.

God is going to bring forgiveness to the earth through His Son Jesus Christ.

Verses 17-25

At this point Isaiah saw further into the future than any Old Testament prophet, looking beyond the millennial kingdom to the “new heavens and a new earth” (Rev. 21).

Thus, the reader is suddenly thrust into the celestial future of New Jerusalem.

“Weeping” and “crying” shall be no more.

The blessings of faithful Israel in the coming kingdom are described.

Rev. 21:4: “God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes ... for the former things are passed away”:

Isaiah 65:17 “For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.”

“New heavens and a new earth”:

Israel’s future kingdom will include a temporal kingdom of a thousand years and an eternal kingdom in God’s new creation (51:6, 16; 54:10; 66:22; Rev. 21:1-8).

The prophet uses the eternal kingdom here as a reference point for both.

Isaiah’s prophecy does not make clear the relationship between the kingdom’s two aspects as does later prophecy (Rev. 20:1 – 21:8).

This is similar to the compression of Christ’s first and second advents, so that in places they are indistinguishable (61:1-2).

This sinful world will pass away.

God will create a new heaven and a new earth.

Revelation 21:1 “And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.”

2 Peter 3:13 “Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.”

Isaiah 65:18 “But be ye glad and rejoice for ever [in that] which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy.”

This will be a time of great rejoicing for God’s people, as we read in the next verse.

Revelation 3:12 “Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, [which is] new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and [I will write upon him] my new name.”

Isaiah 65:19 “And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying.”

The following Scripture is the best to explain this.

Revelation 21:4 “And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.”

Isaiah 65:20 “There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die a hundred years old; but the sinner [being] an hundred years old shall be accursed.”

“Shall be no more ... an infant ... nor an old man”:

Long life will prevail in the millennial kingdom.

In the temporal phase of the kingdom, death will happen, but not nearly so early as in the time of Isaiah.

“Accursed”:

In the millennial phase of Israel’s kingdom, a sinful person may die at age 100, but will be considered a mere youth at the time of his premature death.

Having died an untimely death at such a youthful time, it will be assumed that God has taken his life for sin.

The curse will be reversed in the Millennium, but it will not be removed until the eternal state (Rev. 22:3).

This speaks of some people only living to be 100 years old.

Some live to happiness, some to a curse.

When the Millennium happens, only those who are saved will go into it.

No sinners, only those who are saved.

These people will then start having children and many of those will not follow Jesus, therefore they will die by the time they are 100 years old.

And it is not because Satan nor his demons cause this, but the sin nature all of us are born with.

Verses 21-22

“Build ... inhabit ... plant ... eat”:

Social justice will prevail in Israel’s kingdom.

No enemies will deprive people of what is rightfully theirs (Deut. 28:30).

Isaiah 65:21 “And they shall build houses, and inhabit [them]; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them.”

It appears that even in the New heaven and the new earth, there will be gardens and homes.

Isaiah 65:22 “They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree [are] the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands.”

“They shall not build, and another inhabit”:

As the Canaanites did, whose houses the Israelites inhabited.

But they shall inhabit the houses they have built, and shall not be taken away by an enemy:

“They shall not plant, and another eat”:

The fruit of the vines, olives, fig trees, or others, planted by them:

“For as the days of a tree are the days of my people”; not as of a leaf which falls every year, but as of a tree, and as of such that last long, as oaks, cedars, and the like; though perhaps a tree bearing fruit fit to eat is meant; and the sense be, that the Lord's people should live as long as the trees planted by them, and so should eat the fruit thereof, and not leave them to others to partake of.

Isaiah 65:23 “They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they [are] the seed of the blessed of the LORD, and their offspring with them.”

“For trouble”:

Literally this means “for sudden death.”

Subjects in the kingdom will enjoy freedom from ordinary misfortunes related to the premature death of infants.

There will be the lowest infant mortality rate ever.

Along with longer life, verse 20, this means the earth will be greatly populated at an exponential rate of people at the end of the kingdom who come against Christ.

Jesus explained in the next verse how it would be for those who are His followers.

Matthew 6:20 “But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:”

If we belong to Christ, we are heirs with Him.

Romans 8:17 “And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with [him], that we may be also glorified together.”

Isaiah 65:24 “And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.”

“Before they call ... while they are yet speaking”:

Relationship with the Lord will be so close that He will anticipate and provide for every need (58:9).

This just speaks of the wonderful care God takes of His family.

He hears even while our prayers are still in our hearts, even before we utter them.

Isaiah 65:25 “The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust [shall be] the serpent’s meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the LORD.”

“Wolf ... lamb lion ... bullock (ox) ... serpent”:

Dangers from the animal world will be nonexistent during the reign of the Servant of the Lord (11:6-9).

Jesus defeated sin, death, and Satan, there is no danger here.

Isaiah Chapter 65 Questions

1. Who is verse 1 speaking of?

2. What does the word “behold”, in verse 1, mean?
3. What does God call physical Israel in verse 2?
4. Who had God sent to minister the truth to them?
5. Whose ways did they walk in?
6. What is verse 3 a description of?
7. To burn incense to a false god, was _____.
8. Where do we find the law forbidding the eating of swine?
9. Why did they remain near graves?
10. The incense these evil people burned was what?
11. What kind of records does God keep.
12. God has always had a remnant of the _____.
13. Jesus is the Lion of the tribe of _____.
14. Who is the Rose of Sharon?
15. What happens to the ones God called, who did not answer?
16. My servants shall eat, but ye shall be _____.
17. Who destroys those who have turned away from God?
18. The God of truth in verse 16, is speaking of whom?
19. Verse 17 says God will create what?
20. What is verse 20 speaking of?
21. What are 2 things verse 21 says, we will have in the new earth?
22. Verse 24 promises God will answer, before we _____.
23. What three things did Jesus defeat?