

God Restores

Nov. 29, 2020

Isaiah 65:17-25

We are now in our final lesson from Isaiah. Much of Isaiah concerns itself with historical events in the near future or a few centuries down the road. But Isaiah's vision of the future in the final chapters of this book is different. It is fitting, then, that our text is concerned with "new heavens and a new earth."



God is going to radically transform this present creation. The pain and woe of this present evil age will be gone forever (65:17). The city of Jerusalem will be restored, full of joy and mutual delight between God and his people (65:18-19). There will be no more premature death (65:20). Life will be defined by prosperity and fruitful labor (65:21-23). God will communicate freely and constantly with his people (65:24), and even animosity between predator and prey will disappear (65:25).

Isaiah's message was clear that the future of God's people is bright, we can rest assured that our future is bright. He is going to restore what has been lost and restore what sin has devastated. Isaiah records God telling us that in the new heaven and a new earth, He will be so attentive to us that, "Even before they call, I will answer; while they are still speaking, I will hear" Isaiah 65:24.

In the words of Corrie Ten Boom, "If you look at the world you will be distressed. If you look within you will be depressed. If you look to God you will be at rest." Our hope is in the Lord! He never fails. He is with us now and the best is yet to be! [excerpts from Joshua Sharp and Glenn Metts]

A Place Of Joy (Isaiah 65:17-20)

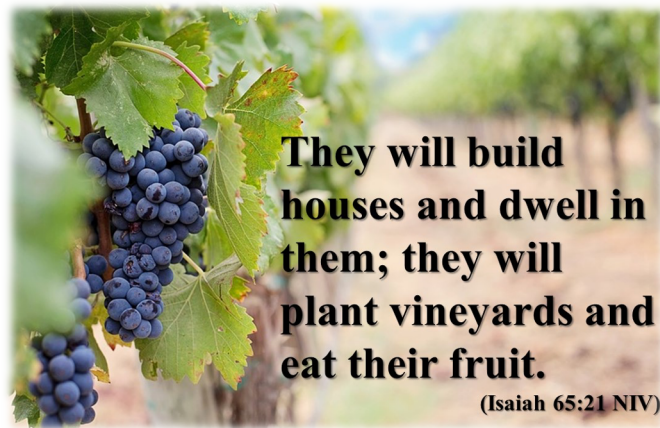
- **"For behold, I create ..."** Verse 17 is in response to the whole of chapters 56-66.
- **"new heavens and a new earth"** – The creator will make a new creation that solves the fundamental problem of sin and its effects on the existing order of things.
 - God created everything good, but the serpent's temptation led Adam and Eve to reject God.
 - In the new creation, sin, death, destruction and failure will be no more.
- Through Isaiah, God gives promise of future hope, to start afresh.
 - The promise has been partially fulfilled in Jesus first coming (2 Cor. 5:17).
- **"The former shall not be remembered"** – this is the main point of the new creation; everything that caused pain and suffering will be gone and remembered no more.
- The result of the new creation is that the people would be **"glad and rejoice forever"**.
 - The failure in the garden of Eden will not happen again.
 - The people of God would finally be a beacon of God's goodness.
- God always desires a right relationship with His creation.
 - **"I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people"**
- In God's new creation, sorrow will no longer exist.
 - **Can we know joy now, in the current state of affairs?**
 - **Does the idea of a new earth bring you comfort, or does it cause you to worry about this physical world?**

Then I saw a New Heaven and a New Earth
for the first heaven and the first earth
had passed away.

Revelation 21:1

A Place of Prosperity (Isaiah 65:21-23)

- The loss of one's physical home during war was a symbol of God's judgment due to sin.
 - The Babylonians had conquered Israel and Judah, taken them into exile, and occupied the land.
 - The Babylonians moved into their houses.
- God promises in the new creation this will not happen again. They will build houses that they inhabit, they will plant vineyards that they harvest.
- ***"mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands"***
 - The new creation includes the physical realities of home and productive labor.
- God created us to have a personal relationship with Him. Our labor should be productive – with a purpose. It will be similar in the new creation but with one major difference.
 - Currently, our temporary nature limits our ability to affect anything of lasting value.
 - We spend our lives building sand castles that are washed away by the changing tide.
 - ***"for as the days of a tree are the days of my people"*** – But in the new creation, our days will be long (eternal). Unlike the grass that perishes readily, our time will be measured in generations (like a tree). Lives will be long, ***"they shall not labor in vain"***.
- All of this will take place because the people will be "blessed of the Lord". The time of curses will be gone, and the blessing will be eternal.
- **What would you do different today if you knew your labor would be successful?**
- **Knowing that God will make all things new, do your views of other people change?**



They will build houses and dwell in them; they will plant vineyards and eat their fruit.

(Isaiah 65:21 NIV)

A Place of Peace (Isaiah 65:24-25)

- ***"before they call, I shall answer"*** – communication with God in the Old Testament was difficult (strict rules and procedures).
 - In the new creation (already begun with the coming of Jesus), our prayers will be heard (an acted upon) before we speak!
 - The people and their requests will be aligned with God's will.
- ***"wolf and lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw"***
 - The sources of danger for both man and beast will present no danger in the new creation.
 - This world, filled with sin, will be replaced by the world filled with peace.
- The kingdom of the Messiah will be the new heavens and new earth,
 - In Jesus' kingdom, the people will not succumb to sin ***"dust shall be the serpent's meat"***.
 - The people will live in God's kingdom, the new creation, and peace will reign forever.
- **How do peace and joy relate to each other?**
- **Who can you share the good news of Jesus with this Christmas season?**

Don't forget to pick-up your new SS study guide for next quarter. They are available in the room adjacent to the Minnie Rowe Class.

Biblical Truth:

The one true God promises to restore His creation for His people through faith in His Son.

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! 2 Cor. 5:17

The wolf and the lamb will feed together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox, and dust will be the serpent's food. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain," says the LORD.

(Isaiah 65:25 NIV)

