

## ISAIAH 65

## NEW HEAVENS AND A NEW EARTH

We are now drawing toward the conclusion of this Book of evangelical prophecy, and its last two chapters direct us to look as far forward as the new heavens and the new earth – that new world of the Gospel-Kingdom, which makes a separation between the Lord’s people and the wicked. In this chapter, we find very much of Christ; and those who desire to read this chapter profitably must pray for much of the Holy Spirit to instruct them in it. Jesus – in the Person of His servant Isaiah – speaks of the call of the Gentiles and the sad obstinacy of the Jews. But toward the close of the chapter, we have a cluster of the richest Gospel-promises!

“I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not,” says the Lord (verse 1). He is here speaking of the Gentiles (non-Jews), who were not typically included among the chosen people of God during the Old Testament times. These Gentiles came to seek the Savior, and they found Him – for even though the Jews thought of them as unlikely converts, they were sought and found by Him! This is how Christ often works; He meets with some thoughtless trifler or rebellious sinner, and makes him or her a recipient of His amazing grace. He says to such a person, “Behold me!” – and a speedy and complete change takes place in the soul. In our naturally sinful state, we could never have known Jesus; nor would we ever have dreamed of asking for Him. O the riches of His wondrous grace! Well may we rejoice in the consolation; for we were born as Gentiles, but now we are called by Jesus’ precious name! (Eph. 2:11-22)

All the Gospel-day, Christ waits to be gracious! When He was busy in His earthly ministry, the door of grace was standing open to the whole Jewish nation. They were bidden to the Gospel-feast, but they refused to come and dine. And so it was not without a just cause that they were subsequently rejected by God. They desired to only do what most pleased them. They forsook God’s Temple, sacrificed to idols in groves, and assumed a haughty “holier than thou” attitude. The Lord’s reproof against these people is plain. It is indeed a sad history that the Scriptures have on record of their rebellion and rejection of their own Messiah. But to a gracious soul that longs for the Redeemer’s kingdom to come with power and glory upon the earth, it is a blessed relief to recollect that sweet promise which shall one day be fulfilled, when the Redeemer shall cause His ancient beloved people to become the recipients of His saving grace, just as He has done already with us Gentiles! (chapter 59:20; Rom. 11:26) A remnant

Outline of the chapter:

- ❖ The bringing in of the Gentiles, and the rejection of the Jews – verses 1-7
- ❖ The Lord’s preservation of a remnant among the Jews – verses 8-10
- ❖ The Lord’s people and the wicked are contrasted – verses 11-16
- ❖ The Lord’s blessings upon the “new heavens” and the “new earth” – verses 17-25

of the Jews shall be saved by grace. And hence, Israel's fruitful and fertile plain of Sharon and valley of Achor are spiritually spoken of (verse 10) as flourishing and opening a door of hope to poor repentant Israelites; they will be brought into Jesus' Church, and they will become part of the same sheepfold as the Gentiles. All of God's people, who are the spiritual descendants of praying Jacob – whether Jewish or Gentile by birth – shall inherit Christ's mountains of bliss and joy (verse 9); and they shall be carried safely to them through the valley of tears.

In verses 11-16, God's servants are assured that they shall have the Bread of Life, and they are promised that they shall lack nothing that is truly good for them. But those who forsake the Lord shall be ashamed of the vain confidence which they have placed in their own righteousness, and of the hopes that they have built thereon. Worldly people bless themselves because they have an abundance of temporal goods, but God's servants bless themselves in Him; *He* is their strength and their portion. It was promised that in Christ, all the families of the earth would be blessed. If you know yourself to be united with Him, and a member of His Body, then all your springs of blessing and of spiritual life are found in Him!

“Behold,” says the Lord in verse 17, “I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind!” It is in the grace and comfort which believers enjoy in Christ, that we are to look for this new heaven and new earth. This blessed promise is fulfilled in a gracious sense when sinners are made new creatures in Christ Jesus, and it shall be ultimately fulfilled in that upper and brighter world which John saw in the Book of Revelation (21:1-5). How truly blessed it is to observe the happy change that is worked in the circumstances of mankind by the gracious effects of the Gospel of peace! And those blessings are heightened and endeared by the fact that in every renewed heart where the saving change is wrought, the wonderful results are instantly induced – whether in infancy or old age (verse 20). Every event that befalls the children of God shall be blessed to them, for they are blessed in Christ (verses 21-24). Even before we call upon the Lord or approach His throne of grace, His answer is already prepared for us. Why? Because Jesus is ours; and in His blood and righteousness, all His redeemed ones are accepted. And the wonderful and peaceful environment which is described in the last verse shall be the blessed circumstance that is induced in the heart of every person upon whom a saving change has been worked by the glorious Gospel of Jesus! Where the Spirit of Christ dwells, the minds of people will be changed; and the powers of Satan will be so lessened that the most uncouth and rugged tempers – like the savage natures of the wolf and the lion – will be softened to the gentleness of the lamb!

*Lord Jesus, increase the influences of Your grace upon lost sinners everywhere, and turn the fierce wolves into gentle sheep! Amen.*

