

“A NEW HEAVENS AND A NEW EARTH”

Isaiah 63-66

Introduction

- 1) **Isaiah** and other prophets spoke of “new” things to come (Isa. 65:17; Jer. 31:31; Ezek. 36:26)
- 2) As the book of Isaiah comes to a conclusion, emphasis is again given to the coming new messianic kingdom and the wondrous blessings for those who are a part of it
- 3) NT – new creation, new covenant, new and living way (cf. 2 Cor. 5:17; Heb. 8:8; 10:20)
- 4) God provides all that man needs – salvation, forgiveness, contentment, peace, and joy

I) The Lord’s Fierce Judgments and Great Mercies (63:1-14)

- A) God is pictured as coming from Edom – glorious apparel and strength (v. 1)
 - 1) Apparel is red like one who treads the winepress (v. 2)
- B) God answers that He has punished [trodden, trampled] Edom in His fury (vv. 3-6)
 - 1) Edom representative of nations who opposed God and His people (cf. Isa. 34:1-7; Jer. 49:7-22; Obadiah; Mal. 1:2-5; Amos 1:11-12)
 - 2) Treading the winepress is symbolic of God’s judgment and fury (v. 3; cf. Rev. 14:19-20; 19:15)
 - 3) Lord found no one to help Him, so He did it alone (v. 5; cf. 59:16)
- C) The lovingkindness and mercy of God was bestowed on Israel (vv. 7-14)
 - 1) Helped and carried them in times of affliction – saved by the “Angel of His Presence” (vv. 7-9; cf. Ex. 23:20-25; 33:14)
 - 2) When they rebelled and grieved His Holy Spirit, God fought against them as an enemy
 - a) Why Israel would find itself in captivity (v. 10; cf. Ps. 78:56-64; Eph. 4:30; Jas. 4:4)
 - 3) Remembered the days of old when God led them by Moses through the sea to a place of rest – God saved then, He can save now! (vv. 11-13)
 - 4) Plan and purpose of God is to lead His people to make for Himself a glorious name (v. 14)

II) A Plea for Divine Restoration (63:15 – 64:1-12)

- A) Plea for God to “look down from heaven” (63:15), “return” (63:17), and “come down” (64:1) – a desire for God to arise to see and act in His grace and power for the good of His people! (63:16-17)
 - 1) “Where are you?” questions not from doubt, but a plea based on faith and hope (v. 15)
 - 2) Nation had become like a Gentile nation of old away from God’s special favor (63:18-19)
- B) A desire for God to come in furious judgment – rend the heavens, shake the mountains, burning fire, nations tremble, make name known, do awesome things (64:1-5a)
 - 1) God’s people had sinned, their righteousness like “filthy rags” – sins had hidden God’s face from them (64:5b-7; cf. 59:1-2; 61:10b)
- C) A humble plea for God to forgive His people (64:8-12)
 - 1) “We are the clay, and You our potter, and all we are the work of Your hand” – humble recognition that God can mold us by His will (64:8; cf. Jer. 18:5-11; Rom. 9:21)
 - 2) Desire for forgiveness – they are desolated and need God’s help (64:9-12)

III) The Righteousness of God’s Judgment (65:1-16)

- A) God was sought and found by those not asking or seeking Him [Gentiles] while God implored disobedient and idolatrous Israel to return (vv. 1-7)
 - 1) Vv. 1-2a are quoted by Paul and applied to the Jew’s stubborn rejection of Christ and the gospel, with salvation coming to the Gentiles as a result, which then resulted in causing the Jews to turn to the truth (Rom. 10:16-21; 11:11-12)

- B) God will not destroy all of Israel, but bring forth descendants and an heir (vv. 8-10)
 - 1) Fulfilled first in the remnant and then in those in the messianic kingdom
- C) Those who forsake the Lord and join with evil will be destroyed (vv. 11-12)
 - 1) When God calls, we must answer; when He speaks, we must hear!
- D) God's faithful will be blessed, while the unfaithful will not (vv. 13-14)
 - 1) God will give His servants another name and be blessed (vv. 15-16; 62:2)

IV) A New Creation (65:17-25)

- A) God will create a "new heavens and a new earth" (v. 17)
 - 1) Former "creation" will not be remembered – a change for the better!
 - 2) Symbolic of a new order, a new dispensation to come
 - a) Change from Mosaic covenant/kingdom to Messianic covenant/kingdom
 - 3) Joy will be found in Jerusalem instead of weeping (vv. 18-19)
- B) Blessings of longevity, prosperity, contentment, peace (vv. 20-25)
 - 1) Symbolism of animals dwelling together peacefully – no hurt or destruction in God's holy mountain [future messianic kingdom] (cf. 11:6-9; 2:2-3)

V) God's Greatness and the Birth of a New Nation (66:1-13)

- A) The greatness and sovereignty of God – heaven is His throne, earth His footstool (vv. 1-2a)
 - 1) God is the Creator of all things – who can build Him a house? (cf. Acts 17:24)
 - 2) God will look upon him who is "of a poor and contrite of spirit," who "trembles" at His word (v. 2b; cf. Psa. 34:18; 51:17)
 - 3) God will not accept the vain worship of hypocrites who choose their own evil ways and will not listen to God's way (vv. 3-4; cf. Matt. 15:8-9)
 - 4) The righteous will be hated by their evil brethren, but God will repay! (vv. 5-6)
- B) Zion [righteous remnant of nation of Israel] in travail will give birth to her children [Messiah and spiritual Israel] (vv. 7-9; cf. Micah 5:2-3; Rev. 12:1-2, 5, 17)
 - 1) Rejoice and be glad in the new Zion – peace extended like a river along with the glory of the Gentiles, and given comfort by God (vv. 10-13)

VI) The Wrath of God and the Gathering of the Nations (66:14-24)

- A) God will come in the fire of His anger – judgment and punishment of evildoers (vv. 14-17)
 - 1) Judgment that will consume the idolaters and evildoers of Israel who reject God/Messiah
- B) God will gather all nations and tongues, and set a "sign" among them (v. 18-19)
 - 1) What is this "sign"? Some suggest virgin birth of Christ, resurrection of Christ, establishment of church, or destruction of Jerusalem/temple
 - a) Whatever it is, the effect is that survivors of God's judgment [believers] will go out and declare the glory of God to the Gentiles (Matt. 28:19; Mk. 16:15; Rom. 9:22-24)
- C) The redeemed of all nations will be brought to God's holy mountain Jerusalem (v. 20-21)
 - 1) Holy Mountain/Zion/Jerusalem (Isa. 2:2; 8:18; Micah 4:7; Gal. 4:26; 6:16; Heb. 12:22)
 - 2) In the messianic kingdom, priests will be taken from all nations (cf. 61:6; 1 Pet. 2:5, 9)
- D) "New heavens and the new earth" – new order in the messianic kingdom (v. 22; 65:17)
 - 1) Used again in NT for coming eternal, heavenly kingdom (2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:1)
- E) All flesh will come to worship the Lord faithfully and regularly, and view the ongoing punishment of the wicked who reject the Messiah (vv. 23-24; cf. Mk. 9:44, 46, 48)

Conclusion

The book of **Isaiah** ends with the same contrast between the destiny of the righteous and wicked as was noted at the beginning of the book (1:19-20). This contrast is echoed throughout the Bible. Faithfulness to God is the ultimate goal of life. Are you faithful?