

Is. 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*.

In this chapter the LORD begins to give answer to Isaiah's questions of the previous chapter. The first part of His answer is not encouraging to the prophet. The LORD tells Isaiah that He will be sought and found by heathen nations, those who have not been called by His name. I believe this is a prophecy of the establishment of the church since the word *nation* is a reference to a singular entity. The Hebrew for the word *sought* included the idea of "worship" and the word *found* included the idea of "presence." In other words, there is coming an entity composed of the Gentile nations that will choose to worship God and will enjoy His presence in their lives. This was supposed to be the privilege of the nation of Israel.

Is. 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;

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

Is. 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 LORD is pictured in a posture of desire for intimacy and fellowship before His people. It's like when we open our arms to embrace someone we love and want to bless. This mirrors the scenario in Revelation 3:20 that pictures Jesus standing at the door of the church of Laodicea wanting to be invited in for fellowship.

Instead of joyfully accepting the LORD's embrace, His people have been rebellious. They have chosen to live in ways that were not good, ways according to their own thinking. This makes me think of one of the Proverbs.

Proverbs 14:12 There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.

Israel/Judah had no excuse. God had given them His oracles, His wisdom, commands and guidelines for living. They had been strictly commanded that they were to have no other gods before YHWH.

Exodus 20:2-3 I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

Not only that, He had performed many miracles on their behalf.

What did they do? They rebelled openly with an "in your face" attitude. They openly and publicly offered sacrifices and incense to the gods of the heathen nations around them. Spending time among the graves and gravestones testify to the sin of "necromancy," communication with the dead. This was also prohibited in scripture.

Deuteronomy 18:10-11 There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer.

The dietary laws God had given the Israelites stated that they were to avoid eating the meat of pigs and to avoid the use of unclean animals. The whole chapter of Leviticus 11 is devoted to defining clean and unclean animals.

Leviticus 11:7 & 45-47 And the swine, though he divide the hoof, and be clovenfooted, yet he cheweth not the cud; he is unclean to you....For I am the LORD that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy. This is the law of the beasts, and of the fowl, and of every living creature that moveth in the waters, and of every creature that creepeth upon the earth: To make a difference between the unclean and the clean, and between the beast that may be eaten and the beast that may not be eaten.

Is. 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.

Not only did they openly rebel against God's authority, those who were involved in such wicked deeds were claiming to be holier than those choosing to remain obedient to God. God compares His rebellious people as a "smoke in my nose, a fire." This is a picture of an angry God. I like the wording of the NLT: "They are a stench in my nostrils, an acrid smell that never goes away."

Is. 65:6 Behold, it is written before me: I will not keep silence, but will recompense, even recompense into their bosom,

Is. 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.

The LORD seems to be referencing the words of the Psalmist.

Psalm 50:1-4 The mighty God, even the LORD, hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people.

Psalm 50:21 These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes.

"recompense" – to give in an equivalent, to give in return

I like the wording of the Complete Jewish Bible: "See, it is written before me; I will not be silent until I repay them; I will repay them to the full, your own crimes and those

of your ancestors together," says ADONAI. "They offered incense on the mountains and insulted me on the hills. First I will measure out their wages and then repay them in full."

In simple terms, they will be judged according to their actions. God's judgment is always righteous and just.

The NIV Commentary gave a reminder of God's thinking vs. man's thinking; it stated that God's "judgment on a nation often awaits the full term of its sin."

*Genesis 15:16 But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for **the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.***

*Daniel 8:23 And in the latter time of their kingdom, **when the transgressors are come to the full**, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up.*

The question then becomes, "What denotes being full?" Only God can be the judge of this.

Is. 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.

Finally, the prophet begins to get some good news. I like the wording of the NLT for this verse.

"But I will not destroy them all," says the LORD. "For just as good grapes are found among a cluster of bad ones (and someone will say, 'Don't throw them all away—there are some good grapes there!'), so I will not destroy all Israel. For I still have true servants there."

Is. 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.

Is. 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.

The LORD states that He is going to preserve a remnant out of Israel, and in particular there is going to come forth a powerful deliverer from Judah that will deliver the nation. Israel is again going to possess the *promised land*. It will be populated with "my servants," those who love the LORD and are following Him in obedience—those that have sought Him. The land will once again be a place of peace and pasture in abundance for their flocks.

Is. 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.

Is. 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.

The LORD changes His address to the current generation, those to whom the prophet Isaiah is prophesying. They do not qualify for the blessings God has just promised to the future believing, obedient remnant. They have finally passed the point of no return. Their judgment is sure. They had continually rebuffed God's pleas for them to repent and rejected the message of His prophets. They blatantly chose to rebel and live wickedly, in ways that they knew were not pleasing to YHWH.

Is. 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:

Is. 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.

In these verses the LORD makes a stark contrast between the blessings of His servants, those who seek Him and follow Him in obedience, and the judgment of those who rebel against Him.

Servants will eat.

Servants will drink.

Servants will rejoice.

Servants will sing with joy.

Rebels will hunger.

Rebels will thirst.

Rebels will be shamed/ disappointed.

Rebels will be sorrowful and experience bruising, hurt and destruction.

I think the key truth being presented is regarding spiritual nourishment and joy. As we continue to study these last two chapters, I think it is also appropriate to make application to physical provision as well.

Is. 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:

Is. 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.

The LORD is making specific reference to Isaiah's audience. He is saying that the future believing remnant will look back on this generation and those that preceded them in rebellion and wickedness with a curse as to the testimony they established for God's chosen people. This became clearer when I looked at the Hebrew for *curse* and then at Webster's. This seems to be saying that the future remnant will affirm God's decision to judge their ancestors. They will understand why God chose to give His chosen people of faith another name—Church/Christian.

I like the wording of the NLT for verse 16: “All who invoke a blessing or take an oath will do so by the God of truth. For I will put aside my anger and forget the evil of earlier days.”

The new name for God’s chosen people of faith will identify a body of people made up of both Jew and Gentile—people from all nations. Thus, the address of verse 16 is to those on planet earth, not just of the nation of Israel. When Messiah comes, all people who enter the Kingdom will get a fresh start. The troubles and adversity of the past will no longer enter into God’s judgments in the Kingdom.

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

I think the better choice for *create* from the Hebrew in context would be “make fat,” or strengthen and make to prosper. The Hebrew for *new* states “to rebuild, renew, repair.” This is described in further detail as the chapter continues. The curse on planet earth is going to be lifted. It would seem that only the curse on man and woman for their sin will be continued—their sin will result in death, eternal separation from God, unless they choose to repent and follow the Messiah in love, faith, and obedience. The glorious blessings of the Messiah’s Kingdom will totally put the horrors of the past behind. The truths passed down from generation to generation will be of God’s blessings and provision.

Is. 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.

Is. 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.

Of special significance to Isaiah’s people, the *new* heavens and *new* earth will include a *new* Jerusalem, and a *new* people of Israel. Neither the people nor the land will ever again experience sorrow or destruction. YHWH will never again have to consider judgment for rebellion. Why? Because of His new covenant with them as referenced in previous chapters and stated by the prophet Jeremiah.

Jeremiah 31:33-34 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

I believe it is from the beginning of the Kingdom on to which the truth stated by the Apostle Paul refers.

Romans 11:26 And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob....

Is. 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 an hundred years old; but the sinner *being* an hundred years old shall be accursed.

It seems that during the Messiah's Kingdom long life will again be the order of the day. This verse also seems to state that if a person does not turn to the LORD in repentance and faith by the time he is 100, the opportunity for salvation is over, or their hearts have so been hardened that they will never respond to that opportunity.

Is. 65:21 And they shall build houses, and inhabit *them*; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them.

Is. 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.

Is. 65:23 They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they *are* the seed of the blessed of the LORD, and their offspring with them.

In Messiah's Kingdom His servants will experience...

- **security** – “they shall build houses and inhabit them,” “they shall not build, and another inhabit,” “they shall not plant, and another eat”
- **abundance of food** – “they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them”
- **long life** – “as the days of a tree are the days of my people,” “shall long enjoy”
- **satisfaction** – “shall long enjoy the work of their hands”
- **prosperity** – “shall not labour in vain,” “the seed of the blessed of the LORD”
- **a bright future** – “nor bring forth for trouble,” “the seed of the blessed of the LORD, and their offspring”

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

In Messiah's Kingdom God will anticipate every need of His people. It seems that prayer will become mostly a time of praise and worship before the Lord.

Is. 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.

It would seem that during the Kingdom Age all the animals will dwell in harmony and will once again be vegetarians. No harm will come to man or animal from another animal. The serpent will still be cursed to crawl on its belly, but it will no longer pose a danger to man or beast.

As has been stated several times in the study of this book, mountains are often used in scripture to refer to kingdoms; and I believe this reference to “my holy mountain” is a reference to the whole of Messiah’s kingdom.