

Isaiah 65

Is. 65:1 "I permitted Myself to be sought by those who did not ask for Me; I permitted Myself to be found by those who did not seek Me. I said, 'Here am I, here am I,' To a nation which did not call on My name.

We discovered in Isaiah 49:5-7 that the rejection of Jesus by the Jewish nation at His First Coming paved the way for the Gentiles to come to Christ during the Church age. Isaiah deals with the same subject in Isaiah 65:1-7; so a quick read of the notes associated with Isaiah 49:5-7 would add much flavor to what is discussed here.

The Church age, which began in Acts 2 and continues today, is addressed only a few times in the Old Testament, Isaiah 65:1-7 being one of those instances, Isaiah 49:6 being another, and Deuteronomy 32:21 being yet another (a verse that is dealt with shortly). We will soon discover that Isaiah 65 is an outline of the history of God's dealings with man, beginning with the Church age (Isaiah 65:1-7) and continuing through the Tribulation (Isaiah 65:8-16) and Messianic Kingdom (Isaiah 65:17-25). What an interesting chapter!

Jehovah *permitted Himself to be sought and found* by the Gentiles, who *did not ask for nor seek Him*. Neither did they *call on His name*. How could this possibly be? It is simple if we will but consider the following.

The Jews, as a *kingdom of priests* (Exodus 19:6), were to take the good news of Jehovah to the Gentiles. Instead, they sat on the truth and viewed the Gentiles as unworthy of hearing what Jehovah had revealed to the Jews. This resulted in a loss of wisdom within Israel, causing the leadership to reject the very Messiah of the nation, Jesus Christ. In fact, their rejection of Christ was the catalyst that brought about the spreading of the gospel to the Gentiles in the book of Acts. No rejection, no Church age, for had the Jews accepted Jesus, the Kingdom would have been established with Christ ruling over Israel as Messiah. But there was rejection; and the

Church age, the age of grace, most definitely began. In fact, did you realize that the *tongues* spoken on *the day of Pentecost* (Acts 2) were a sign of Jewish unbelief in the Messiahship of Christ (the notes associated with Isaiah 28:11 tie in well here)?

The last phrase of Isaiah 65:1, “*To a nation which did not call on My name*” (NASB), is rendered “*unto a nation that was not called by my name*” in the ASV as well as the KJV. Isaiah’s point is that there will be a season of history when the Gentiles, who were never *called by God’s name*, will *seek* God, while Israel, who is called by God’s *name*, will not. This pretty much sums up the events of the Church age; for the overwhelming percentage of individuals who have submitted to Christ since Acts 2 have not been Jews, but Gentiles. Even Paul makes use of this verse in Romans 10:20 to confirm that the events of the Church age had been predicted (and therefore sanctioned) by God even during Old Testament times. Even Deuteronomy 32:21 confirms the same, because the church is *not a people*, or nation, since individuals from all nationalities become members of the body of Christ through faith.

Is. 65:2 "I have spread out My hands all day long to a rebellious people, Who walk in the way which is not good, following their own thoughts,

This verse can be easily interpreted by taking into account what is addressed in Isaiah 65:1. Even though God had *spread out His hands* to the Jewish people, they had, overall, rejected His offer by walking *in the way which is not good, following their own thoughts*. Paul quotes this verse in Romans 10:21 to prove that the Old Testament confirms what is taking place during the Church age, an age where the majority of believers are from the Gentiles rather than the Jews.

Is. 65:3 A people who continually provoke Me to My face, Offering sacrifices in gardens and burning incense on bricks;

The Jewish nation has consistently provoked God during the Church age by *Offering sacrifices in gardens and burning incense on bricks*, practices that are idolatrous in nature.

Is. 65:4 Who sit among graves, and spend the night in secret places; Who eat swine's flesh, And the broth of unclean meat is in their pots.

Israel’s involvement in the occult during the Church age is addressed here. The phrase, “*Who sit among graves,*” points to the seasons in which they have shown interest in communicating with the dead.

Is. 65:5 "Who say, 'Keep to yourself, do not come near me, For I am holier than you!' These are smoke in My nostrils, A fire that burns all the day.

Even though the Jewish nation (outside of the Jews who have accepted Jesus as Messiah) has walked in disobedience during the Church age, her spiritual blindness has brought about spiritual pride. There is no doubt that arrogance and pride find much solace in hearts that are spiritually inept. According to the last two phrases of this verse, along with James 4:6 and 1Peter 5:5, the Lord greatly resists hearts of this sort, never granting them the grace to prosper. This is why the Jews will have to experience the horror of the Tribulation, which begins sometime after the Rapture of the church, before possessing the humility to admit that Jesus is Messiah. Note: Daniel 12:7 speaks of *the power* (will) of the Jews being broken during the Tribulation, pointing to the laying aside of the pride and arrogance that has so characterized the nation.

Is. 65:6 "Behold, it is written before Me, I will not keep silent, but I will repay; I will even repay into their bosom,

God will...repay Israel for her sin; in fact, He will allow her to reap *Double for all her sins* (Isaiah 40:2).

Is. 65:7 Both their own iniquities and the iniquities of their fathers together, "says the Lord." Because they have burned incense on the mountains, And scorned Me on the hills, Therefore I will measure their former work into their bosom."

Jehovah will see to it that *the iniquities of the Jewish people will return into their bosom*. This ties in well with Isaiah 64:7 where we find that God delivers Israel *into the power of her iniquities*.

Keep in mind that the first seven verses of this chapter describe the conditions that will exist during the Church age—the blessings granted to the Gentiles versus the judgment brought upon the unregenerate segment of the Jewish nation.

Is. 65:8 ¶ Thus says the Lord, "As the new wine is found in the cluster, And one says, 'Do not destroy it, for there is benefit in it,' So I will act on behalf of My servants In order not to destroy all of them.

Verses 8-16 describe conditions that will exist during the Tribulation, a seven year span of time which follows the Church age (the Church age having been described in verses 1-7). To be more specific, verses 8-16 contrast Jehovah's response to the remnant (the Jews who accept Christ during the Tribulation) with His response to the nonremnant (the Jews who refuse to accept Christ during the Tribulation).

In verse 8, we find ample proof that it is the ever-present presence of the remnant (the Jewish believers) within Israel that has allowed the nation to continue to exist throughout her storied history. In other words, a removal of the remnant during any segment of Israel's history would have caused the nation to become extinct. This same principle is also taught in Isaiah 1:9; so a quick read of those notes might be helpful. Therefore, as is stated so well in Isaiah 65:8, there are always a few good grapes within a *cluster*, regardless of the number of bad grapes within the *cluster*. Consequently, God has perpetuated the existence of Israel as a result of the few good grapes (the believing remnant, though small at times) that have existed within the nation.

Is. 65:9 "And I will bring forth offspring from Jacob, And an heir of My mountains from Judah; Even My chosen ones shall inherit it, And My servants shall dwell there.

The word "*servants*" makes reference to the believing remnant within Israel. These *servants* will *inherit* the land promised to the nation. The nonremnant (the unbelieving Jews) will miss out on this blessing. The phrase, "*chosen ones*," should be taken through the notes associated with Isaiah 42:1.

Is. 65:10 "And Sharon shall be a pasture land for flocks, And the valley of Achor a resting place for herds, For My people who seek Me.

The believing remnant will inhabit rich agricultural areas such as *Sharon* and *the valley of Achor* during the Millennium.

Is. 65:11 "But you who forsake the Lord, Who forget My holy mountain, Who set a table for Fortune, And who fill cups with mixed wine for Destiny,

The nonremnant (the unbelieving Jews) is described in this verse. They *forsake the Lord* and *forget His holy mountain*. They also worship gods such as *Fortune* and *Destiny*, gods of the occult associated with fortunetelling, both of which Israel has relied upon in her quest to know the future. Is it not amazing that the so-called counsel of these gods, who were incapable of speaking, was accepted in place of the spoken counsel from God's prophets?

Is. 65:12 I will destine you for the sword, And all of you shall bow down to the slaughter. Because I called, but you did not answer; I spoke, but you did not hear. And you did evil in My sight, And chose that in which I did not delight."

God *will destine* the nonremnant of Israel to *the sword* and *slaughter* because they *chose* to disobey. Note that God *will destine* them after they have made the choice to disobey. Also, note that God can *destine* the unredeemed to physical destruction without having to *destine* them to hell. It is their own choice, not God's, that determines where they will spend eternity.

Is. 65:13 ¶ Therefore, thus says the Lord God, "Behold, My servants shall eat, but you shall be hungry. Behold, My servants shall drink, but you shall be thirsty. Behold, My servants shall rejoice, but you shall be put to shame.

In verses 8-12 of this chapter, we discovered that the remnant of Israel will inherit the land during the Millennium while the nonremnant will experience physical death. In fact, the nonremnant (being roughly the *two-thirds* of Israel that dies—read Zechariah 13:8) that lives during the Tribulation will be totally annihilated. But how can the believing remnant (some of which will be unbelievers until shortly before Jesus' Second Coming—the notes associated with Isaiah 10:20 tie in well here) survive during the last half of the Tribulation (the *one-third* of Zechariah 13:8) if no one can *buy or...sell* without receiving *the mark* of the beast (Revelation 13:17)—a *mark* which they will not receive? The answer is given in Isaiah 65:13. God will supernaturally supply the Jewish remnant's physical needs during the last half of the Tribulation, something He will not do for the Jewish nonremnant. For more details, read the notes associated with Isaiah 41:17-20.

Note: No Jew, believer or unbeliever, will receive *the mark...of the beast* addressed in Revelation 13:17. Why? The Antichrist's goal is to annihilate every Jew on the earth during the last half of the Tribulation.

Is. 65:14 "Behold, My servants shall shout joyfully with a glad heart, But you shall cry out with a heavy heart, And you shall wail with a broken spirit.

The Jewish remnant during the second half of the Tribulation will *shout joyfully with a glad heart* while the nonremnant possesses a *heavy heart* and a *broken spirit*.

Is. 65:15 "And you will leave your name for a curse to My chosen ones, And the Lord God will slay you. But My servants will be called by another name.

The nonremnant's *name* (reputation) will be left *for a curse*, while the *name* (reputation) of the remnant will be blessed. For more details relating to the word "*chosen*," read the notes associated with Isaiah 42:1.

Is. 65:16 "Because he who is blessed in the earth Shall be blessed by the God of truth; And he who swears in the earth Shall swear by the God of truth; Because the former troubles are forgotten, And because they are hidden from My sight!

The remnant of Israel will be *blessed*, one of those blessings being the ability to forget their

former troubles. These *former troubles* will also be *hidden from God's sight*.

Is. 65:17 ¶ "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; And the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind.

The Millennium, which follows the Tribulation (verses 8-16), which follows the Church age (verses 1-7), is addressed in verses 17-25.

The *new heavens and...new earth* of Isaiah 65:17 are different from the *new heaven and new earth* of Revelation 21:1. Those mentioned in Isaiah 65:17 are associated with the Kingdom (Millennium), while those of Revelation 21:1 are the *new heaven and...new earth* of the Eternal Order. Did you realize that no Old Testament verse has anything to say about the Eternal Order? To express it differently, no Old Testament prophet stated a word concerning the Eternal Order. In fact, it was not until New Testament times that man finally realized that there would be an Eternal Order. We must understand as well that it was not until John wrote Revelation that God revealed the duration of the Kingdom (*a thousand years*—Revelation 20:3-4), the highlight of the Old Testament Scriptures. Consequently, if all we had was the Old Testament, we might view the Kingdom as lasting for all eternity. However, Revelation 20:4 revealed, for the first time, that the Kingdom would be *a thousand years* in duration followed by the Eternal Order (addressed in Revelation 21-22). It is good news that this is the case; for Scripture confirms that sin and death, while not completely eliminated during the Millennium, will not be present in the Eternal Order.

It is the *new heavens and...new earth* of Isaiah 65:17, those of the Millennium, that *the creation* longs for today (Romans 8:18-21); for *the glory* that they possessed before the fall will once again be restored. Therefore, even though Isaiah 65:17 uses the word "*create*," it actually points to the transformation or renovation of the present *heavens and earth* in preparation for the Millennium. It does not point to the *new heaven and...earth* of the Eternal Order (Revelation 21:1). Based on Daniel 12:12, there is a seventy-five day interval between the end of the Tribulation and the beginning of the Millennium. This transformation will occur during this seventy-five day interval. However, at the end of the Millennium and in preparation for the Eternal Order, the *heaven and...earth* of the Millennium will be abolished (Revelation 21:1).

Is. 65:18 "But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; For behold, I create Jerusalem for rejoicing, And her people for gladness.

Just as the Millennial *heavens and...earth* are addressed in the previous verse, Millennial *Jerusalem* is addressed here. Much *rejoicing* will occur in the city, and its *people* will be filled with *gladness*.

We must be careful with the word "*forever*" as it relates to the new heavens and earth of the Millennium along with Millennial Jerusalem; for in some instances "*forever*" does not mean for all eternity. In fact, it frequently points to specified seasons of time that have an ending. Read 1Chronicles 28:4, where we find that David was chosen *to be king over Israel forever*—yet we know that David does not reign today. Also, consider Deuteronomy 23:3, where we find concerning the *Moabite and Ammonite—even to their tenth generation shall they not enter into the congregation of the LORD for ever* (KJV). In this case, obviously, *forever* pointed to the season of time that was to end with the *tenth generation*. Therefore, the *new heavens and...new earth* mentioned in Isaiah 65:17, along with Millennial *Jerusalem* addressed in Isaiah 65:18, are temporary (they are created for the Millennium); for they will be eliminated in preparation for the Eternal Order. We know, based on the context of Revelation 20:11 and 21:1, that God will create *a new heaven and a new earth* following the Messianic Kingdom. He will do so in preparation

for *new Jerusalem* (Revelation 21:2) to descend and dwell upon the newly created earth.

Is. 65:19 "I will also rejoice in Jerusalem, and be glad in My people; And there will no longer be heard in her The voice of weeping and the sound of crying.

Millennial *Jerusalem*, along with the Jews who inhabit the Millennium, will bring Jehovah much joy. He will see to it that no *weeping* or *crying* is heard in the city throughout the Millennium.

Is. 65:20 "No longer will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, Or an old man who does not live out his days; For the youth will die at the age of one hundred And the one who does not reach the age of one hundred Shall be thought accursed.

No *infant* will die during the Millennium, and the elderly will *live out their days*. In fact, only those who reject Christ *will die*; yet even they will live to *the age of one hundred*. Note how the ASV renders this verse:

for the child shall die a hundred years old, and the sinner being a hundred years old shall be accursed.

These who *die* will be of the offspring of the Gentiles living in their physical bodies during the Millennium, and they will *be thought accursed*—sent to hell. No Jewish offspring will reject Christ during the Millennium (read the notes associated with Isaiah 59:21).

Is. 65:21 "And they shall build houses and inhabit them; They shall also plant vineyards and eat their fruit.

Once the Millennium begins, the Jews will *build houses and inhabit them*, as well as *plant vineyards and eat their fruit*, without fear of enemy invasion or occupation.

Is. 65:22 "They shall not build, and another inhabit, They shall not plant, and another eat; For as the lifetime of a tree, so shall be the days of My people, And My chosen ones shall wear out the work of their hands.

The phrase, "*wear out the work of their hands*," means that what the Jews manufacture (make, produce, fabricate) during the Millennium will remain in their possession until those items *wear out*. Spiritually redeemed Israel (God's *chosen ones*) could not do this previously because of her sinfulness and resulting banishment from the land. (For more details relating to the word "*chosen*," read the notes associated with Isaiah 42:1.)

Is. 65:23 "They shall not labor in vain, Or bear children for calamity; For they are the offspring of those blessed by the Lord, And their descendants with them.

From verses 21 and 22, it is obvious that the Jews will *not labor in vain* during the Millennium. Neither will they *bear children for calamity*; for all *the offspring of the Jews* will accept Christ as Savior (read the notes associated with Isaiah 59:21 for additional input). This is why they are described as "*blessed by the Lord, And their descendants with them*."

Is. 65:24 "It will also come to pass that before they call, I will answer; and while they are still speaking, I will hear.

Spiritually regenerated Israel will be in such close fellowship with the Lord during the Millennium that even *before they call Jehovah will answer* their prayer. Also, *while they are still speaking*, He will hear—quite a contrast to what they will have experienced previously!

Is. 65:25 "The wolf and the lamb shall graze together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox; and dust shall be the serpent's food. They shall do no evil or harm in all My holy mountain," says the Lord.

This verse goes well with Isaiah 11:6-8 (you may want to read those verses and notes); for the entire animal kingdom will live in a state of peaceful coexistence throughout the Millennium. In other words, they will eat vegetation only. Of course, based on verses such as Ezekiel 45:21-23, animals will be sacrificed during this time. They, however, will not be offered for the purpose of covering or removing sin, but strictly as a memorial to what Christ accomplished on the cross. How could they be offered for sin if there is a new *priesthood* (Hebrews 7:11-19) and *new covenant* (Hebrews 8:6-13) in effect, the old covenant of Law having become obsolete? Therefore, Isaiah 65:25 does not teach that animals will not die during the Millennium, but rather that they will not kill one another.

Obviously, Isaiah 65 is a wonderful description of what will occur during the Church age (verses 1-7), the Tribulation (verses 8-16), and the Messianic Kingdom (verses 17-25).