**“Insights into Isaiah”—Chapters 65-66**

**Chapter 65—The Righteousness of God’s Judgment**

1. **Consider verses 1-16, which speak of the rebellion of God’s people, and verses 17-25 which hint at their future.**
2. **Review Isaiah 63:7-64:12.** The Lord will indeed bless His genuine servants. This is the prayer of the remnant, voiced through the prophet Isaiah. It is one of the most beautiful and moving prayers in the Bible. Yet it does not seem to be representative of the heart of the Jewish exiles in Babylon. Here, God speaks to that heart, a heart with a shallow repentance.
3. **Compare verse 1 with Romans 10:20-21.** Paul quotes this passage in [Romans 10:20-21](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Romans+10:20-21&t1=en_nas): *But Isaiah is very bold and says: I was found by those who did not seek Me; I was made manifest to those who did not ask for Me. But to Israel he says: All day long I have stretched out My hands to a disobedient and contrary people.* These were bold words indeed from Isaiah, so bold, say Origen and others, that for this cause, among others, he was sawn asunder by his unworthy countrymen.
4. **In verse 2, discuss why the Jews were such a rebellious people.**
   1. **Review Judges17:6, 21:25.** The phrase in the book of Judges that characterized the wickedness of that age shows it: *everyone did what was right in his own eyes* ([Judges 17:6](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Judges+17:6&t1=en_nas), [21](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Judges+17:21&t1=en_nas):25).
   2. **See also Proverbs 14:12 and 16:25.** Proverbs expresses the idea like this: *There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death* ([Proverbs 14:12](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Proverbs+14:12&t1=en_nas), [16](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Proverbs+14:16&t1=en_nas):25).
   3. **Compare with Romans 12:2.** God’s solution to living **according to** our **own thoughts** is revealed in [Romans 12:2](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Romans+12:2&t1=en_nas), to *be transformed by the renewing of your mind*.
5. **Discuss the sins highlighted in verses 2-4.**
   1. **See Numbers 19:11.** This expresses itself in the most offensive and unholy ways before the Lord. The people **sacrifice in gardens** to idols. They **sit among the graves**, breaking the commands against contact with the dead ([Numbers 19:11](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Numbers+19:11&t1=en_nas)). They **eat swine’s flesh**, and drink **the broth of abominable things**.
   2. **In verse 3 compare the “altars of brick” with God’s altars which were of unhewn stone. Exodus 20:25 and Deuteronomy 27:5-6. …**…this demonstrates they were using man-made altars for false worship.
   3. **Describe Israel’s rebellion as seen in verses 2-3.**
   4. **Compare verse 3’s use of ‘burning incense’ to idols with what Paul says in 2 Corinthians 2:15, Philippians 4:18, and Ephesians 5:2.**
   5. **Why was Israel “sitting among the dead/graves?**” **Refer to Deuteronomy 18:10-11, Leviticus 11:7-8, Matthew 9:11, Luke 5:30, and Luke 18:11.**
   6. **In verse 4, the Jews were worshipping the dead. Talk about this abomination.**
   7. **Compare these verses with Isaiah 8:19-21.**
6. **Highlight the religious pride evidenced in verse 5. Compare with today’s “religiosity.”**
7. **Verse 7 dictates that “God will judge His people.” Comment.**
8. **In verse 8, compare the picture of a few good grapes to God’s remnant.** The picture of [Isaiah 65:8](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Isaiah+65:8&t1=en_nas) is striking. The idea is that God finds a few good grapes among the corrupt **cluster** of His people. It is for the sake of these - **for My servant’s sake** - that the Lord shows blessing and restores. *Found* suggests that the grapes were oozing as they were picked and that this was specially prized. Hence *there is some good* . . . Marvelously, then, the Lord finds his people a blessing, and he prizes and guards them.
   1. **Discuss the compassion of God in verses 8-10.**
   2. **How is this section of the scripture pointing to the remnant?**
   3. **Who is “God’s elect” in verse 9?**
9. **In verse 10, what is “The Valley of Achor?” See Joshua 7:24-26.**
10. **What destruction comes to those who “forsook the Lord?” verses 11-12.**
    1. **Who are the “troop and the number?” false gods….”that troop” is a Hebrew word for a Canaanite god, “fortune,” who was like a lottery; gambling, etc. “that number” means destiny….verse 12 is a play of words “therefore I will destine you.”**
11. **Who are “my servants?”** 
    1. **Talk about God’s provision for His “servants.”**
       1. **Refer to Psalm 37:25.** I have never seen the righteous forsaken.
12. **Discuss the promise a “new heaven and a new earth.” Verses 17-19. Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth**: As the ultimate answer to the problem of mans sin, God will **create a new heavens and a new earth**. This takes place after the millennium, the glorious thousand-year reign of Jesus Christ, when this very earth and sky is done away with and God makes a **new heavens and a new earth**.
    1. **See also 2 Peter 3**:**13 and Revelation 21:1.** Peter used this promise to encourage believers to holy living: *Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells* ([2 Peter 3:13](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=2%20Peter+3:13&t1=en_nas)). In the book of Revelation, John also sees this: *And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea* ([Revelation 21:1](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+21:1&t1=en_nas)).
    2. **When does this new heaven and new earth take place? See Revelation 20:11-15 and Isaiah 65:17-19, 20-25.** From John’s context we see that this **new heavens and a new earth** comes *after* the Great White Throne judgment ([Revelation 20:11-15](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+20:11-15&t1=en_nas)) and is connected not with the millennial earth, but with the eternal state. If all we had to go by was Isaiahs statement, we would automatically connect this **new heavens and a new earth** with the millennial earth, because immediately after [Isaiah 65:17-19](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Isaiah+65:17-19&t1=en_nas), we clearly find the millennial earth described. But based on what we find in 2 Peter and Revelation, we must see that Isaiah is in the prophetic habit of switching quickly from one time frame to another, speaking of the eternal state in [Isaiah 65:17](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Isaiah+65:17&t1=en_nas), and of the millennial earth in [Isaiah 65:20-25](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Isaiah+65:20-25&t1=en_nas).
       1. **See Psalm 72. And the former shall not be remembered or come to mind**: This is another indication that [Isaiah 65:17](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Isaiah+65:17&t1=en_nas) does not speak of the millennial earth. Other passages of Scripture referring to the millennium show that there will be definite remembrance of **former** times on the earth. The whole temple ritual existing in the millennial earth (Ezekiel 40-46) will be a remembrance of the **former** days of Levitical sacrifice. The **former** nations of the world will remain (after judgment), and will serve the Lord and Israel (Psalm 72).
       2. **Will there be a Jerusalem in the eternal state? Review Revelation 21:2-27.**  **I create Jerusalem as a rejoicing**: There will be a **Jerusalem** in the eternal state, in the **new heavens and a new earth**. Revelation describes - in stunning imagery - the descent of the *New Jerusalem* from heaven to the new earth ([Revelation 21:2-27](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+21:2-27&t1=en_nas)). It is in this Jerusalem, the eternal New Jerusalem, that the **voice of weeping shall no longer be heard in her, nor the voice of crying**.
          1. **Refer to Revelation 21:4.** John clearly connects this promise to the New Jerusalem: *And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying; and there shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away* ([Revelation 21:4](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+21:4&t1=en_nas)).
13. **Verse 16 wraps up this section on rebellion. Recap the concepts. Why is Israel always in unrighteousness?**
14. **Notice the immediate change in verse 17. What restoration awaits the remnant?**
15. **“New heavens and new earth” refer to what?** 
    1. **Parallel Isaiah 65:17 WITH Revelation 21:1, 2 Peter 3:12-13, and Isaiah 66:2.**
    2. **Verses 17-18 show the creation of the new world. Discuss.** 
       1. **2 Peter 3:10-11 reminds us that the world is destroyed by fire. Review.**
16. **The Millennial Earth is viewed in verses 20-25. Describe.**
    1. **Explain the phrase, “No more shall an infant from there live but a few days . . . for the child shall die one hundred years old**.” Quickly - as is the prophetic habit - Isaiah shifts gears, and now speaks not of the eternal state, but of the millennial earth. There will be death in the millennial earth, but in the transformed biology and ecology of the world under the reign of Jesus Christ, people will live incredibly longer, as they did in the days before the flood. In the millennial earth, people will live so long that if someone dies **being one hundred years old**, people will consider that one **accursed**. THIS IMPLIES THAT EVERYONE HAS 100 YEARS TO REPENT AND THEN JUDGED!
    2. **Talk about, “They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit**.” The millennial reign of Jesus Christ will not only be a time of biological transformation, it will also be a time of *social* transformation, when perfect justice reigns over the earth. Never again will someone be robbed of the fruits of their labor. If you **build** a house, no one will steal it from you. You will **inhabit** that house. If you **plant vineyards**, no one will steal the fruit of it. You will **eat their fruit**. God gloriously promises, **My elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands**. NO MORE OF SOMEONE ELSE OCCUPYING WHAT ISRAEL BUILDS—NOT LIKE TODAY!
    3. **Why are things better on the “Millennial Earth**?” **Refer to Revelation 20:1-3.** one significant reason there will be such justice on the millennial earth is because Satan will be bound for these 1,000 years, unable to work his destructive mischief on the earth ([Revelation 20:1-3](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+20:1-3&t1=en_nas)).
    4. **Will children be born during the time of the Millennium? See Matthew 22:30.**  **They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth children for trouble; for they shall be the descendants of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them**: There will be babies born and children raised in the millennial earth, and this is another indication that we are not in the eternal state. In the eternal state, we *neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven* ([Matthew 22:30](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Matthew+22:30&t1=en_nas)). In the millennial earth, those allowed to enter are **blessed of the Lord**, and they and their **descendants** will populate the earth.
    5. **Discuss the character of animals in this passage. Why are they so different than in today’s world?**  Total restoration of all things.
    6. **Discuss the spiritual transformation of the Millennium. See also Isaiah 11:9. It shall come to pass that before they call, I will answer; and while they are still speaking, I will hear**: The millennial reign of Jesus Christ will not only be a time of biological and social transformation. It will also be a time of profound spiritual transformation and intimacy. There will be an immediate and constant sense of the presence of God, and His knowledge will cover the earth ([Isaiah 11:9](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Isaiah+11:9&t1=en_nas)).
    7. **Review what happens at the end of this glorious period**. **Use Revelation 20:7-9 as reference.** At the conclusion of the time of the millennial earth, Satan is released from his confinement and finds many willing servants on the earth ([Revelation 20:7-9](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+20:7-9&t1=en_nas)), whom he gathers for one last - and strikingly futile - rebellion against God.
       1. **Describe the firm rule of the Messiah during the millennial earth. Use Zechariah 14:16-19 and Psalm 2.** [Zechariah 14:16-19](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Zechariah+14:16-19&t1=en_nas) and Psalm 2 describe the firm rule of the Messiah during the millennial earth, dealing decisively with those who do not surrender to His reign, enforcing righteousness all over the earth.
       2. **Will all humans be saved during the Millennium? Examine Matthew 22:14 and Matthew 7:13-14.** Though not all will be saved on the millennial earth, we may suppose that the proportions will be reversed. Today, it is but a remnant that are saved, because *many are called but few are chosen* ([Matthew 22:14](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Matthew+22:14&t1=en_nas)) and *broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it* ([Matthew 7:13-14](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Matthew+7:13-14&t1=en_nas)). In the millennial earth, the *few* will be those who *don’t* know the Lord and are not saved.
       3. **Who populates the Millennium? See Matthew 25:32-34.** One of the reasons why most are saved and know the Lord on the millennial earth is because not all survivors of the Great Tribulation are allowed to populate the millennial earth. After the Great Tribulation - which in judgment reduces the population of the earth by at least a third ([Revelation 9:15](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+9:15&t1=en_nas), [18](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+9:18&t1=en_nas)) - Jesus Christ will return to the earth, and in the judgment of the nations, determine who will be allowed to populate the millennial earth ([Matthew 25:32-34](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Matthew+25:32-34&t1=en_nas)). The millennial earth will have a screened population that in terms of righteousness will not be *perfect*, but better than the present earth.
       4. **Describe how the earth will see a remarkable ecological transformation in the Millennium.** No longer will predators stalk their victims. Instead, even **the wolf and the lamb** will get along, and **the lion shall eat straw like the ox**.
17. **Support the view that Jesus will come back to reign for 1000 years in a post-tribulation, literal, Millennial reign.** **Read Luke 1:32-33.** The Bible speaks powerfully to other aspects of the millennial earth. Tragically, the Church through history has often ignored or denied the promise of the millennial reign of Jesus Christ. The early church until Augustine almost universally believed in an earthly, historical reign of Jesus, initiated by His return. Tyconius (in the late 300s) was the first to influentially champion a spiritualized interpretation, saying that this Millennium is *now* (*amillennialism*). His view was adopted by Augustine, the Roman Catholic Church and most Reformation theologians. Growing out of *amillennialism* is the doctrine of *postmillennialism* is an outgrowth of amillennialism, saying the millennium will happen in *this* age, before Jesus return - but that the church will bring it to pass. But the clear teaching of the Bible isn’t *amillennialism* or *postmillennialism*, but what is called *premillennialism* - the teaching that Jesus Christ will return to this earth *before* the millennial earth, and *He* is establish and govern it directly. There are more than 400 verses in more than 20 different passages in the Old Testament which deal with this time when Jesus Christ rules and reigns personally over planet earth.
    1. **See also Isaiah 55:3-5, Jeremiah 30:4-11, Ezekiel 34:23-31, 37:21-28 and Hosea 3:5.**
    2. **Discuss Israel in this time period, using Amos 9:11-15 and Ezekiel 17:22-24.**
       1. **Describe the rebuilt temple. Use Ezekiel 20:39-44, 40-48, 37:26-28, Amos 9:11.**
    3. **Describe the purity and devotion to God in Zechariah 13:1-9.**
18. **What will be the responsibility in the Millennial Earth for the saints? See Luke 19:11-27, Revelation 2:26-28, 3:12, 22, 20:4-6, and I Corinthians 6:2-3.**
19. **Discuss how the rebellion of God’s people is contrasted with God’s mercy freely given, as seen in Chapter 65.**

**Chapter 66—Rejoicing in God’s Ultimate Victory**

1. **Isaiah 66:1-9 shows the concern of the Lord over how His people were responding to Him. Discuss.**
2. **Compare Isaiah 66:1-2 with Acts 7:49-50.** (verses 1-2) The greatness of God, and proper response of man.
3. **What kind of faithful believer is God seeking in verses 1-2?**
4. **What is God’s answer to empty, pointless religiosity and ritualism?** He who kills a bull is as if he slays a man; he who sacrifices a lamb, as if he breaks a dog’s neck; he who offers a grain offering, as if he offers swine’s blood; he who burns incense, as if he blesses an idol. Just as they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delights in their abominations, so will I choose their delusions, and bring their fears on them; because, when I called, no one answered, when I spoke they did not hear; but they did evil before My eyes, and chose that in which I do not delight. Their religious ritualism *added* to their sin, it didn’t take it away!
5. **Compare the sober warnings of the Tribulation in verse 4 with 2 Thessalonians 2:11.**
   1. **Discuss how the lie of evolution has fed into this delusion. Examples of this kind of delusion are those who believe that the world was created out of *nothing* or by *chance*. What could be more delusional than to believe that something can come from nothing?** To believe that *chance* actually has some kind of power? Yet for those who insist on believing it, God will give them over to this delusion.
   2. **Give some examples from verses 5-6 of how the Lord repays His enemies.**
6. **The Lord comes with fire, verses 7-11. Why?**
7. **Talk about a “nation born in a day.” Remember May 14, 1948.**
   1. **See Romans 11:1-2.** The foreknowledge of God.
8. **Verse 10 begins the second section of this chapter. Describe “the comfort of God.”**
9. **Compare the passage, verses 7-11, with the promise of Romans 8:37.**
10. **The imagery of verses 12-17 is quite beautiful. Discuss:**
    1. **Peace like a river…see Zechariah 9:10.**
    2. **The Gentiles like a flowing stream…..see Amos 5:24.**
    3. **A mother’s comfort…see Proverbs 1:8-9.**
    4. **The Lord’s hand known to His servants…..see Isaiah 59:1 and Proverbs 21:1.**
    5. **The Lord’s indignation known to His enemies….see Revelation 15:1.**
    6. **Bones flourish like grass…..see Proverbs 3:8.**
    7. **Anger of the Lord with fire and chariots, whirlwind…see Jeremiah 4:4. JERUSALEM HAS BEEN DESTROYED 158 TIMES IN HISTORY SO OIIJFAR!**
    8. **Eating swine flesh….see Deuteronomy 14:8.**
    9. **Eating mice……see Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14.** 
       1. **What does the reference to “mice” infer?** **Mice** were eaten as a delicacy by the Romans and other heathen people and were used by others as idolatrous sacrifices.
11. **When does the Lord gather and restore His people? Verses 18-21.** 
    1. **Compare verse 18, “for I know their works and thoughts” with Jeremiah 29:11-12.**
    2. **Where are Tarshish, Pul, Lud, Tubal and Javan?** They are sent to *Tarshish* (Spain, France and Italy) to *Pul* (a region in Africa) and to *Lud*, which according to some is the same as Lydia, though it seems preferable to take *Pul* and *Lud* together for all of Africa. Tubal was a son of Japheth, whose descendants settled in north-eastern Europe or Russia and *Javan* is the biblical name for Greece.
    3. **Where will one find ultimate fulfillment? See Revelation 5:9-10**. One place this finds ultimate fulfillment is around the throne of God ([Revelation 5:9-10](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+5:9-10&t1=en_nas)**).**
12. **God says that He will set a *sign* among the nations. Compare this sign to the *sign of the Son of man* in** [**Matthew 24:30**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Matthew+24:30&t1=en_nas)**.**
13. **Is “the sending to the nations” reference a prophetic reference to the missionary calling of God’s people?** 
    1. **Is the ultimate “missionary calling” fulfilled by the outreach of the 144,000 Jewish witnesses during the Great Tribulation?**
14. **Who are the priests and Levites? See 1 Peter 2:5-9, Revelation 1:6, 5:10, and 20:6.**
15. **Sum-up this final chapter of Isaiah which begins with “And it shall come to pass.” Use Revelation 5:9-10.**  **And it shall come to pass . . . all flesh shall come to worship before Me**: Here, God describes His ultimate triumph. Through the majestic book of Isaiah, the nations have been judged and often condemned. But God has an ultimate plan to reach the nations, seen in its ultimate fulfillment in [Revelation 5:9-10](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+5:9-10&t1=en_nas). God will take people from every tribe and tongue, and **all flesh shall come to worship before Me, says the Lord**.
    1. **Compare these last two verses with Isaiah’s 1:12-15.** Isaiah puts it into context of **from one New Moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, all flesh shall come and to worship before Me**. Significantly, Isaiah began the book with a condemnation of the shallow worship of Gods people at the time of the New Moons and Sabbaths ([Isaiah 1:12-15](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Isaiah+1:12-15&t1=en_nas)). Now, after the greatness of the Lords work, all that is different.
    2. **The last thought of Isaiah is sobering….the eternal importance of serving God in the present life. Compare his contrast between worship and worm.**
    3. **Review the concept of hell shown here; see Mark 9:44-48 with Isaiah 66:24.**
    4. **What can one take away from this final warning issued by the prophet?**
16. **Note your final conclusions to Isaiah’s almost-cryptic warning. Does it seem like his important challenge reaches out to all of us, even today?**

**And, here are “The Promises”……**

**Isaiah 65:17, “For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth;   
and the former shall not be remembered or come to mind.”**

**Isaiah 66:15-16, “For behold, the Lord will come with fire and with His chariots, like a whirlwind, to render His anger with fury, And His rebuke with flames of fire. 16For by fire and by His sword The Lord will judge all flesh; and the slain of the Lord shall be many.”**

**Isaiah 66:22 ““For as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make shall remain before Me,” says the Lord, “So shall your descendants and your name remain.””**

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