

Let's Worship God

23rd-28th December 2024

Isaiah



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Monday - Isaiah 65:1-5 - God, the Sovereign Seeker

In verse 1, God doesn't directly address His people in Judah and Jerusalem, but others. He speaks of those who had not cried out. He speaks of those who really had no interest at all. They had not asked, but to them God had sent the Word. The Spirit brought them to seek after the grace of God in Jesus Christ. How thankful we are that the Jews were not the only ones given the Word of God. It has come to the Gentile world. It has come to all of us. And the good news continues to go forth. There are those who do not seek, but God makes them to be found. The real seeker in all this is God. He is the One Who goes to those who aren't even asking and moves them to seek after Him. He is the One Who goes to those who weren't even seeking and suddenly shows up and says, 'Look to me'.

In contrast to those in verse 1, we have these to whom God has stretched out his hands all day long. He characterizes them as a rebellious people. We see here in verse 2 that they willfully went their own way, and they followed their wicked hearts. How did they provoke and defy God? It was with idolatry. They claim that they are "worshipping" Jehovah, but they do so in unauthorized ways. They are sacrificing in gardens, not where God commanded in Jerusalem, and burning incense on altars of bricks. When it comes to the worship of God, we're to follow God's Word and only what He commands. We must not add to it, we must not take away from it. Then they take on other gods or idols before His sight.

But that wasn't the only sort of sin. The other was self-righteousness. And that more characterised the Jews after the exile whereas idolatry characterised them before the exile. After the exile, what started popping up was a notion, 'If we are outwardly good, everything else will be okay'. They thought that they would justify themselves by their own righteousness. They did not see the radical sinful nature of their hearts. They began to see their own laws and teachings as being even more important than God's Word. If you don't see there's any sin, you don't see that there's any need for salvation. You don't see any need for a Saviour. These people thought that they did even more than God requires. But their hearts were wicked. And God says, 'I'm done with this. I'm going to get rid of it'. First there was destruction by Babylon. Then many years later, after they shifted to a new sin, there was destruction by Rome!

Question

1. Who is God speaking to in verse 1.

Prayer Points

1. Give thanks that God seeks out His people.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

But be glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem to be a joy, and her people to be a gladness. Isaiah 65:18

Praise: Psalm 65 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

Isaiah

Tuesday - Isaiah 65:6-12 - Promises for the Remnant; Destruction for the Hypocrite

It's as if God is saying in verse 6, "It's all written down, all of your sin." There is a payoff for sin. God does not leave his debts. God does something about them, either in this life, or in the life to come, or both. Judgment must come down upon sin. We see specific sin laid out in verse 7. They're following along in the same sins as their ancestors. One sort or another of idolatry is mentioned here. There were other things going on in unrighteousness Israel. But the original and master sin was that of idolatry, worshiping false gods or worshiping God in the way they wished, placing their own likes and desires above what He had revealed. And the payoff of sin is death (Romans 6:23).

In verses 8-10 we have delightful promises to the remnant, the chosen, the true Israel of God. We have a picture here of a vine with many dead branches and pathetic, little, sour grapes. But then it's discovered that there are some good grapes in it, so it is pruned and kept. God is acknowledging that there is a remnant of His people. He is not forgetting about them. He is not about to see them harmed, nor will He root them out with the rest. Now, there are a couple of aspects to this preservation. One is that God will save the lost who are His elect. Verse 9 looks at our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the delightful Saviour of this remnant. He is the offspring. He is the possessor of God's mountains. He is the elect One in Whom all God's chosen ones are found. That is how His servants are able to dwell there. And there in God's house we shall always dwell. In verse 10 we see a delight that comes about after grief. Sharon is a place of beauty, a place of delight, where the flocks could graze and do well. The Valley of Achor which had been a place of trouble for Israel after their defeat at Ai due to the disobedience of Achan - even it is made to be a place of wonder and delight. God shall make all the trouble of the remnant into delight. It's a place where there shall be peace, prosperity, joy, and the goodness of the Father evident everywhere.

In verses 11-12 we go back to those who are only externally the people of God. They are hypocrites and apostate. A hypocrite is somebody who pretends to be something that they're not. An apostate is somebody who claims to be a believer and then goes away from Jesus, from Scripture, from God's people, from truth. The hypocrite and the apostate will not give God their hearts. Their lives are given over to other gods. In verse 12 we read of their reward. Their end is not triumph, but destruction!

Question

1. What promises are here for the remnant?

Prayer Points

1. Pray for those you know who have walked away from the faith.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

But be glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem to be a joy, and her people to be a gladness. Isaiah 65:18

Praise: Psalm 66 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

Isaiah

Wednesday - Isaiah 65:13-16 - Blessings and Curses

We have two kinds of blessing and cursing in verses 13-14. One is outward blessings, which is in verse 13, and then a more inward, which we see in the end of verse 13 and into verse 14. These blessings are only, of course, for the true servants of God. The curses are for those who are the people of God in name only.

The first contrast of blessing and cursing is in eating and drinking. We who are in Christ have the promise here of eating to the full. Now, this isn't merely looking at physical food. There are Christian people who have physically hungered. But this promise is from Him who is Himself, the bread of life and the living water. We feed upon Him, and we have life, abundant life, joy, gladness, fullness. In contrast, the hypocrites, the accursed, shall receive nothing but destruction. There shall be appalling grief, emptiness, death, and despair. They will seek life and fullness and happiness in their idols. What good do these do them? None at all. They thirst. Those without the Lord Jesus Christ have lives that are dry and sterile as dust.

The contrast continues at the end of verse 13 and into verse 14. It is between inward joy and its opposite, shame and grief. To be adopted by God, to have Christ as your own, provokes joy. In contrast, those who do not know the living God in Jesus Christ are destined for shame and unbearable grief. They may have the adoration of the world, but there is no lasting satisfaction.

We have dishonour to the wicked in verse 15 and honour to the remnant of God in verse 16. For those who are nominal believers, the curse is for them and dishonour as well. They have not only guilt, but shame. God says, "I will not even allow my servants to use your name anymore." We are not called the children of Jacob or Israel now. We are called Christian. We are given a new name. We are called by the name of the blessed One, the Lord Jesus Christ. The name of honour has been taken away, and someday shall be taken away from the unfaithful who claim to be part of the Church of Jesus Christ. Verse 16 has a promise that we shall no longer be a remnant, but an overwhelming group of those who profess to be the people of God all over the earth. People will call on the name of Jehovah in their lawful oaths and vows. They shall have an eye to Him seeking His glory and pleasure and living delightfully in Christ. The former troubles are forgotten!

Question

1. Why curses are described here?

Prayer Points

1. Give thanks for your salvation and the blessings you have in Christ.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

But be glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem to be a joy, and her people to be a gladness. Isaiah 65:18

Praise: Psalm 67 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

Isaiah

Thursday - Isaiah 65:17-19 - Be Glad And Rejoice

The new heavens and the new earth begin in new hearts. Such a change, a worldwide change, a worldwide transformation begins with, and is made up of, many, many, many changed hearts. It's comprised of many beyond counting who are there at the great throne of God, a great multitude that no man can number, who have new life, who once were dead in trespasses and sins. There they are dwelling in the new heavens and new earth. We tend to think of new heavens and new earth as something off in the future somewhere, but we're still in the same old heavens and earth. Well, certainly in Isaiah's day, people there, for the most part, would have to say so. In Isaiah's day, and throughout all the Old Testament, except on the individual level, this indeed was a day to come. On the individual level, as the Spirit would work on people and as He would work through them, why, it would be a new heaven and earth for them. They would be made new creations. But the new heavens and new earth in every other respect are off to the future for them. But what about people in Jesus' day? What about people in our day? The new heavens and new earth have appeared. They have begun, they were started out or inaugurated with the coming of Christ (Hebrews 1:1-2). We're already in the last days, and we have been since Jesus finished his work. The new heavens and new earth wait for the consummation and final existence at the return of Jesus Christ. We continue to experience some things of a fallen world. In fact, there are some things we experience of it that unbelievers do not. We experience its fallenness in a sharper way. We see in Scripture that we have wonderful things already, but not their completion yet. And so it is with the new heavens and new earth, we wait for that which will be far, far better. John describes the completed new heavens and new earth in Revelation 21.

Verses 18 and 19 give us a call to be glad and to rejoice. There is much to bring joy in this thinking of the new heavens and earth. We once were dead in our trespasses and sins. We are now alive! It's abundant cause for everlasting joy. Where does this joy come from? From the One Who creates the joy. Why does He create this? It's for His glory's sake. It's for His people's sake -- His people whom He loves. What's the centre of this joy? It's centred at Jerusalem. This is referring to the Church, the bride of Christ. That's what the new Jerusalem is. It is in the Church that this joy is brought about!

Question

1. Who is making all things new?

Prayer Points

1. Give thanks for the glorious final new heavens and earth that awaits.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

But be glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem to be a joy, and her people to be a gladness. Isaiah 65:18

Isaiah

Friday - Isaiah 65:20-23 - New Life

Verses 20-23 deal with the effects of the coming of the new heavens and earth. In the old heavens and earth, all must die. In Jesus Christ there is life, bought by Him at the price of His blood. This life that He has attained for His people is everlasting life. What about in this world now? It might be that as Christ triumphs over all, bringing all things under His feet, that the effects of the fall and its curse should be more and more lifted. But as long as someone's life might go, if they die without Jesus Christ, they are accursed. They yet die in their sin. It's life in Christ that is everlasting.

Verses 21-22 are about our work in the new heavens and the new earth. With the Fall, man's work, commanded by God, became frustrated and laborious. We live now in the new heavens and the new earth, yet we do not see its fullness till Jesus returns. Even now, though, as we work, the work of our hands is assured. Here we dwell under the care of a Father in heaven, with the assurance that all our works here do follow after us (Revelation 14:13). We have the promise of provision of all we need in this life (Matthew 6:25-34). Finally, there is the promise of our dwelling forever in our Father's house (John 14:1-4). All this is secured in and by Jesus.

Since the Fall, people have been bringing forth children for trouble. But God says in verse 23, for those who abide in the new heaven and earth, they shall not labour in vain nor bring forth children for trouble. By God's grace, we have children. And by God's grace, by His grace alone, but according to promise, they too come to know our Saviour. They too, through our prayers and through our witness before them, come to know Jesus, to love him, to serve him. They too have the Holy Spirit dwelling within them. Sadly, there's the occasional one that strays. Isaac loved Esau. And there are others that we see who fall by the wayside, but they stand out so because they're unusual. Characteristically, God kindly works to make the promise to be true for you and for your seed after you. Do you have one straying or know of one straying? If you are the parent of such, continue to pray for them. You have the promise. You can pray on that basis. Pray for them. Do you know of one? Pray along with their parents. Who knows what may happen? It's often that Jesus, through the prayers of His people, brings back dead, lost sheep. And you will find that that one was not born into trouble, but to the magnification of God's grace!

Question

1. What are some of the effects of the new heaven and the new earth?

Prayer Points

1. Pray for covenant children whom you know of who have walked away from Christ.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

But be glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem to be a joy, and her people to be a gladness. Isaiah 65:18

Praise: Psalm 69 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

Isaiah

Saturday - Isaiah 65:24-25 - I Will Hear

In the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve had God speaking to them, and they spoke unhindered to Him. But with the Fall, all of this ended. But we're now living in the new heaven and new earth. It's not in its full form yet, but it has been constituted since the resurrection of Jesus. Because of what Christ has done, God will hear you when you cry for mercy in Christ. The promise of verse 24 is true. We see this promise made and fulfilled all through Scripture. Your Father in heaven hears kindly and lovingly. But things that we ask for do not come for a long while sometimes, or not at all. Does this mean that this promise is worth nothing? Does this mean that God is a liar? No. There is no lack of an answer, and there is no lack of love from your Father in heaven. He delights to give good gifts to His children. He does not give us things to harm us. If there be a delay, if there be a denial, there's always a point to it or a reason for it. But be assured, He has heard you and is only delaying or only refusing because that thing, whatever it might be, would be bad for you and others and would not give to His glory as much now as later. Or if He says no, it's because something better awaits. And you shall look back and see and say, "He hath done all things well." This we can guarantee!

We see in verse 25 the deliverance of creation in the new heavens and new earth. In the Garden of Eden man was given dominion over the animals so that he can use them for God's glory. There was no animal death. But man fell. All of creation was thrown out of whack. Where there had been glory, there is now suffering. This effect of the Fall goes on today, for this is still the description of the world even now. Even now the world is full of pain and destruction. However, Jehovah has said, "I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former shall not be remembered or come to mind." There in verse 17, fallen creation is being restored. In the new heaven and new earth, all is changed. Verse 25 is a word-picture. Certainly what we shall see is the ending of those called by the apostle Paul ravening wolves. We shall see an end of the devouring lions as their proud hearts are brought into submission to Christ. The king shall reign on his holy mountain, and the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of God as the waters cover the sea!

Question

1. What should we remember if our prayers are not being answered?

Prayer Points

1. Pray for the preaching and hearing of God's Word tomorrow.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

But be glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem to be a joy, and her people to be a gladness. Isaiah 65:18

Praise: Psalm 70 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

The goal of Let's Worship God is to encourage and help you in your worship of God each day.

**God tells us that
Ezra read from
the book of the Law
day after day
and that
the people of God
were filled with joy!**

Let's Worship God is produced
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