

God Answers Isaiah Isaiah 65

Why did God let Israel be destroyed? (vv.1-7)

Isaiah had prayed for God to restore Israel — because Israel had been destroyed by Babylon.

So why had God let Israel be destroyed? God answers: because Israel had rebelled against Him.

Does this mean the people of Israel will be completely destroyed? (vv.8-10)

No. Those who repent, trust God's mercy, and seek God will return to the Promised Land.

What will happen to those who continue to forsake the Lord? (vv.11-15a)

God will destroy them.

What will happen to those who seek the Lord? (vv.15b-25)

We will be called by a new name — changed by God's power (15b-16)

God will create for us new heavens and a new earth (17)

We will know complete and ever-increasing joy and gladness (18-19)

Everything that could cause weeping and distress will be removed (20-23)

Some think this refers to a 1,000 year millennium which occurs after Jesus' Second Coming. This might be described in Rev. 20. At the end of this millennium the Final Judgment will occur, and God will then create the new heavens and earth.

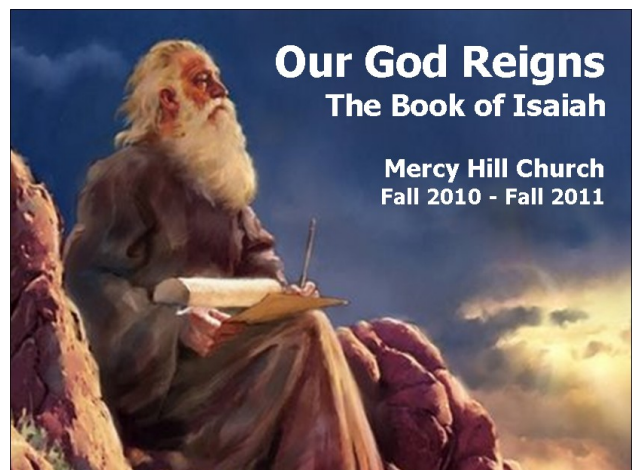
Others think these verses are a way of describing eternity from the Old Testament perspective — absolutely true, but not as clear as in the New Testament. The verses figuratively describe how anything that could cause sorrow will not exist in the new heavens and earth.

We will have unhindered access to God (24)

Every aspect of the curse will be gone (25)

What does this mean for us?

"It is impossible to sin with lively thoughts and hopes of the glory of heaven. It's when the thoughts of heaven are long out of the Christian's sight that he begins to set up some idol. But let heaven come in sight, and the Christian's heart will be well warmed with thoughts of it. It is easier to persuade a king to throw his crown into a gutter, than to persuade a heaven-focused saint to sin." (William Gurnall)



HOME GROUP DISCUSSION OF SUNDAY'S TEACHING

(Sometimes in our home groups we talk about Sunday's teaching, so we can work together on responding to God's Word — asking questions, sharing insights, talking together.)

What was the Holy Spirit saying to you Sunday through this passage?

What questions, ideas, objections, encouragements did you come away with?

Which aspect of eternity in vv.15b-25 stirred your heart the most?

What do you think of William Gurnall's quote? Agree? Disagree? Why?

What happened as you spent time praying over verses 15-25? Did the Holy Spirit give you lively thoughts and hope of the glory of heaven?

How did that affect sin in your life?

What's your take-away from this message? What are you going to do differently? When? How?

Share prayer requests that come up in the discussion, jot them down below, and pray for each other.

