

## Segment 15: Isaiah 63:7-65:16

### 63:7-14 Remembering God's Actions in the Past

Several times throughout Scripture, God's people recount His past deeds. Sometimes the motive is praise (105), other times instruction (Ps 78), still others pleading for help (Ps 106). Once again, God's *chesed* (i.e. steadfast love or passionate loyalty) looms large in the mind of the petitioner. It is the first word from his lips, and it finds illustration in God's acts over the many years. Here is another definition for *chesed* that may help:

It is sometimes described as covenant love, though in the OT it rarely appears in the company of the word "covenant." It is used in two connections: when someone makes an act of commitment for which there is no reason in terms of prior relationship, and when someone keeps their commitment when they might be expected to abandon it (e.g., because the other person has done so). It is the Hebrew equivalent to the Greek *agape*.<sup>1</sup>

### 63:15-19 Complaining because of God's Inaction

Where is God? Why hasn't He acted? He is our Father, yet He does not recognize us! The people have become so distant from God that they are just like any other nation over whom God never ruled. Although complaining to others is usually unhelpful, complaining to God is oftentimes the best action to take. God can handle it. He responds to these questions in chapter 65:1-7.

### 64:1-4 Petition for Rescue

Now the one praying gets to what he wants God to do. He wants action. He wants God to do something about the situation. The people are in captivity, and the city of God lies in ruins. Can't God come down and do something awesome like the days of old? Notice too how the request is couched in terms of God's renown. He just as much wants his own people's deliverance as he wants God to gain fame through a display of His power.

### 64:5-7 Confession of Sin

God responds to confession, whereas the silent sinner wastes away. Consider these Scriptures on the subject:

Proverbs 28:13

He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper,  
But he who confesses and forsakes *them* will find compassion.

Psalms 32:3-6

<sup>3</sup> When I kept silent *about my sin*, my body wasted away  
Through my groaning all day long.

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<sup>1</sup> John Goldingay, *Psalms: Psalms 90-150*, vol. 3, Baker Commentary on the Old Testament Wisdom and Psalms (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), page 753.

<sup>4</sup> For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me;  
My vitality was drained away *as* with the fever heat of summer.  
Selah.

<sup>5</sup> I acknowledged my sin to You,  
And my iniquity I did not hide;  
I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD";  
And You forgave the guilt of my sin.  
Selah.

<sup>6</sup> Therefore, let everyone who is godly pray to You in a time when You may be found;  
Surely in a flood of great waters they will not reach him.

1 John 1:8-10

<sup>8</sup> If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. <sup>9</sup> If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. <sup>10</sup> If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us.

Likewise Daniel confessed the sins of his people while in exile in a similar prayer (Dan 9:4-19). Prayers like these must have had an impact on the return from exile under Zerubbabel and Joshua (see also Ps 106).

#### **64:8-12 Calling God's Attention to Their Suffering**

The cities are a wilderness, and Zion is desolated. The temple is like a charred carcass. All is lost; the people have suffered enough. God has already poured out His wrath. Now is the time for redemption and restoration. Haven't the people learned their lesson? Aren't they once again motivated to serve God? Remember Egypt?

#### **65:1-7 God's Reason for Inaction**

Now God tells His side of the story. He cried out to them over and over with no result. They spurned Him, ignoring His messengers (2 Chron 36:14-17). They offered sacrifices to other gods, refused to abstain from unclean meat, and thought they were holier than others. God was right to act and judge them for their unfaithfulness. God's *chesed* demands that He remain faithful to His covenant, which includes consequences for what will happen if the people do not obey (Deut 28:15ff, especially 64-65). However, God also promised He would bring them back if they repented (Deut 30:1-5). The Holy One of Israel has done exactly as He said He would. He is not asleep or impotent; He is just and ready to act now.

#### **65:8-16 God's Solution to Redeem a Remnant**

Rather than saving the whole people out of the land of the Babylonians, God prefers to rescue only those who want to serve Him; otherwise, He will just end up with the same problem again. He wants those who seek Him and have stayed true to Him even when surrounded by the idolatry of Babylonia. These the Lord Yahweh will mightily bless.

## Segment 16: Isaiah 65:17-25; 66:1ff

### New Heaven and Earth

Isaiah 65:17

God will create new heavens and a new earth.

Isaiah 65:18-19

Be glad and rejoice in God's creation.

Isaiah 65:20

Longevity of life will return.

*No longer will babies die when only a few days old. No longer will adults die before they have lived a full life. No longer will people be considered old at one hundred! Only sinners will die that young!*  
*Isaiah 65:20 (New Living Translation)*

Isaiah 65:21-23

God's people will not labor in vain. They will enjoy the fruit of their labor.

Isaiah 65:25

There will be peaceful existence between animals and mankind. Isaiah 11:6-9; Ezekiel 34:24-30

The Scriptures specifically mention "the new heavens and earth" by name in three places: here in Isaiah, in the book of Revelation, and in 2 Peter. Comparing these sections of Scripture helps to bring clarity of understanding.

Revelation 19:20-21; 20:1ff; 21:1-4

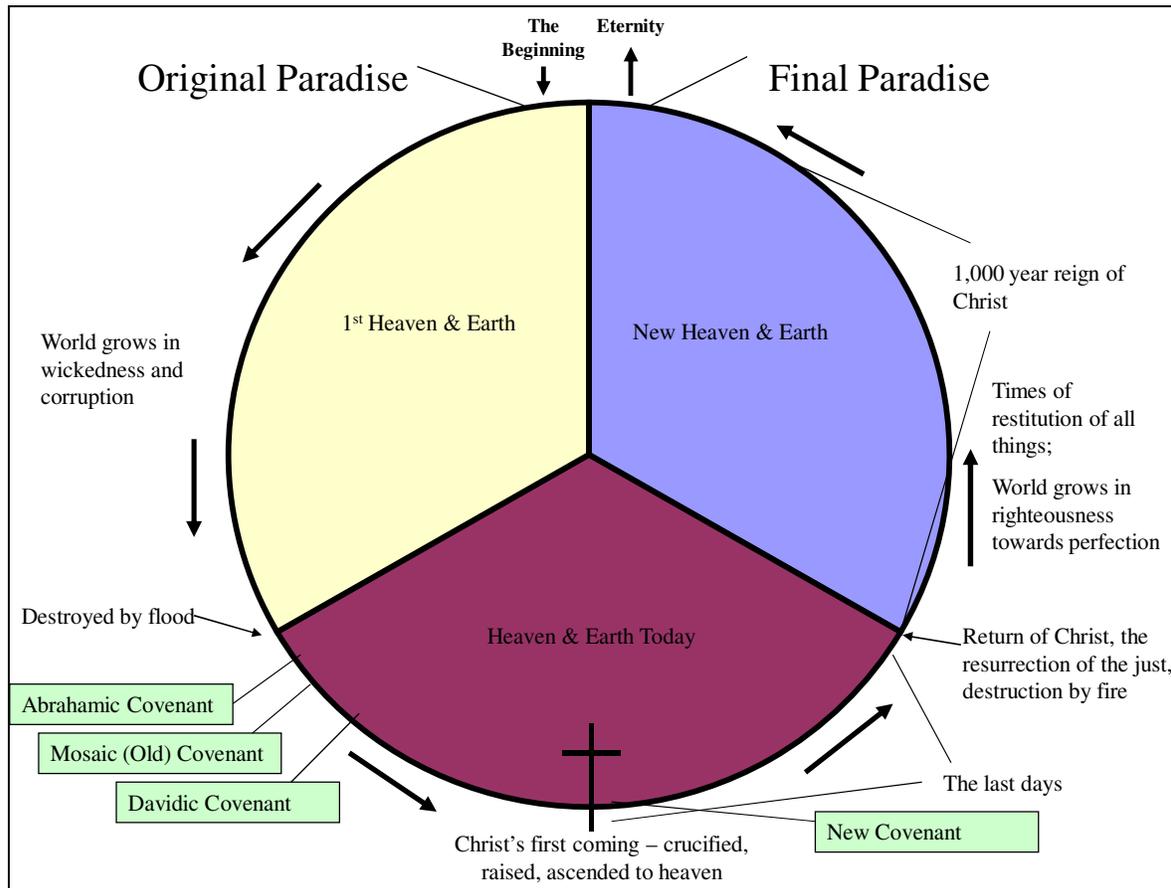
Order of events from:

- Revelation 19:20-21 – Last battle ends with beast and false prophet destroyed.
- Revelation 20:1-3 – The millennial Kingdom begins with Satan bound in chains for 1,000 years.
- Revelation 20:4-6 – The 1,000 year reign of Christ; the Messiah reigns in Jerusalem.
- Revelation 20:7-10 – At the end of 1,000 years, Satan is destroyed in lake of fire.
- Revelation 20:11-13 – The second resurrection
- Revelation 20:14-15 – Death and Hell are destroyed in lake of fire.
- Revelation 21:1-3 – The New Jerusalem comes down from heaven. John sees a new heaven and earth. Former earth has passed away.
- Revelation 21:4 – No more crying, no more pain, no more death

The new heaven earth includes a "period of restoration" (Acts 3:19-20). It is the time of the "regeneration" (Matthew 19:28 – GK *paliggenesia* – means "genesis again").

2 Peter 2:5; 3:5-13

It is a direct antithesis of the first heaven and earth.



<b>The world after the fall, before the flood</b>	<b>The world after the return of Christ – the millennial Kingdom</b>
Ends with God's judgment by water Genesis 6:13-17; chapter 7	Begins with God's judgment by fire 2 Pet 3:3-13; Rev 8:7-10; 10:17-18; 16:8-9
Satan had great influence. 1 Peter 4:19-20; Jude 6	Satan is bound 1,000 years. Rev 20:1-3
Men lived long lives, but died. Gen 5:5-31	Mortals will still die, but longevity of life will return.
Sorrow began to fill man's days. Genesis 3:16-19; Ecc 5:17; Psalms 90:10	Sorrow and sighing will flee away. They will be replaced with joy & gladness. Isaiah 35:10; 51:11
Sons of God, giants in the earth, mighty men, and men of renown ruled the earth in wickedness. Genesis 6: 4-5	The true sons of God, the saints, will rule the earth with the Messiah, as kings and priests in righteousness. Romans 8:19-21; Daniel 7:27; Rev 5:10;20:6; Isaiah 32:1; Psalms 98:9
Every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart was only evil continually. Genesis 6:5	At that time, the nations shall not walk any more after the imagination of their evil hearts. Jeremiah 3:17
Violence filled the earth. Genesis 6:11-12	Wars will cease. Isaiah 2:4; 11:6-9; Hosea 2:18; Mic 4:5
All flesh corrupted God's way on the earth. Genesis 6:12	All nations will desire to be taught His ways and walk in His path. Isaiah 2:3; 11:9; Micah 4:2

Men became famous, making their own name great. Genesis 6:4	All will call upon the name of the Lord, to serve Him with one consent. Psalms 102:15-16; Zep 3:8
Begins with the serpent being cursed. Gen 3:14	Ends with the serpent being destroyed. Rev 20:7-10
Begins with death, sin, & sickness. Genesis 3:19; Romans 5:12	Ends with the destruction of death – no more sin and sickness. Rev 20:11-15; 21:4

## **God dwells with the humble – not the hypocrite**

Isaiah 66:1-2

God does not dwell in a temple, but rather He dwells with humble people that are genuine, who do the will of God, who tremble at His Word. Isaiah 57:15; Acts 7:39-53

Isaiah 66:3

Their sacrifices had become an abomination. Isaiah 1:10-13; 44:19

Isaiah 66:4-6

God will bring punishment and recompense to His enemies.

“You who tremble at His word” – verse 2

Those who hate the humble, contrite ones will be put to shame. Ps 22:6-8; 35:1-4, 11-26; 40:14-15; Is 5:18-24.

## **Joy and rejoice – Yahweh will comfort**

Isaiah 66:7-9

God’s deliverance/punishment is implied as bringing forth a child in birth. Isaiah 13:8; 26:17-19; 37:3

Two rhetorical questions:

“Shall I bring to the point of birth and not give delivery?”

“Shall I who gives delivery shut the womb?”

God will bring His plan to pass, and there will be joy and comfort. John 16:20-22

Isaiah 66:10-13

There will be joy and comfort as a mother comforts her child.

Isaiah 66:14-17

God will execute judgment on His enemies.

Isaiah 66:18-23

All nations will be gathered; all mankind will come to bow down before Yahweh.

Isaiah 66:24

They will look on the corpses of men (Isaiah 5:25; 34:3).

Their worm will not die (Isaiah 14:11).

Their fire will not be quenched (Isaiah 1:28-31; Matthew 3:12; Mark 9:43-48).

The enemies of Yahweh will be judged and destroyed, but God's people will endure. He will bring to pass all that He has promised. God has continually repeated this deliverance throughout the book of Isaiah (Isaiah 11:15-16; 12:1ff; 25:1ff; 26:1ff; 35:1ff; 40:1-10; 42:10-13; 49:8-13; 61:1ff).