

A Trek Through Isaiah 89 - 65:1-12

Bruce Pike

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<u>The New Heavens and New Earth: Prayers and Promises 63:7 - 66:24</u>
The watcher praying 63:7 - 64:12
The Lord responding 65:1 - 66:24

- In the book of the Conqueror (56 - 66)
 - Question: How will God's people fulfill their promise?
 - Three areas of emphasis
 - The contrast between the ideal community and the actual community
 - God's glorious promises for the faithful.
 - A Conqueror: the third messianic figure who accomplishes God's purpose and fulfills His promises.
- This section: The New Heavens and New Earth: Prayers and Promises 63:7 - 66:24
 - The work is completed. Now what?
 - The watcher praying 63:7 - 64:12
 - The Lord responding 65:1 - 66:24
- Today:
 - The Lord responding (part 1) 65:1-12

The Lord responding 65:1 - 66:24

- 65:1-12 Reaching out to the peoples and to the people
 - 65:1 Reaching out to the **nations**

1 I was ready to be sought by those who did not ask for me; I was ready to be found by those who did not seek me. I said, "Here I am, here I am," to a nation that was not called by my name.

■ Those

- Who is this?
 - Did not ask for or seek the LORD
 - Were not called by His name
 - Paul quotes this verse in Ro 10:20 in contrast to Israel.
- Refers to the nations. Here is the call of grace to the Gentiles, who did not seek after God, or care to find Him.
- Inclusio with 66:18-21 ...the time is coming to gather all nations and tongues.

■ I was ready to be sought

- The LORD allowing Himself to be found.

■ I said, "Here I am, here I am,"

- Self-revelation
- By His word

○ 65:2-7 Reaching out to **Israel**

■ V2-5 Appeal and provocations

2 I spread out my hands all the day to a rebellious people, who walk in a way that is not good, following their own devices; 3 a people who provoke me to my face continually, sacrificing in gardens and making offerings on bricks; 4 who sit in tombs, and spend the night in secret places; who eat pig's flesh, and broth of tainted meat is in their vessels; 5 who say, "Keep to yourself, do not come near me, for I am too holy for you." These are a smoke in my nostrils, a fire that burns all the day.

● V2a The Lord's appeal

○ I spread out my hands all the day

■ Used to describe supplication. The Lord has become One appealing to His creation.

■ Done continuously all the day.

● V2b Israel's response

○ to a rebellious people, who walk in a way that is not good, following their own devices;

■ Israel's response

■ Rebellion

■ Following their own devices rather than obeying God's word.

■ Thus they walk in a way that is not good.

■ Israel's guilt is greater since, when given the chance, the Gentiles turned to God.

- As Jesus said in Mt 21:43 Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people producing its fruits.

● V3-5a Israel's response elaborated

○ a people who provoke me to my face continually,

■ Isaiah now details the way not good by contrasting it with the first four commandments in the Decalogue (Ex 20).

- Here is Scripture used to reveal wickedness.
- As Heb 4:12 For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

■ The first command: You shall have no other gods before me.

■ But rather than honoring Him as God, they provoke Him continually to His face

- V3 sacrificing in gardens, making offerings on bricks
 - Second commandment: You shall not make for yourself a carved image. Refers to the form of worship.
 - sacrificing in gardens. Gardens used in Baal worship.
 - Bricks were a forbidden material for the altar. Ex 20:25 prescribed uncut stones
 - Worshipping in their own way rather than in God's way.
- V4 who sit in tombs, and spend the night in secret places;
 - Third commandment: You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain. About being true to God as He has revealed Himself in His word.
 - He is the living God but His people seek spiritual guidance among the dead.
- V4-5 who eat pig's flesh, and broth of tainted meat is in their vessels; who say, "Keep to yourself, do not come near me, for I am too holy for you."
 - Fourth commandment: Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. About distinguishing the holy from the profane.
 - They were not following God's standard of holiness but making up their own.
 - At the same time they considered themselves as holier than others, and exclusive.
- V5b The Lord's reaction
 - V5 These are a smoke in my nostrils, a fire that burns all the day.
 - A continual irritation to the LORD.
 - The fire of God's wrath
 - All the day. Parallel with v2.

■ V6-7 The LORD's response

6 Behold, it is written before me: "I will not keep silent, but I will repay; I will indeed repay into their lap
7 both your iniquities and your fathers' iniquities together, says the LORD; because they made offerings
on the mountains and insulted me on the hills, I will measure into their lap payment for their former
deeds."

- V6 Behold, it is written before me: "I will not keep silent, but I will repay; I will indeed repay into their lap
 - Written. Decided upon.
 - I will. Personal with the LORD.
 - Not keep silent. A reply to the question of Is 64:12 Will you keep silent?
 - Repay. Pay back in full. Matching the offense.
 - Into your lap. Directly affecting each person.
- V7 both your iniquities and your fathers' iniquities together,
 - Not the sons doomed by the fathers' sins.
 - Rather not breaking with the past sins means suffering the consequences.
- V7 because.
 - Final summary
- V7 Offerings on the mountains
 - Baal worship
 - Characteristic of pre-exilic practices
- V7 I will measure into their lap payment for their former deeds."
 - Repeated for emphasis

- 65:8-10 Blessings for the faithful **remnant**

8 Thus says the LORD: "As the new wine is found in the cluster, and they say, 'Do not destroy it, for there is a blessing in it,' so I will do for my servants' sake, and not destroy them all. 9 I will bring forth offspring from Jacob, and from Judah possessors of my mountains; my chosen shall possess it, and my servants shall dwell there. 10 Sharon shall become a pasture for flocks, and the Valley of Achor a place for herds to lie down, for my people who have sought me.

- Four pictures of blessing

- V8 New wine

- As the new wine is found in the cluster, and they say, 'Do not destroy it, for there is a blessing in it,' so I will do for my servants' sake, and not destroy them all.

- New wine. Made from the first drippings of the grapes.
- Found in the cluster. Perhaps a small group of good grapes in the midst of bad grapes.
- The LORD finds blessing and delight in the remnant who are His people.
- All merit the winepress of Is 63, but some are saved because He delights in them.

- V9 Offspring

- I will bring forth offspring from Jacob, and from Judah possessors of my mountains;

- Descendants for the LORD's people

- V9 Possession of the land

- my chosen shall possess it, and my servants shall dwell there.

- Secure dwelling for the LORD's chosen.

- V10a Peace and security

- Sharon shall become a pasture for flocks, and the Valley of Achor a place for herds to lie down,

- Sharon signifies deterioration (Is 33:9) and renewal (Is 35:2)

- Achor is where Achan was stoned to death after the defeat at Ai. (Josh 7:24-26). A place of cursing will become a place of peace.

- Together they picture the entire country.

- V10b The remnant

- for my people who have sought me.

- The remnant of true believers

- 65:11-12 Recompense for the **wicked**

11 But you who forsake the LORD, who forget my holy mountain, who set a table for Fortune and fill cups of mixed wine for Destiny, 12 I will destine you to the sword, and all of you shall bow down to the slaughter, because, when I called, you did not answer; when I spoke, you did not listen, but you did what was evil in my eyes and chose what I did not delight in.”

- V11 Practices of unbelief

- Forsaking the LORD
- Forgetting His holy mountain to go to the unholy mountains of Baal
- Silly religion: plying their “gods” with good and drink.
- Contrast Ps 50:12 If I were hungry, I would not tell you, for the world and its fullness are mine.

- V12a Punishment of unbelief

- Destined for the sword of slaughter
- Death from worshipping dead idols.

- V12b Reasons for the punishment

- Two reasons
 - Refusal of the LORD’s word
 - Denial of the LORD’s way
- Note how they acted out of their sinful nature.

Discussion

We will break into three groups for discussion. The questions are

- 1. I was ready to be sought 65:1**
 - a. By those who did not ask for Me or seek Me**
 - b. Here I am**
- 2. Provoking God to His face 65:2-5**
 - a. Rebellious**
 - b. Following our own devices**
 - c. Walking in a way that is not good**
 - d. Breaking the commandments**
- 3. My people who have sought Me 65:8-10**
 - a. New wine**
 - b. Offspring of Jacob**
 - c. Possession of the land**
 - d. Peace and security**

Remember to worship the Lord: (1) See (2) Know (3) Respond

For next week: The Lord responding (part 2) 65:13-25

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