

v25 “The final concrete example that Isaiah uses to convey the character of God’s new creation is one he used in the description of the messianic kingdom in ch. 11. Indeed, these verses seem to be a condensation of 11:6–9, using many of the same words. Its appearance here serves to make plain that although the Servant/Messiah is not given prominence in this passage, it is the same kingdom that is being spoken of, and the blessings that are being spoken of here are those that are made available because of the Servant/Messiah’s coming” (Oswalt 1998: 662).

RELATED PASSAGES

2 Peter 3:13 — But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.

Rev 21:1 — Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea.

Rev 21:4 — He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

Why would Isaiah predict something in the distant future to his contemporaries? How was it relevant? How is it relevant to you today?

What will it take to make (and keep) a new creation as perfect as it is described?

What does this passage say about what God’s people will *do* in the kingdom?

SOURCES CITED

John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40–66*, NICOT, 1998.
Gary V. Smith, *Isaiah 40–66*, New American Commentary, 2009.

ISAIAH 65:17-25: THE NEW CREATION

OUTLINE OF ISAIAH 40-66

- III. The Holy One of Israel is sovereign over the restoration and salvation of his people (40:1–66:24).
 - A. The Holy One of Israel vindicates his glory over idols by predicting the restoration of his people from Babylon (40:1–48:22).
 - B. The Servant of the Lord will suffer to save his people (49:1–55:13).
 - C. The Holy One of Israel will return blessing to the righteous and retribution to the evil (56:1–59:21).
 - D. The Holy One of Israel will restore his people to a glorious new home (60:1–66:24).
 - 1. The Lord will bring his glory to the people and city of Zion (60:1–63:6).
 - a) The Lord will be the glory of Zion (60:1-22).
 - b) The Servant of the Lord will bring righteousness to Zion (61:1–62:12).
 - c) The Lord will judge the nations in the winepress of his wrath (63:1-6).
 - 2. The nation prays for redemption of heart and home (63:7–64:12).
 - 3. **The Lord responds to the nation’s prayer with the promise of a new heart and home (65:1–66:24).**

OUTLINE OF ISAIAH 65:17-25

- I. God’s plan for a new creation (65:17-19)
 - A. The effect of the new creation on the old creation: it is forgotten (17)
 - B. The effect of the new creation on the people: everlasting rejoicing (18)
 - C. The effect of the new creation on God: fullness of joy (19)
- II. The character of the new creation (65:20-25)
 - A. Ideal conditions for man to live for a long time (20)
 - B. The removal of enemies and covenant curses (21-23)
 - C. The immediate presence of God (24)
 - D. A transformed animal kingdom (25)

NOTES

“This new creation will engender feelings of joy and gladness, the end of sorrow; people will live long, there will be peace among men, and there will be clear communion between God and his people and a period of peace among the animals. This sounds almost like a return to the paradise of the garden of Eden before sin entered the world” (Smith 2009: 716).

v17 “In speaking of the kingdom of God here Isaiah amalgamates several aspects of it that may be chronologically distinct but are spiritually identical. Thus in its present manifestation in the lives of believers, the kingdom is a “new creation” (2 Cor. 5:17), “the world to come” (Heb. 2:5). But there is also the millennial kingdom, in which this world will be redeemed and renewed (Rev. 20:4–6). Finally, there are “new heavens and a new earth” that will exist after “the first heaven and the first earth had passed away” (2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:1). All three of these manifestations of the kingdom of God and of his Messiah seem to be telescoped together in the prophet’s mind, much as the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the world seem to have been telescoped for Jesus (Matt. 24; Mark 13; Luke 21)” (Oswalt 1998: 656).

v19 “One would expect that God would be happy about everything in this new creation, but two of the things that will give him the greatest pleasure will be this wonderful new city of Jerusalem and his new holy people. Jeremiah 31:41 also refers to God rejoicing over all the good things he will do for his people, and Zeph 3:17 talks about God rejoicing over his people with singing. Both of these acts will fulfill what he promised he would do in Deut 30:9” (Smith 2009: 720).

v19 “At that time, all sickness, pain, disappointment, loneliness, rejection, military defeat, financial loss, and every other possible source of crying will cease to exist. These will be things of the past that people will quickly forget as they enjoy the wonderful presence of God in his kingdom” (Smith 2009: 721).

v19 “This verse expresses one of the loveliest thoughts in the book. Zion will be a joy not only to itself but also to God. If he were in time, what a sense of anticipation he would have: the Jerusalem that had so often been a source of grief and disgust and rage should instead one day bring him nothing but joy” (Oswalt 1998: 657).

v19 “The figures for these sorrows in the following verses are taken from the pages of every person’s experience of this fallen world: untimely death, futile work, impermanence and upheaval, children born to tragedy” (Oswalt 1998: 658).

vv21-22 “What a promise, to have the time to do something right and then the opportunity to enjoy it to the full!” (Oswalt 1998: 659-60).

v23 “These statements indicate that the curse of Genesis 3 will be removed because there will be no premature death, no thorns to make human labor ineffective, and no pain in childbirth” (Smith 2009: 723).

v24 “Another blessing of the kingdom of God will be perfect communication with God. In this fallen world communication with him is difficult. A hundred things arise to interrupt and confuse prayer. Even those who seem most gifted and practiced in prayer speak of “wandering thoughts” and “dry times.” ... In his kingdom all of that will be forever gone. When we have not yet even begun to make our request, God will have begun to answer” (Oswalt 1998: 661).

v24 “These assurances indicate that God (a) will know everything that people will be thinking about, (b) will pay attention to everything people say, and (c) will instantaneously provide an answer. This suggests a very close personal relationship with God and the total absence of the sins that formerly separated God from mankind (59:1–2)” (Smith 2009: 723).