

Isaiah Chapters 65-66 Summary - John Karmelich

Title: The epilogue and a summary of the Book of Isaiah

First, congrats we made it to the end of Isaiah. To those who read my lessons on this, grateful. I admit when I read books, I always like the epilogue when it explains what happens to the main people in that book after the story is over. As my regulars know there are no chapter numbers in the original text. As we finish Isaiah here, I kept thinking of the two words "epilogue and summary". That summarizes this final text well. Remember much of Isaiah says, "As God's chosen, you're not living as He wants you to live!" referring to the Israelites. At the same time Isaiah's preaching, "God will keep His unconditional promises to the nation of Israel (and Christians putting their trust in Jesus). In other words, His name is on the line to keep His promise. Therefore, Isaiah explains in this text what'll happen to our world after Jesus "sets up shop" for believers, unbelievers and those living then who don't know the difference!

If you read the last lesson, all of Chapter 64 and part of Chapter 63 were a prayer for God to act. What these two final chapters are in effect, an answer to that prayer! Isaiah explains WHY the unsaved will suffer for all of eternity and how those who trust in Jesus' payment for our sins will be blessed for that same eternal time frame.

OK John, it is all interesting, but can't we worry about the next life "then" as we have enough problems to deal with now! As I've been "pounding the pulpit" all through Isaiah, God calls us to be a witness to eternal events now, as God works through people to lead others to Him. Whether we like it or not, that is the "ballgame", and He calls us to play by His rules as after all He is Lord of our lives! With that out of my system, let me discuss the details of these last two chapters of Isaiah.

It always amazes me to consider that in a "trivial" part of the vast Roman Empire, (at its peak about the time of Jesus crucifixion that surrounded the entire Mediterranean) the death of a "nobody" claiming to be God spread to millions of people in a short time span after the resurrection! There's no way it's not a "God thing"! Isaiah states in the first verse of Chapter 65 that multitudes of non-Jewish people who did seek God over the last 2,000 years is in effect His commentary that this was His plan all along! A great reason to visit the nation of Israel in one's life, is meeting people from around the world traveling there. That's a great bit of evidence that seeing this is all part of His plan for mankind. OK, back to Isaiah:

In Verse 2, Isaiah switches his focus back to the Israelites. The application is God turned to non-Jewish people because, "I (God) sent you prophets and judges and collectively you ignored Me. I stated in the book of Samuel, that a descendant of King David (Jesus) will rule the world forever." In Luke 1:32, the angel Gabriel tells Mary: Jesus will sit on David's throne! Obviously, that never happened in Jesus first coming! I'm just saying God's keeping His word, despite the fact the vast majority of Israelites ignored what Isaiah preached. I should add, that's no reason to condemn Israelites today. God will literally rule the world from Israel at a date known only to Him. Until then, He wants us to be a witness for Him.

Bottom line from Verses 2-7 talks about "religious" Jews not living as God desires! OK John, we know people who reject Jesus are going to suffer. Why should we read this? Again, it's back to being a good witness for Jesus and leading others down the right path.

By Verse 8 God's stating again He will act alone to preserve Israel (Keeping His unconditional Word!) that His plans will go forth. Remember we're reading Isaiah's last words, so it's essential to emphasize the fact God will win and we are required to go along with His plans for mankind! We get a reminder

that God knows all things. He condemns the Israelites for worshipping other gods and doing religious rituals that He never ordained! The middle of Chapter 65 gives contradictions between those who turn their backs on God versus those who seek and worship Him! I realize I'm talking to those who already believe Jesus is God and Lord of our lives. Think of this as a reminder of what God calls us to do until all this happens. I realize it may be a long time from now. There's a classic expression that people will work harder if they know the boss is watching over their shoulder! Think of God looking over ours, as I suspect He wonders at times why we're not making the effort to live as He desires.

By Verse 17, in effect Isaiah's tired of the "chewing people out" lecture. He switches to the fact God is going to create a new heaven and earth. This is discussed near the end of Revelation as well. Best that I figure, it'll be like life before the flood. If you study the early chapters of Genesis, people listed lived to close to 1,000 years. In short, there was an ozone layer that lowers radiation and people lived longer then. Also like the early chapters of Genesis there will be no more predatory animals. Still during what we call the Millenium life will go on with those that survived Revelation, repopulating the world. (The basic purpose of it is to show that even with Satan bound up as he is then, people will still sin, thus the need for the Messiah to rule with a "strong hand". It's also important to understand how the "end time" works: Short version it is literally 1,000 years (that's what a Millenium means) when Satan's bound up and lots of changes to our world so people living then will have no significant threats etc. After 1,000 years, there'll be a new heaven and earth created since ours is permanently corrupted by sin.

The "epilogue and summary" continue in the final chapter. It opens by stating God is not impressed by our works. Let me clarify that. Our behavior does matter in terms of being a good witness for Him. It does not matter in terms of trying to earn God's respect. The first six verses of Chapter 66 get one final shot in at those who rebel against God. Remember these final two chapters go back and forth between condemning those who **SHOULD HAVE** known better and those who come to God by faith! Verse 7's a return to of all things, Jesus entering the world. In Verse 10 God asks us to rejoice over the fact Jesus will rule the world from Jerusalem. It talks about those of us resurrected and those alive then will have comfort by Jesus ruling the world from Jerusalem when all this happens.

Gee John, all this sounds wonderful! How does any of this effect what I'm dealing with at the moment? Think of it in terms of comfort. An underlying message of Chapter 40 onwards is to take comfort that no matter what we're dealing with, God will win in the end and He's well aware of our problems as He guides our lives for His glory!

Speaking of having joy over our eternal future, that is verse 10 to the end of the chapter. God is stating we will have joy when all this occurs! God will comfort us through all we're dealing with and guide us for His glory! So why doesn't God ever say all this begins on "x" date? Not knowing the date of return for Jesus to show up, keeps us focused on making a difference for Him! I know it's been 2,000 years. I would remind you that all of Isaiah's predictions of Jesus First Coming came true 700 years after he did write this book, so I trust Isaiah's Second Coming predictions will occur on His timing! Realize if Jesus came 100 years ago, none of us would experience all of this!

Remember why God is doing all this. He desires to spend eternity with people freely willing to let Him be Lord of their lives. Verse 18 lists the "far reaches" of the world the Israelites would know. Isaiah is stating how God will gather people from around the world who desire that eternity! The last few verses say in a colorful way how from one day to the next, we will be gathered with Him. The final verse says we can go see the dead bodies who refuse to make that choice. No thanks, but the option will be there!

Again, thanks for putting up with my Bible study obsession, hope you enjoyed it. The book covers the game plan from God calling Isaiah to the "wrap up" in these final chapters. For those who don't know, I wrote a more detailed commentary some years back. If you want to read it, click on one of the links below. It's still a joy to study this and again I'm grateful for you reading this. The rest of this email is links to questions you may have. If you're new here, realize you're welcome to e-mail me. Oh, on the last page of the original study I have a list of my sources I use.