

God's Eagerness to Save Sinners

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[0:00] Isaiah 65, we'll read the first 16 verses. I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me.

I was found by those who did not seek me. To a nation that did not call in my name, I said, here am I, here am I. All day long I've held out my hands to an obstinate people who walk in ways not good, pursuing their own imagination.

A people who continually provoke me to my very face, offering sacrifices in gardens and burning incense on altars of brick, who sit among the graves and spend their nights keeping secret vigil, who eat the flesh of pigs and whose pots hold broth of unclean meat, who say, keep away, don't come near me, for I am too sacred for you.

Such people are smoke in my nostrils. A fire that keeps burning all day. See, it stands written before me. I will not keep silent, but will pay it back in full.

I will pay it back into their laps. Both your sins and the sins of your fathers, says the Lord, because they burned sacrifices on the mountains and defiled me on the hills.

[1:22] I will measure into their laps the full payment for their former deeds. This is what the Lord says. As when juice is still found in a cluster of grapes and men say, don't destroy it.

There's yet some good in it. So will I do in behalf of my servants. I will not destroy them all. I will bring forth descendants from Jacob and from Judah, those who will possess my mountains.

My chosen people will inherit them and there will there will my servants live. Sharon will become a pasture for flocks and the valley of Achor a resting place for herds for my people who seek me.

But as for you who forsake the Lord and forget my holy mountain, who spread a table for fortune and filled bowls of mixed wine for destiny.

I will destine you for the sword and you will all bend down for the slaughter. For I called, but you did not answer. I spoke, but you did not listen.

[2:28] You did evil in my sight and chose what displeases me. Therefore, this is what the sovereign Lord says. My servants will eat, but you will go hungry.

My servants will drink, but you will go thirsty. My servants will rejoice, but you will be put to shame. My servants will sing out of the joy of their hearts, but you will cry out from anguish of heart and wail and brokenness of spirit.

You will leave your name to my chosen ones as a curse. The sovereign Lord will put you to death. But to his servants, he will give another name.

Whoever invokes a blessing in the land will do so by the God of truth. He will take an oath in the land. He who takes an oath in the land will swear by the God of truth.

For the past troubles will be forgotten and hidden from my eyes. Well, here at the end of Isaiah, God, through Isaiah, has been teaching us as the church how to pray in times of spiritual decline.

[3:44] Now, it was the need of God's people 600 years before Christ came, and it remains our need today to come confessing our sin, our need of him, crying for mercy and saying, Oh, that you would rend the heavens and come down, that the mountains would tremble before you.

Come down and make yourself known to your enemies. Come in power and glory to save and to judge. Move unmovable mountains.

Do things that are awesome and that we did not expect. And, Lord, as you look upon us in our pathetic state, will you hold yourself back?

This has been the prayer of Isaiah, and indeed of all the faithful, down to this present day. And the last two chapters of Isaiah's prophecy are God's answer to that prayer.

Indeed, the answers to the prayers of Isaiah and the faithful of his day and the answer to the prayers of God's people today as we are pleading with God to come and show himself in power and glory.

[4:59] You who give yourself no rest and give God no rest. Don't you think for a moment that your prayers are offered in vain?

God will answer and he will come down and he will do amazing things that we did not expect. Saving a people for himself and punishing all who reject him.

And so these last two chapters of Isaiah's prophecy then are the answer to the prayer. What God would do for his people after their exile in Babylon.

What God would do for his people as Jesus Christ came and in the New Testament period. What God would do for his people today. And even reaches into the future in what God will do for his people when Jesus Christ does literally rend the heavens and come down.

And he will gather his people to himself. And he will punish his enemies in unspeakable torments. Yes, this is the God who answers the prayers of his people.

[6:10] And though the note of judgment is found here, the dominant note throughout is God's eagerness to save hell deserving sinners. And to show them the full extent of his love.

Even bringing them into a new heavens and a new earth as we'll see next week. So let's see the eagerness of God to save. As it's displayed in this passage in four points.

The first is this. That God saves those who were not seeking him. He saves those who were not seeking him. Verse 1.

I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me. I was found by those who did not seek me. To a nation that did not call on my name. I said, here am I.

Here am I. So children, you're playing hide and seek. And your little brother Billy wants to play too. And so you're counting with your eyes closed.

[7:10] And everybody else is supposed to be running and hiding. 17, 18, 19, 20. Ready or not, here I come. And as soon as you pull your hands down.

Immediately Billy jumps out. Here I am. Here I am. And you say, Billy, Billy. This isn't how you play hide and seek. You didn't hide.

I didn't seek. And God is like Billy. He's not playing hide and seek with sinners. So far is he from hiding himself from sinners.

These sinners he's talking about here. He rather was revealing himself to them. Saying, here I am. Here I am. Now anybody who does that shows that he wants to be found.

And this shows us just how eager God is to be found by these sinners. Who are making no efforts of their own to find him.

[8:14] They weren't seeking him. They weren't asking for him. They weren't calling out to him. Rather, they were quite content to live their life without God. I don't know if there's a bigger sin than that.

Just being content to live your life without God. They were happy to follow their own desires. And that's God's picture of fallen humanity.

We weren't seeking God. We were content to live without him and his son. We were satisfied with our own way. So that Paul can say in Romans 3, there is no one who seeks God.

All have turned away. We seek God like a mouse seeks a cat.

Like a fugitive seeks the policeman. And yet, God is so eager to save sinners that he doesn't wait for us to seek him.

[9:19] Or we would never be saved. Rather, he takes the initiative and he came to us and he revealed himself to us in the gospel.

Friends, I wonder if you realize what is happening every time you hear the gospel. God in Jesus Christ is saying, Here I am.

Here I am. I'm the only Savior there is. There's no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved than my name. I'm the only mediator.

No one comes to the Father but through me. I'm the only one who took the curse of God in behalf of sinners. I'm the only one who has righteousness to give to sinners.

Here I am. Come to me. Take me. Receive me. Oh, how urgent he is to have us to know him.

[10:16] And so, brothers and sisters, we found him. We found him as our Lord and Savior. Not because we were looking for him, but because he in sovereign grace came seeking us and revealing himself to us, even when we didn't want him.

The initiative was all his. God is the one here saying, I was found by those who did not seek me. I sought the Lord, but afterward I knew.

He moved my soul to seek him, seeking me. It was not I that found, O Savior, true. No, I was found of thee. We only seek him because he first sought us.

We only find him because he first found us and revealed himself to us in the gospel and drew us to himself. Now, in one sense, this is true of all of us, as Paul says in Romans 3, that there's none that seek him.

But in a specific sense, it refers to the Gentiles, the non-Jews, all the peoples of the world outside of Old Covenant Israel.

[11 : 32] For hundreds and hundreds of years, God was not seeking them. God was not revealing himself to them in the scriptures and in the gospel. No, he was dealing only with Israel, the one nation.

And as for the rest of the peoples of the world, as Paul says in Acts 14, 16, in the past, he let all nations go their own way. And so what did they do?

They went their own way. They wandered off in darkness, far from God, separated from God, following the thoughts of their own minds, their own ideas of God, their idols.

Without God and without hope in the world, that was the life of the Gentiles. Gentiles. But now, in the last days, God has sent the gospel to the Gentiles.

He is revealing himself and he's commanding all people everywhere to repent. The Gentiles, people who weren't seeking, weren't asking, who weren't calling for God, are finding him.

[12 : 41] So Gentiles, like you and me, not seeking him, but he sought us and so we found him.

You see, all of this through the gospel of Jesus Christ, this is God coming down in power and glory and shaking the nations.

This is God moving things that were unmovable. The nations, who has ever heard of the nations forsaking their gods to come to Jesus? God was doing amazing things, doing awesome things that we did not expect, saving a multitude of sinners from every nation, tribe, and language.

Now, can you see God's eagerness to save sinners by saving those who were not seeking him?

That's the first point. The second point, God patiently extends his invitation of mercy to stubborn sinners.

He patiently extends his invitation to stubborn sinners. So, verse 2, all day long I have held out my hands to an obstinate people who walk in ways not good, pursuing their own imaginations.

So now, the posture is this. Hands extended. welcoming, inviting people to come and to receive his warm embrace of love.

[14 : 21] Urging men, pleading with them to come to him, to repent and to turn to him. And of all the nations of the world, God was revealing himself to these people.

Now he's talking about the Jews. His old covenant nation of Israel. He had chosen this nation to whom he poured out his revelation to them. Sent them the prophets.

Sent them the scriptures. And God was saying for hundreds and hundreds of years to his people, to the Jews, here I am, here I am. Return to me, return to me.

And wonder of wonders, they refused to come. They went on in their own unbelieving way and spurned his loving, saving arms.

Now, this is how the apostle Paul interpreted our text, Isaiah 65, 1 and 2. We don't have to just turn to some human commentaries. We have the divine commentary.

[15 : 26] Verse 1 speaks of the Gentiles, verse 2 of the Jews. As the apostle Paul went around preaching on behalf of Christ, he was calling sinners to be reconciled to God.

He was standing in for Christ saying, come to me. He was the hands extended of Christ saying, come, repent, believe.

And what did Paul find? Well, as he went around preaching, he found only a few Jews believed.

Only a few Jews came. But the greater part of the nation spurned the gospel that he preached.

Even though they had such a long history with God. All the prophets and all the scriptures and all the privileges. And on the other hand, when Paul preached to the Gentiles, he found them flocking and coming to Christ in great numbers.

And as he thought upon this phenomenon, even though God had not been calling them and revealing himself to them for hundreds and hundreds of years, it just let them go. And now when God came and said, here I am, Gentile, they came.

[16 : 39] And as he thinks about this, the self-seeking Gentiles receiving and the religious Jews rejecting, Paul says, that reminds me of Isaiah 65, 1 and 2.

You can hear it in Romans 20, verses 20 and 21. Paul is quoting them as he's talking about the rejection of the Jews of their Messiah.

He says in Romans 10, 20 and 21, Isaiah boldly says, I was found by those who did not seek me. I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me. But concerning Israel, he says, all day long I've held out my hands to a disobedient and obstinate people.

You see, Paul is saying, but as far as Israel, they're the ones God held out his hands to, the obstinate people. In contrast to the Gentiles who weren't seeking God, weren't interested at all in God, God revealed himself, they came.

And so these Jews, the Jews are the people especially being referred to here in verse 2. God was inviting them. He was holding out his hands to them.

[18:01] He didn't just invite them once. No, he invited them all day long. Have you ever tried to hold your hands out all day long? It's wearisome.

And that's what God was doing. And what a long day it was that he was holding out his hands. It went back to the day they left Egypt hundreds of years before Christ.

And he held out his arms to them. It went back to the very founding of their nation through the whole entire long history of the Jews.

And they refused to come to him. They rejected the Lord and his offers of mercy and they went on their own way. And all the while, God was holding out his hands to this obstinate, rebellious, stiff-necked people.

And he sent his prophets to them and his prophets came and in the name of God they said, Return, O Israel, to the Lord your God. And at last, after rejecting his prophets, he sent his own son.

[19:08] And he came with open, outstretched hands and he said, Come to me, all you who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest. And though he came to his own, his own received him not.

Though he offered himself to them, he was despised and rejected by men. He was the stone the builders rejected. And he complains to them in Matthew 23, 37, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I long to gather you as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings.

All throughout your history, as the prophets came calling you to turn back to me, it was I, it was I, who was longing to gather you.

It was I, who was holding my hands out all day long. But you would not. And you still will not.

And they showed their utter rejection by nailing his hands, those outstretched hands, to a cross. From which he continued to call on men to come to me.

[20:33] I'm the only way to the Father. Amen. And he still has outstretched hands and through his ministers and through the gospel and his people, the message is going out.

Come to me, Jesus is saying. And experience God's mercy and salvation. You know, it's hard to know which is more amazing.

God's patient offers of mercy or sinners' stubborn rejection of them. We see that both here in this passage.

You would think he came offering them hell the way they reject him and push him from them. But he comes offering mercy. His hands are full of pardon and peace with God and rest for their souls.

He comes offering himself. Here I give you myself and all the blessings of my salvation, not just in time but forever and ever, a new heaven and a new earth. And still they refused to come.

[21:42] Brothers and sisters, how long did God wait before you came? Did you come the first time you heard the gospel invitation? Did you come the very first time Jesus got in front of you in the gospel and said, come to me?

You didn't? You didn't? Did you come the second time? How long did you put him off?

We are meant to adore the long-suffering patience of Jesus and to understand from it just how eager he is to save sinners.

He puts up with lots of indignities from us, lots of refusals, what follows is God's description of these people who said no, these obstinate people who walk in ways not good.

They didn't walk in God's good ways but in their own bad ways, pursuing their own imagination. Ah, there's, you see, the problem. As long as a man follows the way that seems right to him, walks by his own thoughts and imagination, he'll go in wrong ways.

[23:00] He's not come and put his thoughts and his ways under God's thoughts and God's ways. That's what's happening here. No.

And most of, and verse 3 goes on to show that they are a people who continually provoke me to my very face. He continued to open his hands to them and they continued to provoke him right in his face.

They knew that what they were doing was displeasing to them and they did it to him anyway. That's in your face kind of rejection. Did we not do that?

We knew what was right. We knew what was wrong and still we refused. Most of what follows is the way that they provoked him and it was by perverting the true worship of God.

They took a little bit of the true worship of God and they mixed in some of the religion of the world. Syncretism. Mix together. Blend it together. We'll worship God but we'll worship him in the way that we want to worship him.

[24:10] And so they offered sacrifices in gardens. Gardens were the symbol of fertility and that's often where the pagans worship thinking this is how we get God's blessing of fertility upon the land and the womb and such.

Burning incense on altars of brick. You may not understand exactly what that means but it was forbidden material for the Lord's altars to be made of stone that no tool was worked upon.

Verse 4 who sit among the graves and spend their nights keeping secret vigil consulting the dead. You see they wanted supernatural revelation but they were not content with the word of the prophet because it was always repent and come back to me.

And so they want supernatural knowledge where they get it they try to consult with the dead. It's demonic who eat the flesh of pigs and whose pots hold broth of unclean meat.

Now that may seem like a little thing to us. What's the big deal? I'm sure that's what they were saying. Our neighbors eat pork. Why can't we? I'd rather like it. But God had said for you my special people this is one of the things that will mark you out as different from the world around you.

[25:22] Your very diet will be different. But why? Just because I say so. And it became the test. We sang it. Test our thoughts and our attitudes.

You know one of the ways God tested his people? Don't eat pork. Don't eat these meats that are unclean. They're unclean because I say so. Later he will remove that in the New Testament.

But you need to learn as my people whatever I say is off limits is off limits. Even in your diet. And they weren't ready for that kind of submission to God.

And before you say oh but it's such a little thing I remind you that that was the first sin that sunk our world into sin. It's a matter of diet. You're free to eat from everything but not from this tree.

Oh but it looks good. It looks like it would do good for me. Don't because I said not to. Will they obey just because I said so? And in breaking that dietary command they showed the true nature of their heart.

[26:30] Their attitude. My way not your way. This is some of the things that were provoking God to anger you see. There's many others.

Verse 7 they burned sacrifices on the mountains and defied me on the hills. The high places you read of that in the scriptures they weren't supposed to offer sacrifices on the high places. That's where the pagans did their offering.

Instead they were to offer their sacrifices in the place where God commanded them. Verse 11 who spread a table for fortune and filled bowls of mixed wine for destiny.

These were some kind of pagan rituals of setting the table and feeding their gods all to win good luck for themselves. To win good fortune good destiny. Do you realize that the things that people do for good luck are detestable to God?

Read it there. Read it there. Verse 11 they spread a table for fortune and fill bowls of mixed wine for destiny. I've known coaches and athletes who wear certain clothing because they think it will bring them good luck.

[27:46] Certain rituals done. I know a tennis player who won't step on the lines in between games might bring bad luck. People sometimes say things and then knock on wood that there might be good luck.

Why are these things so offensive to God? Because they rob him of glory. It attributes to something else the power to bless which is God's alone.

If I have anything good I am to bless him and to see his goodness in it and to say thank you and worship him. But when I say it's good luck I rob him of his glory and I give it to the sweater I'm wearing or the socks that I'm wearing or the thing that I'm doing.

Some good luck charm. Oh it's a strike at the very honor of God. Well these are just some of the ways that God's worship was being perverted.

And I believe the church needs to hear this today. God's worship is far more important to him than we may realize. Churches come and invent and tinker with God's worship as if it doesn't matter.

[29:01] Just as long as it's God we're worshiping doesn't matter how. The second commandment says you're wrong. You must worship me but not in the way that the world worships their gods.

They worship their God through idols. Don't you worship me through idols and physical objects.

God is saying the way you worship me is important. You're not free to worship me in any way that you want.

You're only able to worship me and approach me in the way that I have commanded. And so obedience not invention is the watch word for our worship.

And any disobedience to God's commands shows our stubbornness in saying no to God and it's provoking him to his face.

Well these are the people that kept saying no to God's outstretched hands. And next God tells us of their inflated opinion of themselves.

[30:08] Verse 5 we hear them speaking. They say keep away don't come near me for I'm too sacred for you. The King James I'm holier than thou. Yeah that's the idea here.

I'm holier than thou. There's no lack of self esteem here is there. They've got their view of themselves way up high. How out of touch they are with reality.

Remember back in chapter 64 and verse 6 reality is this that all of us are like one who is unclean. We're all like spiritual lepers. We all have poison of sin in us so much that it would be right for us to say to anyone we meet hello I'm John Heaney I need to warn you that I am contagious with sin I'm so full of that poison of sin that you're not safe to be close to me stay back from me or I might ruin your life I might pollute you remember we saw that 64 6 now here they come and say stay back from me why because you might pollute me I'm much more holy than you what do we learn from this we learn that all self made religion which is what they were doing is fed by pride and leads to more pride if a man can say I have done this and this and this and you haven't well then you stay away from me self righteous arrogance gives a sense of superiority and it doesn't sit well with God at all he opposes the proud no it's true religion that accepts all righteousness from God as a gift because all of our righteous acts are like filthy rags so I have nothing to boast in the only thing I can boast in is what

Jesus has done for me and the gift of his righteousness and so I say to you I am a dirty filthy defiled and defiling sinner but I have found cleansing and I have found righteousness in Jesus and you can too and we stand together at the foot of Christ but when we start to turn away from the true religion to our own self-made religion we then start taking pride in what we have done Ray Ortlund says one of the most important discoveries we must make in all of life is this the difference between true holiness and false holiness the difference between true religion and false religion people are religious people have a lot of religion but is it the true religion if it's true it will lead to humility if it's false it will lead to pride and self righteousness if it's true it leads to the glory in

Christ and no confidence in the flesh if it's false it leads to glory in self and so God tells this proud people with their high view of himself he now tells them what he thinks of them and that's the value of the Bible you see we go around with our thoughts about ourselves we go around with our people around us and the world's thoughts about ourselves but when we come to this book we get the most important evaluation of all what does God think of us and God tells us what he thinks of these people he doesn't hold back does he such people are smoke in my nostrils a fire that keeps burning all day that's long hand for their headache you ever gotten smoke up your nose it's not a pleasant thing how about all day long you're having a picnic and one of your neighbors has decided to burn that wet pile of leaves and it just smolders and stinks up the whole place for all day long

[34:13] God says that's what these people are to me a constant provocation to me and yet these are the ones to whom he holds his hands out all day long he stands in the smoke and in the stench and he says come come that's why I say it's hard to know which is more amazing God's long suffering offers of mercy or stubborn sinners continually rejecting them well these Jews and of Isaiah's prophecy they did not profit from God's patience with them they only grew harder under it

it's supposed to lead them to repentance and to come to God as Paul says in Romans 2 but because of their stubbornness and unrepentant heart they were only storing up wrath against themselves for the day of wrath when

God's righteous judgment would be revealed when God will give to each person according to what he has done so all of that patience and all of that long suffering of God extending mercy was wasted upon them they rejected and our third point from the passage is that there is an end to God's patience when his wrath will pay back in full an end to God's patience when his wrath will repay in full see it stands written in six I will not keep silent but will pay back in full I will pay it back into their laps both your sins and the sins of your father says the Lord because they burned sacrifices in the mountains and defied me on the hills I will measure into their laps the full payment for their former deeds so you're at the store and you see the price tag and you take your bill fold out and you measure out in those days maybe you would pay with something that literally had to be weighed and measured upon a scale but you measure out exactly the full payment and you don't pay a penny more you don't pay a penny less and

God says that's the way I'm going to pay back to for what they have done to me and provoking me to there's an end to God's patience when his wrath will repay in full and there's no wrath so great as for those who have often heard the invitation and who have snubbed God's offers of mercy and in the end he'll say you did not want me or my salvation so you will have none of me or my salvation you must know that there comes a point when God is done inviting and the open arms are open no longer just as the door to the ark there came a point when

God shut the doors and there was no mercy to be found only judgment you say where is that line between God's patient offers of mercy and his repaying in wrath someone has written there is a line by us unseen that crosses every path the hidden boundary between God's patience and his wrath oh where is that mysterious line by which our path is crossed beyond which God himself has sworn that none who go that all who go are lost how far can one go on in sin how long will mercy spare where does grace end and where begin the confines of despair an answer from the sky is sent while it is you who from

God depart while it is called today repent and harden not your heart you see the point is we don't know where that line is we just know it's there is there there there Jesus tells us it's there oh how I wanted to gather you but you would not therefore there's only judgment coming for you as he follows up his words to them so you who from God depart and continue to resist while it's called today right now repent and harden not your heart you see he warns!

[39:16] about rejecting you about rejecting him why because he's so eager to save I'm not willing that any should perish why will you not turn and live why will you rather die in the face of my warnings and the last lesson from the text is God's judgment distinguishes!

between those who are true servants and those who aren't God's judgment distinguishes between those who are true servants of his and those who aren't and so God promises when his judgment falls he will spare some he says you've got a cluster of grapes and though it may not look like much and it may be stepped on and it may look like most of the juice is gone yet if there's some juice still in it men say don't throw it away there's still something good in it God says that's the way I view this nation of Israel the way I view this lump of humanity there are still some that I am going to spare there has always been a remnant in the old covenant people of Israel a remnant chosen by grace that though the whole vineyard was rotten and it seemed like there wasn't anyone to be found yet yes there was

God's faithful they deserved hell as much as the rest of them but God exalted his mercy in forgiving them they did seek the Lord as the Lord drew them and sought them they did come to him they did ask for mercy and God says I haven't forgotten them they're like the little bit of juice in the whole cluster of grapes that's bad verse eight so I'm going to spare in God's judgment and so as God looked at old covenant Israel there were those that were true believers and they were saved and there were those that were not true believers and they were lost and Paul says it in Romans 9 not all who descended from Israel are Israel there was an Israel within Israel there were the true believers within this unbelieving!

nation God says those I will save they're my servants but as for you who forsake me there's certain judgment verse 11 but as for you who forsake the Lord and forget my holy mountain who spread a table for fortune and fill bowls of mixed wine for destiny I will destine you for the sword and you will all bend down for the slaughter you see I'm really the one who holds!

no good luck here there justice for I called but you did not answer I spoke but you did not listen I held my hands out all day long and you only did evil in my sight and did what displeased me I called I spoke you didn't listen children you know how dishonoring that is you're playing on the floor dad walks in the room and says okay children it's time to go to bed I want you to pick up your toys right now and get to bed and if you just keep playing as if dad didn't say a word then he could say to you I called but you did not answer I spoke but you did not listen and that would be a picture of what these people were doing with

[43:02] God he spoke spoke in ten commandments and they didn't listen he called come to me and they did not answer and so he turns them over to certain judgment so you see how God makes a difference between his own he calls them my seed he calls them my servants he calls them my chosen ones in this passage they are his but these others are not really mine and so in this world none but God can really see who are really his true servants in this world they're often found together mixed in with the world they all may have a bit of religion they all may have some appearance of good in them but it's only God who knows those that are truly his those who are covered in the blood of

Jesus because of their faith in him and so Malachi says in Malachi 3:18 you will again see the distinction between the righteous and the wicked between those who serve God and those who do not a day is coming when you'll see that distinction now together but at the end of the age when God judges you'll see the distinction it'll be clear who are the lords and who aren't notice how differently they're treated in judgment by God in verse 13 and 14 it takes us right to the last day of judgment right into heaven right into hell verse 13 therefore this is what the sovereign Lord says my servants will eat but you will go hungry you who have forsaken my offers you will go hungry my servants will drink but you will be thirsty my servants will rejoice but you will be put to shame my servants will sing out of the joy of their heart but you will cry out from anguish of heart and wail and brokenness of spirit you see the contrast what a difference it will be seen then who are the Lord's servants and who aren't and as far as the Lord's servant every desire every appetite will be fully satisfied but not so for those who for so they will have the desire but it will be unfulfilled and as for those who are my servants their hearts will be so full of joy that they got to sing or they explode and so they sing out of the joy of their heart not so you who have forsaken me your heart will be filled with something else it will be filled with such anguish and brokenness of spirit that you will cry and wail have you ever heard someone wail I don't recommend it I can't imagine it for eternity this is where God is taking us in this passage and he's doing it because this is where life is taking you and me to the day of judgment when this will be the experience of his true servants and this will be the experience forever and ever of those who have rejected him behold the kindness and severity of the

Lord kindness to those who have come to Christ severity for those who haven't do you see why God is telling us this again I see does it not express something of his eagerness to save hell deserving sinners he could have just surprised us with the last judgment and meted out these punishments and blessings but instead he shoots a warning shot over the bow of our ship he's telling us this is the way it's going to be for my people that the very joys that are coming might encourage holiness in us trusting impressions of what's coming for those who reject him might cause us to turn away from those sins that would cause us to turn our back on Christ you see we just don't see things clearly in this world until we see them in the light of the last judgment what do you see around you see people living for friends of the world as if a friend smile is boy that's that's what

I live for see people smile please them they like me I like them they don't see right until they see in the day of judgment what will my friends do for me in that day when I stand before God in judgment absolutely nothing but add to my condemnation with their witness that they give of what I did with them other people are living for sexual immorality and they're saying it's fun everybody's doing and they're living they're throwing themselves into it but they don't see right because they don't see the final judgment when God will judge the adulterer and the sexually immoral Hebrews 13:40 he tells us that why that it might affect!

[48:39] our evil paths to walk in the paths of righteousness people are lying they don't see in the day of judgment that all liars will have their part in the lake of fire this is the second death and others are living for money and the things that it buys but wealth is worthless in the day of wrath the Bible tells us you see how the final judgment encourages us to find a savior here and now to walk with

him to say no to temptation and to not live for all the wrong things so we need the shadow of the final judgment to cast the light of the final judgment to cast its shadow over us in this life we need often to visit the day of judgment this is where God is taking us in Isaiah 65 and 66 and it is exactly where we're all headed for it is appointed unto man once to die and then the judgment and he's saying don't show up in that day without a savior my hands are still open the day of grace is still not over come come to me let's pray oh lord when we think how easily our anger is provoked by person's dishonorable word to us or glance toward us we do marvel at how slow you are to anger how abounding in love and compassion we marvel how long your hands have been held open wide for obstinate stiff neck sinners we marvel in our own lives that you didn't send us to hell but you kept seeking us in mercy until you found us and laid hold of us and revealed to us our sin and our savior so we worship you saving

God of patience and of grace but you've shown us that there is severity with you as well and you've shown us that there is a day of judgment and that in itself tells us don't play with your mercy oh I pray that you would not let any outside of Christ to spend one more moment rejecting him gather them in even this day do those greater works of moving unmovable mountains of what's impossible with men giving new hearts that love Christ and trust in him alone for salvation changing our natures and giving us the Holy Spirit to walk in newness of life do it for your namesake do it that we all might stand in awe of your great grace and glory we pray in Jesus name amen