

Trembling At God's Word

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Preacher: Jon Hueni

[0:00] Isaiah 65 and verse 17. Behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth.

! The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind.! But be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create. For I will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy.

I will rejoice over Jerusalem and take delight in my people. The sound of weeping and of crying will be heard in it no more.

Never again will there be an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not live out his years. He who dies at a hundred will be thought a mere youth.

He who fails to reach a hundred will be considered accursed. They will build houses and dwell in them. They will plant vineyards and eat their fruit.

[1:05] No longer will they build houses and others live in them, or plant and others eat. For as the days of a tree, so will be the days of my people. My chosen ones will long enjoy the works of their hands.

They will not toil in vain, or bear children doomed to misfortune. For they will be a people blessed by the Lord. They and their descendants with them.

Before they call, I will answer. While they are still speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb will feed together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox.

But dust will be the serpent's food. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, says the Lord.

I want you to think of what these following names all have in common. Letchworth, Brook Farm, Oneida, Fruitlands, New Harmony.

[2:13] The list could go on and on. Well, they were all attempts at utopia, weren't they? Attempts to create the perfect society.

And you know what else they all have in common? They all failed miserably. Mired down in quarrels about who's the boss, what are the rules, finances, and just the problems of not being able to create enough provisions for the whole community.

It seems that in order to have a perfect society, a utopia, you must have perfect people and perfect conditions. And that's why every attempt has been a perfect failure to date.

But what if I told you that that is precisely where this world is heading? For utopia. For a perfect society with perfect people and perfect conditions.

Now that's what Isaiah 65 is talking about here in the passage read for us. A real utopia. A real new age.

[3:26] A whole new world. Not achieved by man's efforts to improve his world. But rather, after all men's efforts have failed at kingdom building, Jesus Christ will return.

And he will judge all men and nations. And he will establish his eternal kingdom. And create a new heavens and a new earth where righteousness dwells.

A place of unending joy and love and peace. Where everything is perfect. Where God's will is done on earth as it is in heaven. And where God himself dwells with his people forever.

Isaiah is saying to us, it's coming. He's coming. Now, all these failed attempts then at utopia highlight for us the depravity and inability of man.

Man cannot make the perfect society of his own strength and abilities. But do not these failures also reveal that there is something in human nature that causes us to long for utopia?

[4:36] There's something within the very heart of man that desires this new world where everything is as it should be. And not as we often find it.

It's only right that we should long for a new world. A utopia. After all, we've come from Eden. Where everything was perfect.

And we want to return there. We were made for this. To live with God and others. In a perfect place. Mankind expresses this inner longing for utopia in politics, in religion, in literature, the arts, in music. It's twisted by the fall, but it's still there. And you can see it. Our fairy tales often end with the phrase, And they lived happily ever after.

And it strikes a chord in the heart of every boy and girl, mom and dad, grandpa and grandma, as they read that. We want to live happily ever after.

[5:40] The New Age movement yearns for this. In 1967, the musical hair opened with the song, The Age of Aquarius. When peace will guide the planets and love will steer the stars.

Harmony and understanding, sympathy and trust abounding. No more falsehoods or derisions. And to the New Agers, we say, we too are looking for such a new age.

A new world of peace and love and harmony. But it's not the age of Aquarius. It's the age of King Jesus. And it's not man or planetary alignment that will bring it to pass, but the glorious return of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Even Disney singing about a whole new world, aren't they, kids? So different from this world.

Unbelievable sights. Indescribable feelings where every turn's a surprise.

With new horizons to pursue and every moment gets better. A thrilling chase. A wonderful place for you and me. And we say, yes, yes, all this and more. But it does not come by being close to Jasmine.

[6:57] But by being with the Lord Jesus forever in his new heavens and new earth. All these cultural expressions show that the idea of a whole new world strikes a deep chord within our nature.

And in his book, Mere Christianity, C.S. Lewis writes this. If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world.

If none of my earthly pleasures satisfy it, that does not prove the universe is a fraud. Probably earthly pleasures were never meant to satisfy it, but only to arouse it, to suggest the real thing.

I must make it the main object of life to press on to that other country and to help others do the same. End quote. Well, here is the other country, Isaiah is telling us.

Here's this whole new world for which we were made. Man has gone in search for it in all the wrong places, trying to create his perfect world without God.

[8:15] And Isaiah tells us where it's to be found. It is the work of God the creator for his people. So the first point in our message this morning is God's new creation, a new environment and state of existence for God's people.

Notice how it starts in verse 17. Behold. It's the scripture's way of saying, stop and consider.

Look at this. Here is a wonder worth looking at closely. Behold. Behold. And it's behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth.

Children, that should remind you of another verse in the Bible. Genesis 1.1. Let's all say it together. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

So in the beginning, God created heavens and earth. But in the end, that same God will say, says, I will create new heavens and a new earth.

[9:26] Nothing less than the creative power of God is needed to bring in this new world. Now, what is this new heavens and new earth? What is it? When is it?

How is it? There are only four places in scripture that use that language. New heavens and new earth. Two in the Old Testament. Two in the New Testament.

Both of the Old Testament passages are found here in Isaiah. Chapter 65, verse 17. The other ones in chapter 66, verse 22. And notice what it tells us.

As the new heavens and the new earth that I make will endure before me, declares the Lord. So will your name and descendants endure. What does this tell us about the new heavens and the new earth?

Just this, that they are enduring. They are enduring. They're not here for a time. They're not passing. It's not a temporary situation.

[10:25] It's not a mere thousand year period. No, this is a condition that will remain, that will endure forever. It is the eternal state. Now, those are the two Old Testament passages.

Now we turn to the New Testament. Two other passages. Turn to 2 Peter chapter 3. And some Christians get nervous about turning to the New Testament in order to interpret Old Testament passages.

But I trust that's not your problem. I trust that you understand that one key principle about interpreting the Scriptures is that Scripture is the best interpreter of Scriptures. Sometimes when we have questions, what does this mean? We'll go to a commentary in our library and we'll pull down Calvin or Spurgeon or Hodge or some other man who's trying to help explain what it is.

What if we could pull down a commentary that's inspired by God? Well, that's what the New Testament is. It's God's own word. The same Holy Spirit that inspired Isaiah to use the phrase, the new heavens and the new earth, has inspired New Testament writers to speak of that same new heavens and new earth.

[11 : 43] And what we find is that Scriptures become clearer the further you go in your Bible. There's a little couplet that's helpful for remembering this, and it's this.

That the new is in the old contained. The old is in the new explained. All right, we have our Bible in two parts.

Part one, the Old Testament. Part two, the New Testament. The new is in the old contained. What you find in the New Testament was in the Old Testament in seed form, in prophetic form, in types and shadows.

And what you find in the Old Testament is in the new explained. And that's the way it is here with the new heavens and the new earth. And so we turn to the New Testament to find God's inspired commentary on the new heavens and the new earth.

First of all, 2 Peter 3. And we're going to get to verse 13. But we see in verse 3 that it's talking about the last days when scoffers will say, Where is this coming that he promised?

[12 : 53] Jesus said he's coming back. Where is this? We haven't seen it. The world just keeps going on as it ever did. And so we're talking about Jesus' return. In verse 10 he says, But the day of the Lord will come like a thief.

The heavens. Notice what's said about heavens and earth. The heavens will disappear with a roar. The elements will be destroyed by fire. And the earth and everything in it will be laid bare.

Verse 11. Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives. As you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming, that day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire.

And the elements will melt in the heat. Now here it is. But in keeping with his promise. What promise? Isaiah 65, 17. In keeping with his promise, we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth.

The home of righteousness. So what does this New Testament passage, with all of its new light, shine upon the meaning of the new heavens and the new earth? When will it happen?

[14 : 02] Well, it happens after Jesus comes in judgment. Destroying the present heavens and earth. Indeed, verse 7 says, The present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.

Who will it be for? Well, we're told it's a place where only the righteous dwell. It is the home of righteousness, this new heavens and earth. And it should motivate us to make every effort now to make peace with God and to live holy and godly lives.

There's one other passage in the New Testament. It's Revelation 21. If you want to turn over to that passage, the Apostle John is actually given in vision the ability to see this new heaven.

It hasn't happened yet, but by way of vision, by revelation from God, he sees it happening. And verse chapter 20 ends with the final judgment.

And then verse 1 of chapter 21. Then, then, then, after the final judgment, then I saw a new heaven and a new earth.

[15 : 15] For the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride, beautifully dressed for her husband.

And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.

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.

He who was seated on the throne said, I am making everything new. All right, what do we learn about the new heavens and new earth from this passage?

When will it be? It's after the final judgment, after the destruction of the first heaven and the first earth. Who is it for? Well, it's the place where the perfected people of God are, the bride of Christ. [16:18] They will live with their God forever. They're referred to here as the holy city, the new Jerusalem. Verse 9 explains clearly, This is the bride, the wife of the Lamb.

These are the blood-bought believers in Jesus, Jews and Gentiles in Jesus' church. And notice it will be the end of all tears forever, because there will be no more death, no more mourning, crying, or pain.

In fact, it will be the end of the whole old order of things, things as they used to be, things as they are now, and it will be the beginning of a whole new world where God makes everything new.

I'm sure you've heard that sometimes 9-11-01 is claimed to be, quote, the end of the world as we've known it.

Have you heard that language? The end of the world as we've known it. Now, without diminishing the changes that 9-11 brought upon each one of us, I still would say it's a stretch of the language to use that of 9-11, but a day is coming when those words will be filled up to the full.

[17:34] At Christ's return, it will truly be the end of the world as we have known it, for the entire old order of things will have passed away, and he will make everything new.

Nothing the same. Everything different. New. Improved. Better. Better by far. This is the eternal joy that God is preparing for his people.

So we've come to the New Testament because I intend to let them shed their light upon this phrase as we come to Isaiah's holding forth to us God's new creation.

We're meant to interpret the Old Testament not as if we didn't have the new. That's to refuse the light that God gives, but rather to take all that God has given us about this subject God's new creation then is a new environment and state of existence for God's people.

Notice he says in the last part of verse 18, For I will create Jerusalem to be a delight. Its people to be a joy. Jerusalem is the people, just as Bremen is the people of Bremen.

[18:56] It's the name. Jerusalem is the name for God's people. Indeed, the next verse 19, he calls them my people. Verse 22, he calls them my chosen ones. Verse 23, he calls them a people blessed by the Lord.

And as we've just seen in Revelation 21, the New Testament reveals this Jerusalem, this new Jerusalem, to be the bride of Christ, believers of all ages in Jesus Christ.

So God's not just out to save his people from their sin and the curse. He's also out to save their environment from sin and the curse.

This world is presently suffering under the curse because of man's sin. Cursed is the ground because of you, God said. Romans 8 tells us it's not just the ground that's cursed, but the whole creation was subjected to frustration and to decay and death and violence because of man's sin. The whole realm of nature is out of joint. But when God completes the salvation of his people at the end, the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the same glorious freedom of the children of God.

[20:14] He will make a new heavens and a new earth, purged of the curse, the eternal home of God's righteous people. That's the new creation. The second point I want us to see from this passage is it's all-consuming atmosphere of joy.

Of joy. Six times in verses 18 and 19 we read of joy, gladness, rejoicing, delight. First of all, it's a joy in what God will create.

You see that in verse 18? But be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create. For I will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy. So Jerusalem, God's people, are at the focal point of this new creation.

I will make a new heavens and a new earth and I will make Jerusalem to be a joy and delight. It's the same thing we find in Revelation 21 in the vision. John no sooner sees a new heaven and a new earth than what does he see?

A new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God. The bride of Christ. His blood-bought people. Now, when Isaiah spoke these words, wrote them, preached them to his people, God's people in Jerusalem were anything but a joy and delight.

[21:38] As Isaiah was writing to them, they were a desert, a desolation, a pitiful mess. They were reaping the painful consequences of forsaking God, living life without God.

And we've been seeing that all the way through these final chapters, haven't we? The mess that they are in. But God's creative energy is going to change all of that and make a new Jerusalem out of them that will be a delight and a joy.

The church brought with Jesus' blood, made altogether new. And what joy it will be for us in that day to be made perfect.

We're talking about where everything's perfect, including us. That's the first thing we're seeing here. That this is a joy in what God will create. He will create his people perfect. The Bible says, when we see Christ, we will be made like him.

And what a joy when all of our spots and wrinkles and inward sinful thoughts and desires and outward actions and words that come short of perfection will be gone forever.

[22:43] Part of that former stuff. And he will make all things new, even his people. Shining with the glory of God in the perfect moral likeness of Christ.

It will thrill us. It will be joy for us. But notice, secondly, this joy is not only our joy. It's God's own joy in his people. Verse 19, God says, I will rejoice over Jerusalem and take delight in my people. Now think about that. Oh, the joy of seeing God rejoicing and delighting in us. Now every lover knows the reality of that.

A taste of that. Not only joy in the other person, but the joy and delight that comes from seeing them delighting in us.

And you see, that's the way it will be. We will be happy in God. And God will be happy in us. There's joy all around. That's the pervasive atmosphere of this new creation.

[23:50] And thirdly, and the best is found in that one word, forever. You see it in verse 18? Be glad and rejoice forever in what?

I will create. This joy is eternal joy. It's not a passing thing. It goes on and on forever. It's a joy that knows no interruption, no disturbance.

It's an unmixed, pure, everlasting joy. Indeed, Isaiah has already spoken of it in chapter 35 and verse 10. When he said that the ransomed of the Lord will return, they will enter Zion with singing. Everlasting joy will crown their heads. Sorrow and sadness will flee away. Or gladness and joy will overtake them and sorrow and sighing will flee away.

So it's a joy that lasts forever. It's a sorrow-smothering joy. It's a sigh-crushing joy. A gladness that will push out all sadness because all the former things will not be remembered because of the wonderfulness of the new order.

[24:59] Everything's new and improved. Are any of you pining that you don't have your old desk phones, rotary phones, that you got the cord now that you have your cell phone?

Any of you just thinking of those days? Oh, wouldn't it be nice to have the old? No. Those things are forgotten because of the new and improved. And that's how it will be with sadness and sorrow and sighing.

It'll be forgotten because of the new joy that will be ours in that day. The all-consuming atmosphere of the new heavens and earth. And that leads us to the next description.

It's just the flip side of the coin. Number three, it's complete absence of weeping. For we're told in verse 19, the last part, that the sound of weeping and crying will be heard in it no more.

Jerusalem was going to be full of tears. Read the book of Lamentations. It's a lament. It's tears. It's crying because of the situation in Jerusalem.

[26:08] But here's the prophecy that the sound of weeping and crying will be heard in it no more. And after living our lifetime here in this veil of tears, this sounds wonderfully inviting.

No more tears. Now that's the thing that caught the eye of John in Revelation 21.4. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. And the reason there's no more tears and weeping and crying is because every cause of sorrow is absent.

sorrow is an extinct emotion in this new world. You'll remember it like the dinosaurs.

A thing of the past. It's extinct. It's no more. Not in this world. A forgotten thing. The past troubles will be forgotten, verse 16 says, and we won't miss them a bit.

Now Isaiah is struck with the difficulty of any man who is given the task of describing the eternal state.

[27:16] How do you describe the eternal state to people in this world? To people living with what you and I are seeing. Because no eye has ever seen those things.

And no ear has ever heard those things. And no mind has ever conceived those new things. The way the new world is going to be. How do you explain it then? It's so otherworldly.

It's so different from this world. So Isaiah describes it by what is not there. He takes what is here and says that won't be there. He describes the new heaven and earth by the absence of all the negative things that we experience here.

He doesn't say all those negative. He selects certain negative things that his people were going through. They were experiencing. And he says this will never be. You see the language?

Never again. No longer. It will not be like this. The negative. And it was the same for John, the apostle, as he tried to describe it.

[28:24] The vision that he saw. It's the absence of the curse and all that the curse has brought into this world. He says in summarizing the whole thing in Revelation 22, 3, no longer will there be any curse.

You know about the curse? That won't be. Well, Isaiah points to the absence of four things. First of all, no more death.

We see that in verses 20 and 22. What causes more sorrow and tears than death? In this world.

And in verse 20, he says, never again will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days.

There are many families in this world who are familiar with that sorrow. We're pregnant. Nine months of anticipation.

The joy of the birth. Only to be followed days later with the sorrow of death. never again will that happen in that world.

[29:33] And never again will there be an old man who does not live out his years. Did you hear so and so die? How old was he? He was just 60. He didn't live out his years.

It was premature death. Never again will there be an old man who does not live out his years. He who dies at a hundred will be thought a mere youth. He who fails to reach a hundred will be considered accursed.

You know, if you live to be a hundred years old here, they might put you on the news. But if you live a hundred years there, at a hundred years there, I should say, they'll consider you a mere youth.

He's just a little five-year-old. He's green behind the ears. Now, we must not think, we must not think that this means that in the new heavens and new earth, people will grow to a very old age and then die.

Isaiah is simply trying to show how vastly different it will be then from what we experience now.

What do we experience now? We experience infants dying after just a couple days of life.

[30:43] We experience men dying before they've lived out their years. None of that will be found there. Now, he does the same thing with another figure of speech in verse 22.

At the end of verse 22, he says, for as the days of a tree, so will be the days of my people. Kids, do you know how long trees live? Guinness Book of World Records lists a bristlecone pine that was cut down in 1964 on Mount Wheeler in Nevada.

it was around 5,200 years old. And not by some carbon testing and all there's rings, aren't there, in trees that are cut down.

And you can count them. There's lots of trees that are thousands and thousands of years old all over our world. And the point of Isaiah in comparing man's life to a tree is not that in this new world. Men will live to be 5,000 years and then they will die just like the trees die. No. In Palestine, a tree was a symbol of permanence and durability in comparison to grass.

[32:04] grass. And when Isaiah in the Bible explains the duration of man's life, it chooses, here in this world, it chooses grass. Chapter 40 and verse 6, all men are like grass and all their glory is like a flower of the field.

The grass withers and the flowers die. And what Isaiah is saying, yes, man's life is like grass here. There, it's going to be like trees.

Durable, long-living trees. He doesn't talk about the end of it. He's just contrasting here and there. Now, how do we know that Isaiah is not leaving room for death in this new heavens and the new earth?

Well, because he told us already in verse 18 that the joy there is forever. It's eternal. The weeping and crying are no more. That's final.

And he can only say that if death is gone forever. Because that would end the joy, wouldn't it? And he's already told us in chapter 25 and verse 8 that he will swallow up death forever.

[33:12] The sovereign Lord will wipe away tears from all faces. Yes, this wiping away of tears when Jesus comes is forever. No more death. And that would not be the case if there was still death in this new world.

If after living together for 60 years death comes and causes such sorrow between two people in love, what would it be after having loved each other for 5,000 years?

Only to have death sever that tie. No, he's not talking about death at all. He's simply contrasting. None of the experience of death that you experience now will be there.

As Revelation 21, 4 said of the new heavens and new earth, there will be no more death. It's part of the old order of things that's passed away. We sometimes speak of people passing away, don't we? Well, death itself will pass away. Death itself will die and will never be a part of that world. Death not only separates us from loved ones, it also cuts short our enjoyment of life here, doesn't it?

[34:24] Do you ever wish that you had more time for anything? More time with the family? I'd like to read some of those books on my bookshelf if I just had more time.

I'd like to study this hobby a little more. I'd like to study the stars. Man, you could spend a lifetime just in that endeavor. But we don't have time, do we?

Our time here is so short, but not there. You see, that's what he's saying, not there. We have forever to enjoy God and his new creation.

No more death. Secondly, no more insecurity and laboring in vain. What is more frustrating than going to the expense and the labor and the years of building houses, planting vineyards, only after having expended your labor and years and money, now waiting for the harvest to have some enemy nation come in, sweeping in, and to drive you off of your land and to live in your house and to eat your produce.

And that is precisely what Isaiah's hearers were about to experience. It's part of the curse that God said would happen and clear back in Deuteronomy 28, 30, and 33.

[35:50] God told them, if you forsake me, this is what's going to happen. Enemy nations will come in and they will live in the houses you built and they will eat from the vineyards that you planted.

And these are some of the sights that will drive you mad when you see this happen. It was to be their real experience under the Babylonian captivity as they were carted off and others lived in their homes and ate their produce.

It marks the insecurity of things in this world. That's the way things are here. That's the frustration of laboring in vain as we heard this morning. And it's going on in our day and many nations of the world, especially in Africa.

You can read of Nigeria even now. Thousands of people are being driven off of their land. Others are occupying it and enjoying the fruit of their labor. Ten years ago or so or more, I remember reading of the white Afrikaners down in South Africa that farmed the land all their lives and their granddaddy farmed it.

And suddenly a group of hoodlums show up and they stake out the place. And then they just keep moving in. I mean really moving in.

[37:12] They come into your house. This is our place now. You have to leave. And if you don't want to leave, they would kill you or torture you.

That's what God said would happen to Jerusalem, to Israel, if they forsook him. And that's what they were to experience. But no more of this insecurity. No more of this laboring in vain in the new heavens and new earth.

Verse 22, no longer will they build houses and others live in them or plant and others eat. No, they'll live in their own houses and eat their own fruit. And my people will live in peaceful dwelling places, secure homes and undisturbed places of rest.

Chapter 32, 18. This is perfect security, you see. All enemies will be destroyed, even the enemy of death that is often the culprit.

You know, often it's death that cuts us off from the enjoyment of the fruit of our labors. So how many times do you hear of a man working hard all of his life in his calling?

[38:14] And he scrimps and he saves and he's laying up that nest egg to enjoy retirement. He finally retires and he dies. He leaves it for others who will do who knows what with it.

With the ministry that people have built, with the business that people have built, with the inheritance that people are leaving behind. It's death that interrupts the enjoyment of it.

No more of this. Laboring in vain there. No. For as the days of a tree, so will be the days of my people. Verse 22, my chosen ones will long enjoy the works of their hands. Long enjoy, like as in forever, enjoy. There will be joy in our work and we will enjoy the rewards of our work forever.

Verse 23, they will not toil in vain or bear children doomed to misfortune. Here was another aspect of the curse for Israel. If they forsook the Lord, Deuteronomy 28, 41, your children, you will see them taken away into captivity.

[39:27] Children doomed to misfortune. He's not telling us that in heaven we're going to have children, we're going to bear children. That's not it.

He's saying present world situation, you have grief and sorrow in your children. It will not be so there. It will not be so there.

pouring your life into your children only to have your heart broken by them. That's the present world. No longer there. There will no longer be this curse that part of the curse is to see your children carted off into disaster. No, because they will be a people blessed by the Lord.

You see this, everyone in the new heavens will be under blessing. No one will be under cursing. And so this will not ever happen again.

[40:30] The curse will be reversed as people live under the unmixed blessing of God. they and their descendants with them. That is all who are God's people.

Yes, you will see parents and their children and their grandchildren and their great grandchildren enjoying together the things that God has prepared for those who love him. No death, no insecurity, and no laboring in vain, and then thirdly, no more unanswered prayers and desires.

Now that was their present miserable condition, Isaiah told them in chapter 59, God's not answering your prayers and it's not because he can't hear you and it's not because he can't help you.

No, it's because your iniquities have separated you from God. Your iniquity, your sin has come between you and God so that he will not hear you. He will not answer you.

Your sins have hidden his face from you so that he will not hear. And so they're left. And that's the way Israel was. They were suffering the sinful consequences alone, pining under God's hidden face.

[41:43] Never again, because then, even before you call, I will answer. And while you are yet speaking, I will hear. Now there's God's loving concern for his people in that day, such that his provision for them, he anticipates their needs.

needs. So he sends their needs to them even before they can ask, how's that for security? How's that for knowing that my God will provide everything for me in that day?

And then lastly, there's no more violence or fears. For the wolf, verse 25, the wolf and the lamb will feed together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox.

Now that is different, isn't it, kids? When you go to the zoo, you don't find the wolves and the lambs in the same cage, or the lions, or the ox. Here the wolf is eating the lamb for dinner.

There they will eat together. And so with the ox, and so with the lion. But dust will be the serpent's food.

[42:58] They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountains, says the Lord. You see the negative again? He's negating all these things. There will be no harming or destroying.

In that day, on my holy mountain. The curse is gone even from the animal kingdom, as the whole world is subdued under our feet. Prophets sometimes refer to enemy nations as fierce animals.

And I do believe, you can read back in chapter 11, where he has much the same prophecy, and it does appear that he's applying these fierce animals to fierce nations, because many times in this world, God's people are like lambs, for the slaughter.

We're like lambs in the midst of wolves, and God's saying, never again, never again. All hurtful things will forever cease. All that threatens and causes us fear will be gone or changed forever, and we'll live in a perfect world of perfect peace and harmony and safety.

Utopia. on all my holy mountain, says the Lord. What the holy mountain is? That's the place where God and his people meet together.

[44:12] And that's what the new heavens and new earth will be. It will be a mountain that fills the earth, where God and his people are together. You see, God is the reason for his people's peace and security and joy and provision.

It's in his presence that there's fullness of joy, and it's at his right hand that there are pleasures forevermore. This is no visionary dream of utopia.

This is the coming reality, Isaiah says. This is the life you've always longed for but has always eluded you, and after being there two minutes, you will say, this is what I was made for.

Now that's what I'm talking about. That's what you'll say. This is it. And after you've been there two millennia, you'll still say that. You will never get tired of life in the new world.

Can I tell you that's why Christ came to earth and died? To purchase this for us? To win this for us? Yes, he bore our griefs and carried our sorrows that we might enjoy this.

[45 : 20] He took the curses our sins deserve. He gives us the blessings his obedience earned. So we owe it all to our Lord Jesus Christ.

I want to ask you, will you be there? Will you ever know the joy of this new world? You can. If you come to Christ repenting of your sins and believing on him, trusting in him to save you, this is your future.

The joy can begin today. 2 Corinthians 5.17 says, If any man be in Christ, he's what? He's a new creation. The old is past.

The new has come. Already this new life is starting. Where? In those where Christ lives. That's where the new creation starts.

And Isaiah is saying, this is where it's leading. This is where we find fullness. Come to Christ today. Get into Christ by faith and enjoy this future.

[46 : 25] And I want to have a word with you who are believers. This morning we've had our glorious hope set before us. This is what's coming for us. This is it.

And every day we're tempted to trade off this hope for something else. For what? For this broken down world under the curse.

to trade pleasures forevermore. For pleasures of sin for a season. To trade lasting treasures for passing trinkets.

To live for the joys of the weekend instead of the joys of the end as they're set before us here. Don't be cheated. This world is worth waiting for.

It were a well-spent journey those seven deaths lay between. The truth is we don't live well without this hope kept before us. That's why Isaiah is setting it before his people.

[47 : 24] It's why it's in our Bibles for us today. We only live right when we're rejoicing in hope of the coming glory of God. The joy of that day is to spill over into this day.

The rejoicing that Isaiah speaks of in verse 18 is to start now. Right now. Be glad and rejoice forever. Forever.

Start now and rejoice forever in what I will create. We're in danger when we forget what's coming. This has to stay front and center this afternoon and tomorrow morning and midway through the week.

We've got to keep in mind where we're headed believers. What's in front of us? We don't live right without that perspective. That's why Isaiah has got chapter 65 in the Bible for us.

That's why God put it here. If we let him he will teach us how to keep the new heavens and new earth front and center. How did Isaiah do it for his people? He took what was negative in this life as the backdrop upon which to point us to the new heavens and the new earth.

[48 : 41] Now will you do that this week? Will you take everything in your life that causes sadness and use it to remind you that new heaven and new earth where I'm headed because of Jesus won't have this.

So whatever brings you sorrow, pain, loss, insecurity, fear, worry, dread, agitation, frustration, disappointment, regret, now is to bring you to think of their absence in God's new creation.

In fact, you're not meant to go through that experience of whatever it is you're going through without your eyes on what's coming. That's what Paul does in 1 Thessalonians chapter 4.

Some people were sorry. They were grieving. Why? Because their beloved ones in Christ had died. What's he do? He says, let your grief lead you to your hope. Jesus is coming and together we will be with the Lord forever.

Therefore, comfort one another with these words. Let your grief lead to your hope. And not just your grief, let everything negative in this life lead you to your hope, lead you to the day when Jesus will return and bring in a whole new world.

[50 : 00] Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones wrote, and I close with this, my whole outlook upon everything that happens to me should be governed by three things. My realization of who I am, my consciousness of where I am going, and my knowledge of what awaits me when I get there.

Let's keep before us where we're going and what's waiting for us when we get there. Let's sing number 598 as our response where the hymn writer does much the same as what Isaiah does for us.

He speaks of the eternal state based on what is not there. There is no night, no grief, no sin, no death. These are all the former things that are passed away.

Let's stand as we sing 598. Let's pray. Father, thank you again for your word. Thank you for these words telling us things about the future that we would have no way of knowing had you not spoken them to us.

Thank you for the Holy Spirit to bring them to our hearts that we might know of a certainty that this is reality. And thank you for the Lord Jesus who came to die for us that we might enjoy this forever and who is here with us now by his Spirit and goes through every sorrow and every sadness with us.

[51 : 29] in all our distresses he too is distressed and one day in all of our joys he too will rejoice. And so we pray that as we go through trials and troubles that you help us to look at what you have prepared for us that we might find comfort now in the midst of this life and a joy now a peace now and a security now in Christ.

Thank you for such promises and that they are all yes and amen to us in Jesus Christ we pray in his name. Amen.