

The Glorious New Creation

Isa 65:17-25

SS Lesson for 06/23/2013

Devotional Scripture: 2 Peter 3:8-18

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Introduction

Overview and Approach to Lesson

The lesson examines the blessings of God's **Glorious New Creation**. The **study's aim** is to show how compliance with God's wishes and directions will lead to His approval now and His blessings later. The **study's application** is to adjust our thinking and lives to the principles revealed here so that we can have a life of joy in God and a future of blessings.

Key Verse: Isa 65:17-18

17 "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; And the former shall not be remembered or come to mind. 18 But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; For behold, I create Jerusalem as a rejoicing, And her people a joy.

Commentary from Barnes Notes

Isaiah 65:17

[*For behold*] The idea in this verse is, that there should be a state of glory as great as if a new heaven and a new earth were to be made.

[*I create new heavens*] Calamity and punishment in the Bible are often represented by the heavens growing dark, and being rolled up like as a scroll, or passing away (see Isa 13:10 Isa 34:4). On the contrary, prosperity, happiness, and the divine favor, are represented by the clearing up of a cloudy sky; by the restoration of the serene and pure light of the sun; or, as here, by the creation of new heavens (see Isa 51:16). The figure of great transformations in material things is one that is often employed in the Scriptures, and especially in Isaiah, to denote great spiritual changes (see Isa 11; 51:3; 35:1-2,7; 60:13,17). In the New Testament, the phrase used here is employed to denote the future state of the righteous; but whether on earth, after it shall have been purified by fire, or in heaven, has been a subject of great difference of opinion (see 2 Peter 3:13; Rev 21:1). The passage before us is highly poetical, and we are not required to understand it literally. There is, so far as the language is concerned, no more reason for understanding this literally than there is for so understanding the numerous declarations which affirm that the brute creation will undergo a change in their very nature, on the introduction of the gospel (Isa 11); and all that the language necessarily implies is, that there would be changes in the condition of the people of God as great as if the heavens, overcast with clouds and subject to storms, should be recreated, so as to become always mild and serene; or as if the earth, so barren in many places, should become universally fertile and beautiful. The immediate reference here is, doubtless, to the land of Palestine, and to the important changes which would be produced there on the return of the exiles; but it cannot be doubted that, under this imagery, there was couched a reference to far more important changes and blessings in future times under the Messiah—changes as great as if a barren and sterile world should become universally beautiful and fertile.

[*For the former shall not be remembered*] That is, that which shall be created shall be so superior in beauty as entirely to eclipse the former. The sense is, that the future condition of the people of God would be as superior to what it was in ancient times as would be a newly created earth and heaven superior in beauty to this—where the heavens are so often obscured by clouds, and where the earth is so extensively desolate or barren.

[*Nor come into mind*] Margin, as Hebrew, 'Upon the heart.' That is, it shall not be thought of; it shall be wholly forgotten.

Isaiah 65:18

[*Forever*] It is not to be momentary happiness-like a bright morning that is soon overcast with clouds. The joy of God's people is to endure forever, and they shall have ceaseless cause of praise and thanksgiving.

[*I create Jerusalem a rejoicing*] A source of rejoicing; or a place of rejoicing.

[*And her people a joy*] That is, in themselves joyful, and a source of joy to all others. The idea is, that the church would be a place of the highest happiness, and that they who were redeemed would have occasion of perpetual joy. The Savior did not come to minister gloom, nor is the true effect of religion to make his people melancholy. Religion produces seriousness; but seriousness is not inconsistent with permanent happiness. Religion produces deep thought and soberness of deportment and conversation; but this is not inconsistent with a heart at ease, or with a good conscience, or with permanent joy. Religion fills the mind with hope of ETERNAL LIFE; and the highest happiness which the soul can know must be in connection with the prospect of unchanging blessedness beyond the grave.

Commentary from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

Along with the coming of the new, Isaiah notes the disappearance of the old. This too is in keeping with John's description of "a new heaven and a new earth," where "the old order of things has passed away" (Revelation 21:4). Followers of Jesus receive a foretaste of this experience in the present life since "if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!" (2 Corinthians 5:17). The conclusion to Isaiah's book includes significantly more hope than his introduction. The first five chapters (prior to Isaiah's call in chapter 6) are characterized primarily by messages of judgment that indict God's people for their rebellion against him. Now, because of the servant's fulfillment of his duties, the bad news has been eclipsed; hope takes center stage. In the remaining verses in our printed text, Isaiah concentrates specifically on Jerusalem. This is the city that suffers such misery as a result of being punished "double for all her sins" (Isaiah 40:2). The Jerusalem that is part of the new heavens and new earth will be a place of immeasurable delight and joy. What a contrast with the sadness and despair of living in captivity in Babylon! Those sad days (or for that matter, any sad days) will become a distant memory (compare Isaiah 25:7, 8). John echoes this "no more tears" language in his description of the marvelous future that awaits the faithful servants of Jesus (Revelation 7:17; 21:4). The sense of joy that this New Jerusalem creates is not only for its inhabitants, but also for God himself. The New Jerusalem will be the climax of God's great redemptive plan, when his bride is fully ready to meet him, "beautifully dressed for her husband" (Revelation 21:2). The prophet Zephaniah uses the image of God singing to portray his personal pleasure with this Jerusalem (Zephaniah 3:17).

Commentary from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary

Our text states that God is going to create something new, not repair something old or redo something that is worn out. This creating will be an act of making something out of nothing, as God did in Genesis when He brought the world into existence. Only God can make something out of nothing! While man continually works at destruction, God continually reaches out to man to create in him a new nature, one that is holy and righteous. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature" (2 Cor. 5:17). God tells us that He will create "new heavens and a new earth." Once more God will speak, and creation will bow and obey at His command. While we may look heavenward and marvel at the wonders of space, God said that all of this is nothing and that one day it will be done away with—not a trace will remain. The heavens are what man has always seen as the most challenging of all mysteries, and nothing can compare to their greatness; but God said that even this He will destroy and that it "shall not be remembered." The pain of an unpleasant experience often lingers as we relive it long after the fact. An act of unkindness torments us and is hard to forgive. In the new creation, all the unpleasant experiences will be gone forever! Most of all, God tells us He will wipe away our past. "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more" (Heb. 8:12). Sin, being the disruption of peace with God, cannot exist in His presence; it must be destroyed forever. It was sin that drove Adam and Eve from the presence of God, and they could no longer enjoy the fellowship that they

had when there was nothing between them and God. Almost everyone enjoys something new; stores continually advertise their new line of merchandise to attract customers. Cars lose their attractiveness after a couple of years, and we just have to have a new one. No one wants to wear yesterday's clothes; the latest fashions are a must. God is not going to build on an outdated foundation, but He will build something new, something never having been marked by sin. God's Word tells us that in this new creation, we will be "glad and rejoice forever." Frowns will be replaced with smiles and fear with boldness; here God will be our Friend for ever, and our love for Him will never end. "We, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Pet. 3:13). There is no way this new creation can be described in language that we humans can understand. How can one describe the beauty of a sunrise to someone who was born blind? Impossible! "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him" (I Cor. 2:9). Our time in this world is limited, and our plans often fall short. However, God has promised that in His new creation there will be no limits, no end. We will enjoy His presence forever. This will be an occasion for celebration!

Approach to the Major Outlines in Lesson

The outline of the lesson was adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary and from the points revealed by the study of the Scriptural text.

Verse	Phrase	Commentary
18	But be glad and rejoice forever	Glorious Joy
22	And My chosen ones will wear out the work of their hands	Glorious Provisions
24	It will also come to pass that before they call, I will answer; and while they are still speaking, I will hear	Glorious Answered Prayers

Lesson Introduction and Background

From the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

Many have called attention to how the book of Isaiah resembles a Bible in miniature. Part of this observation is due to the number of chapters in Isaiah and their division. The first 39 chapters make up the first major division of the book, and the final 27 chapters constitute the second. This corresponds nicely to the arrangement of our Bibles into the 39 books of the Old Testament and the 27 books of the New. The topics covered in these two divisions are noteworthy as well. Isaiah's message begins with an appeal to the heavens and the earth (Isaiah 1:2), just as Genesis begins with the creation of the heaven and the earth (Genesis 1:1). Isaiah 40, which begins the second portion of Isaiah, includes within the opening verses a reference to "A voice of one calling: 'In the wilderness prepare the way for the Lord'" (Isaiah 40:3). This prophecy is fulfilled in the proclamation of John the Baptist, whose ministry preceded that of Jesus (Mark 1:1-3). Within the chapters following Isaiah 40 come some of the most powerful and vivid prophecies about Jesus found in the entire Old Testament. They are often labeled "servant passages" or "servant songs" because they refer to a special servant of the Lord and his ministry on the Lord's behalf. Although there is some variation, these are generally recognized to be the texts of Isaiah 42:1-9; 49:1-6; 50:4-9; 52:13-53:12; 61:1-4. The conclusion of the book of Isaiah brings us to today's lesson text, Isaiah 65:17-25. This text, with its prediction of "new heavens and a new earth" (a promise restated near the end of the book in 66:22) brings to mind the conclusion of the New Testament, where the apostle John records his vision of "a new heaven and a new earth" (Revelation 21:1). While it may be considered a happy coincidence that the numbering, etc., of Isaiah works out in such a fascinating manner, there is nothing coincidental about the links between Isaiah's words and John's in Revelation. Isaiah was one of those who "though human, spoke from God as they were carried along

by the Holy Spirit” (2 Peter 1:21) to write those prophecies whose fulfillment support the uniqueness of the Scriptures as “God-breathed” (2 Timothy 3:16). As noted above, Isaiah 40–66 includes some of the most significant prophecies of Jesus and the impact of his life and ministry. The section begins with a word of “comfort” to God’s people and assures Jerusalem “that her hard service has been completed, that her sin has been paid for” (Isaiah 40:1, 2). This appears to describe how the captivity of the people in Babylon, predicted in Isaiah 39, is coming to an end. However, there was another captivity affecting God’s people that was far more serious and oppressive: the captivity of sin. The bondage to sin—the failure of God’s chosen people to serve and obey him alone faithfully as their God—was the primary cause for the heartbreak of the exile experienced by both the northern kingdom of Israel (to Assyria in 722 BC) and the southern kingdom of Judah (to Babylon in 586 BC). This had to be addressed, and “the servant songs,” cited above, do so. Today’s text pictures the glorious future worship of those delivered from the chains of spiritual bondage by this servant.

From the Barnes Notes

It is generally supposed that this chapter is closely connected in sense with the preceding; and that its object is, to defend the proceedings of God in regard to the Jews, and especially with reference to the complaint in the preceding chapter. If so, it is designed to state the reasons why he had thus afflicted them, and to encourage the pious among them with the expectation of great future prosperity and safety. A general view of the chapter may be obtained by a glance at the following analysis of the subjects introduced in it.

I. God states in general that he had called another people who had not sought him, and extended the blessings of salvation to those who had been strangers to his name ([Isa 65:1](#)). This is evidently intended to show that many of his ancient people would be rejected, and that the blessings of salvation would be extended to others ([Rom 10:20](#)). In the previous chapter they had pled ([Isa 64:9](#)), that they were 'all' his people; they had urged, because their nation had been in covenant with God, that he should interpose and save them. Here an important principle is introduced, that they were not to be saved of course because they were Jews; and that others would be introduced to his favor who belonged to nations which had not known him, while his ancient covenant people would be rejected. The Jews were slow to believe this; and hence, Paul says ([Rom 10:20](#)) that Isaiah was 'very bold' in advancing so unpopular a sentiment.

II. God states the true reason why he had punished them ([Isa 65:2-7](#)). It was on account of their sins. It was not because he was changeable, or was unjust in his dealings with them. He had punished them, and he had resolved to reject a large portion of them, though they belonged to his ancient covenant people, on account of their numerous and deeply aggravated crimes. He specifies particularly:

1. That they had been a rebellious people, and that he had stretched out his hands to them in vain, inviting them to return.
2. That they were a people which had constantly provoked him by their idolatries; their abominable sacrifices; and by eating the things which he had forbidden.
3. That they were eminently proud and self-righteous, saying to others, Stand by yourselves, for we are holier than you.
4. That for these sins God could not but punish them. His law required it, and his justice demanded that he should not pass such offences by unnoticed.

III. Yet he said that the whole nation should not be destroyed. His elect would be saved; in accordance with the uniform doctrine of the Scriptures, that all the seed of Abraham should not be cut off, but that a remnant should be kept to accomplish important purposes in reference to the salvation of the world ([Isa 65:8-10](#)).

IV. Yet the wicked portion of the nation should be cut off, and God, by the prophet, describes the certain punishment which awaited them ([Isa 65:11-16](#)).

1. They would be doomed to slaughter.
2. They would be subjected to hunger and want, while his true servants would have abundance.
3. They would cry in deep sorrow, while his servants would rejoice.
4. Their destruction would be a blessing to his people, and the result of their punishment would be to cause his own people to see more fully the value of their religion, and to prize it more.

V. Yet there would be future glory and prosperity, such as his true people had desired, and such as they had sought in their prayers; and the chapter concludes with a glowing description of the glory which would bless his church and people (Isa 65:17-25).

- 1) God would create new heavens and a new earth-far surpassing the former in beauty and glory (Isa 65:17).
- 2) Jerusalem would be made an occasion of rejoicing (Isa 65:18).
- 3) Its prosperity is described as a state of peace, security, and happiness (Isa 65:19-25).
 - 1) Great age would be attained by its inhabitants, and Jerusalem would be full of venerable and pious old men.
 - 2) They would enjoy the fruit of their own labor without annoyance.
 - 3) Their prayers would be speedily answered-even while they were speaking.
 - 4) The true religion would produce a change on the passions of people as if the nature of wild and ferocious animals were changed, and the wolf and the lamb should feed together, and the lion should eat straw like the ox. There would be universal security and peace throughout the whole world where the true religion would be spread.

There can be no doubt, I think, that this refers to the times of the Messiah. Particular proof of this will be furnished in the exposition of the chapter. It is to be regarded, indeed, as well as the previous chapter, as primarily addressed to the exiles in Babylon, but the mind of the prophet is thrown forward. He looks at future events. He sees a large part of the nation permanently rejected. He sees the Gentiles called to partake of the privileges of the true religion. He sees still a remnant of the ancient Jewish people preserved in all their sufferings, and future glory rise upon them under the Messiah, when a new heavens and a new earth should be created. It is adapted, therefore, not only to comfort the ancient afflicted people of God, but it contains most important and cheering truth in regard to the final prevalence of the true religion, and the state of the world when the gospel shall everywhere prevail.

Major Theme Analysis

Glorious Joy (Isa 65:17-19)

17 "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; And the former things will not be remembered or come to mind.

18 "But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; For behold, I create Jerusalem for rejoicing And her people for gladness.

19 "I will also rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in My people; And there will no longer be heard in her The voice of weeping and the sound of crying.

Joy because the former things have passed away (17)

Joy through the refreshing of God (Acts 3:19)

19 Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord,

Joy through liberation (Rom 8:19-21)

19 The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. 20 For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.

Joy through reconciliation (2 Cor 5:17-20)

17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! 18 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: 19 that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. 20 We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.

Joy through knowing that there is eternal life (1 John 2:17)

17 The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever.

Joy through hope in the new heaven and earth (Rev 21:1)

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.

New Heaven and Earth applies to the Millennial kingdom (from The Wycliffe Bible Commentary)

The designation new heavens and a new earth is applied to the Millennial kingdom only as a stage preliminary to the eternal glories of heaven (the New Jerusalem of Rev 21; 22) - just as Pentecost was to be regarded (Acts 2:17) as ushering in the 'last days,' although it occurred at least nineteen centuries before the Second Advent. This prediction requires the conditions of an earthly city, where babies are born and older people die (even though the average lifespan is to be much prolonged). This final scene is that of a warless, capitalistic (v. 22) society, in which even predatory animals have become tame and inoffensive (as in Isa 11:7-9)

Joy because of being created by God (18)

All creation is joyful because of God (Ps 96:10-13)

10 Say among the nations, "The LORD reigns." The world is firmly established, it cannot be moved; he will judge the peoples with equity. 11 Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad; let the sea resound, and all that is in it; 12 let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them. Then all the trees of the forest will sing for joy; 13 they will sing before the LORD, for he comes, he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples in his truth.

Joy in knowing that being a new creation of God is the only thing that matters (Gal 6:15)

15 Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; what counts is a new creation.

Joy because Jesus is the firstborn over all creation (Col 1:15)

15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.

Joy because nothing in creation is hidden from God (Heb 4:13)

13 Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

Joy because Jesus is the ruler of all creation (Rev 3:14)

14 "To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: These are the words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God's creation.

God alone will create the New Heaven and New Earth (from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)

Note that the new heavens and earth are pictured as something that God will create. This highlights the fact that this activity is the work of God and God alone. The verb "create" (in the

active voice) is used only with God as its subject. No human being can or will ever create in the sense that God creates. So, whether one speaks of the Jerusalem located in the land of Israel in the sixth century B.C. or the new Jerusalem that is to come down from God out of heaven (Revelation 21:2), each is the exclusive work of God. It is He who guided history in arranging for the return of the exiled Judeans, and it is He who is guiding history to its ultimate goal of establishing the new heavens and earth

Joy because of the lack of crying (19)

No crying because God removes the disgrace (Isa 25:8)

8 he will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove the disgrace of his people from all the earth. The LORD has spoken.

No crying because God wipes away tears (Rev 21:3-4)

3 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. 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."

No crying because God gives relief from troubles (2 Th 1:6-7)

6 God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you 7 and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels.

No crying because through godly sorrow comes repentance and salvation (2 Cor 7:8-11)

8 Even if I caused you sorrow by my letter, I do not regret it. Though I did regret it-I see that my letter hurt you, but only for a little while- 9 yet now I am happy, not because you were made sorry, but because your sorrow led you to repentance. For you became sorrowful as God intended and so were not harmed in any way by us. 10 Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death. 11 See what this godly sorrow has produced in you: what earnestness, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what concern, what readiness to see justice done. At every point you have proved yourselves to be innocent in this matter.

No crying because God removes burdens (Zeph 3:18)

18 "The sorrows for the appointed feasts I will remove from you; they are a burden and a reproach to you.

Glorious Provisions (Isa 65:20-23)

20 "No longer will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, Or an old man who does not live out his days; For the youth will die at the age of one hundred And the one who does not reach the age of one hundred will be thought accursed.

21 "They will build houses and inhabit them; They will also plant vineyards and eat their fruit.

22 "They will not build and another inhabit, They will not plant and another eat; For as the lifetime of a tree, so will be the days of My people, And My chosen ones will wear out the work of their hands.

23 "They will not labor in vain, Or bear children for calamity; For they are the offspring of those blessed by the LORD, And their descendants with them.

Provision of longevity (20)

Longevity through obedience (Deut 4:40)

40 Keep his decrees and commands, which I am giving you today, so that it may go well with you and your children after you and that you may live long in the land the LORD your God gives you for all time.

Longevity through a controlled tongue (Ps 34:12-14)

12 Whoever of you loves life and desires to see many good days, 13 keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking lies. 14 Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it.

Long life is a blessing (from Barnes' Notes)

In this verse the image is, that the inhabitants would reach a great age, and that the comparatively happy times of the patriarchs would be restored. The idea is not that there should be no infant in those future times—which would be an idea so absurd that a prophet would not use it even in poetic fiction—but that there will not be an infant who shall not fill up his days, or who will be short-lived. It is to enjoy the blessings of great longevity, and that not a longevity that shall be broken and feeble, but which shall be vigorous and happy. The promise of long life is regarded in the Bible as a blessing, and is an image, everywhere, of prosperity and happiness

Longevity represents victory over death (from Keil & Delitzsch Commentary on the Old Testament)

It depicts an old man who has not filled his days, i.e., has not attained to what is regarded as a rule as the full measure of human life. He who dies as a youth, or is regarded as having died young, will not die before the hundredth year of his life; and the sinner upon whom the curse of God falls, and who is overwhelmed by the punishment, will not be swept away before the hundredth year of his life. We cannot maintain with Hofmann (Schriftbeweis, ii. 2, 567), that it is only in appearance that less is here affirmed than in Isa 25:8. The reference there is to the ultimate destruction of the power of death; here it is merely to the limitation of its power

Provision of fruitfulness (21-22)

Fruitfulness through the fearing God and walking in God's ways (Ps 128:1-2)

128 Blessed are all who fear the Lord, who walk in his ways. 2 You will eat the fruit of your labor; blessings and prosperity will be yours.

Fruitfulness according to one's labor (1 Cor 3:8)

8 The man who plants and the man who waters have one purpose, and each will be rewarded according to his own labor.

Fruitfulness through giving all of one's strength to the work of God (1 Cor 15:58)

58 Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

Fruitfulness through work produced in love and faith (1 Thess 1:3)

3 We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Fruitfulness through God's establishment of the work of man's hands (Ps 90:17)

17 May the favor of the Lord our God rest upon us; establish the work of our hands for us — yes, establish the work of our hands.

Fruitfulness through abiding in Jesus (John 15:5)

5 "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

Provision of safety (23)

Safety because Jesus prayed for it (John 17:11)

11 I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name-the name you gave me-so that they may be one as we are one.

Safety through God's faithfulness (2 Thess 3:3)

3 But the Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen and protect you from the evil one.

Safety through God's protection of us (Ps 27:5)

5 For in the day of trouble he will keep me safe in his dwelling; he will hide me in the shelter of his tabernacle and set me high upon a rock.

Safety through God's Name (Prov 18:10)

10 The name of the LORD is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe.

Safety through being made blameless by Jesus (Prov 28:18)

18 He whose walk is blameless is kept safe, but he whose ways are perverse will suddenly fall.

Safety through living in godly wisdom (Prov 28:26)

26 He who trusts in himself is a fool, but he who walks in wisdom is kept safe.

Safety through trust in God (Prov 29:25)

25 Fear of man will prove to be a snare, but whoever trusts in the LORD is kept safe.

Glorious Answered Prayers (Isa 65:24-25)

24 "It will also come to pass that before they call, I will answer; and while they are still speaking, I will hear.

25 "The wolf and the lamb will graze together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox; and dust will be the serpent's food. They will do no evil or harm in all My holy mountain," says the LORD.

Answered prayer because God knows what is needed (24)

God knows our needs before we ask (Matt 6:7-8)

7 And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. 8 Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

God knows our needs so we must just pray without doubting (Mark 11:22-24)

22 "Have faith in God," Jesus answered. 23 "I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him. 24 Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.

God knows our needs so we can approach him with confidence (1 John 5:14-15)

14 This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. 15 And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.

God knows our needs so we don't need to seek them, but we do need to seek God's kingdom (Matt 6:33)

33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Answered prayer through peace (25)

Peace that comes through faith (Rom 5:1-2)

5:1 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.

Peace that comes through a mind controlled by the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:6)

6 The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace;

Peace that comes through the kingdom of God (Rom 14:17)

17 For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit,

Peace that comes from the God of peace (1 Cor 14:33)

33 For God is not a God of disorder but of peace.

Peace that comes through Jesus, who is our peace (Eph 2:14)

14 For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility,

The Wolf and the Lamb: peaceful co-existence (from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)

In children's stories, the wolf often represents danger. In the tale of "Little Red Riding Hood" it is the wolf who poses a threat to Red Riding Hood when she goes to visit Grandma. In "The Three Little Pigs" it is the wolf who wants to huff and puff and blow the pigs' houses down. The proverbial expression for hunger or poverty (dating back at least to the sixteenth century) is that "the wolf is at the door." The wolf is almost always a symbol of danger. In contrast, the lamb often symbolizes innocence. Long before these children's tales were written, the prophet Isaiah employed similar symbolism in his striking description of the peaceful conditions to be found in God's holy mountain. Not only did he use this language in today's text, but he also included it in a previous description of life in the messianic era (Isaiah 11:1–9). For such natural enemies as the wolf and the lamb to lie down together, two changes must occur: the wolf must no longer attack, and the lamb must no longer be afraid. It is a beautifully poetic word picture of peace—the peace that God provides for His people. The Bible has much to say about this peace. It tells us that we can be kept in God's perfect peace when our minds are fixed on Him (Isaiah 26:3). Writing from his confinement in Rome, Paul described this peace as one "which passeth all understanding" (Philippians 4:7, KJV). Jesus said that His peace is unlike that which the world offers (John 14:27). Such "peace on earth" is a foretaste of the perfect, eternal peace we shall enjoy in Heaven

Conclusion and Other Thoughts

Concluding Thoughts From The NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

When the Boston Red Sox won the World Series over the St. Louis Cardinals in 2004, their triumph signaled the end of one of the longest dry spells in the history of sports. The Red Sox had not won a World Series since 1918, when a young pitcher by the name of Babe Ruth was one of their star players. Following that season, the Red Sox traded Ruth to the New York Yankees, which (in the opinion of many) began the legendary “curse” that doomed the Red Sox to constant frustration. On several occasions after 1918, the Red Sox came close to winning a championship; but all their loyal fans could do was “wait till next year.” Finally in 2004, the “curse” was lifted, and Red Sox fans everywhere rejoiced. Reverse the Curse! may be considered the theme of the Bible following the sin of Adam and Eve in Genesis 3. At that point, the curse of sin shattered the harmony of God’s “very good” creation (Genesis 1:31). The world became a place of pain and sorrow, not at all what God created it to be. From Genesis 3 on, we see God working to get back what is rightfully his. He was (and is) out to “reverse the curse.” This is exactly what he accomplishes through Jesus. “The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil’s work” (1 John 3:8). That destruction began at the cross and empty tomb. It awaits the consummation—the “grand finale”—when Jesus returns. The curse will be lifted fully on that great day, completely reversed for eternity. As one reads Revelation and sees Isaiah’s precious promises coming to pass, the only appropriate response is humble and grateful worship. John’s closing words in Revelation will do nicely: “Amen. Come, Lord Jesus” (Revelation 22:20).

Concluding Thoughts from by Allen Ross "The LORD's Answer: Mercy for Israel"

At the consummation of the ages the LORD will create a new heaven and a new earth and a new Jerusalem. It will be characterized by security, prosperity, safety, and close communion with the LORD. The glorious state described in this chapter is picked up by John in the Book of Revelation in his description of the world to come. In that place John portrays it after the Messianic Age and so it must issue into the eternal state, unless the events in Revelation are not to be taken so strictly chronologically. It will have as its central focus the Messiah, Immanuel; and the righteous will have free access to Him. This glorious new creation will, as Paul says, begin the reign of Christ on earth, that will eventually be delivered up to the Father (1 Cor. 15) and become what we call the eternal state. But Revelation says that the saints will reign with Christ in earth; but have access to Him in the heavenly sanctuary. It will all be far more wonderful, and complex, than we can even imagine. All the expressions in these verses are very clear. The prophet in describing the restoration of human society to right conditions tells of a transformation of the physical universe, just as formerly the perfect creation was destroyed and changed by sin. The words are used of the Christian hope in 2 Peter 3:13, and Rev. 21:1. Weeping and mourning will be removed (verse 19). And one of the causes of sorrow, death, or at least untimely death, will be removed so that there will be longevity once again (verse 20). These descriptions have been taken in a couple of ways by commentaries. Some wish to take the expressions literally and see reference to a new period on this earth when all the transformations in it will be established; for in the eternal state there will be no death and no sinners at all. People who will be on earth will live, marry, have children, build, and be in harmony with nature. Jerusalem will be the center of God’s theocracy, and there will be peace and safety there. This view, a millennial reign of Christ and His saints, would see these conditions in Isaiah as a prelude to the eternal state. This view harmonizes well with some passages of the Bible, but doesn’t harmonize very well with Isaiah 25 and with the order of things in Revelation. Others, noting that Isaiah 25 had announced there would be no death, and noting the sequence in the Book of Revelation (new heaven and new earth after the millennium), describe this picture as the new creation to come. The language then is figurative and representative—if there were death, one who dies at 100 would be considered a child. And if there were sinners, they would be quickly condemned. But the weakness with this view is that it really strains the meanings of the lines. What is clear from the prophet’s message is that there is coming a marvelous new creation that will end the curse and its effects. A return from captivity to Israel could not have satisfied these prophecies, especially since the apostle picks them up and advances them. This, then, remains the glorious prospect of the righteous. But the sequence of the events, and how it will all be worked out, cannot be worked out with absolute certainty at this time. The passage holds out the hope of a share in the world to come, the new creation of the LORD. God will renovate all things in this world to show what He had intended from the

beginning. And that “season of refreshing,” that “world to come” as the Rabbis termed it, will see the removal of the curse and the fulfillment of all the promises. So those who respond to God’s call and serve Him faithfully are the heirs of that new creation. Those who stubbornly refuse His call and go after false gods instead will have everlasting shame. Faithfulness to God’s call, then, becomes the central point of the application. Believers must show their faith by their devotion; unbelievers must turn to the truth by faith, abandoning all false beliefs and wicked practices. For the believers, if the new heaven and the new earth come about a little differently than expected, they will not be disappointed.

[<http://bible.org/seriespage/lord%E2%80%99s-answer-mercy-israel-isaiah-651-25>]

Practical Points from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator

1. God's millennial kingdom will outshine everything man has formerly known (Isa. 65:17)
2. God wants His people to be joyful and truly happy (Isa. 65:18; of. Phil. 4:4)
3. God finds joy in blessing His people (Isa. 65:19)
4. He who gives man life is quite able to expand its duration (vs. 20-21)
5. God is eager to bless His children, even without their asking (vs. 23-24)
6. God always protects His people, whether through providential or supernatural means (vs. 25)