



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Isaiah 65

TRANSCRIPT

“Jehovah’s Answer to Israel’s Appeal: a New Heavens and a New Earth”

[Prayer] Father we thank Thee for the 65th chapter of the prophecy of Isaiah and its great words concerning the future. We thank Thee for Isaiah the Prophet who lived in a day in which the revelation of God was not complete. And who therefore was not given the privilege of understanding all of the things that we have potentially, the power to understand today. But we thank Thee that he belongs to the great company of the redeemed and of those who have been specially chosen by Thee to give to us inspired Scripture. And we thank Thee for its faithfulness.

And we thank Thee for the privilege of sharing with him in the things that concern his faith which is really our faith and we pray that as we consider his prophecy in the 65th chapter tonight, that the Holy Spirit may guide us into an understanding of the important features of it. We commit each one to Thee, pray Thy blessing upon us as we study together in Jesus name. Amen.

[Message] Now tonight we are looking at the 65th chapter and our subject is Jehovah’s Answer to Israel’s Appeal or a New Heavens and a New Earth. Man is liable to a fatal error and that error is the inclination to overestimate this present life. We are warned against this in the Bible. We are told by David and others that life is but a vapor.

In fact, David says in some of his writings that life is not only a vapor like the fog that arose a morning or two ago, but life is even like a sigh. In the 90th Psalm, David writes in the fourth through the sixth verses,

“For a thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night. Thou carriest them away as with a flood; they are as a sleep: in the morning they are like grass which groweth up. In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth.”

A thousand years. David says in the same Psalm, life is a sigh. That is human life. And so we are inclined to be guilty of overestimating the significance of this present life. There are at times when we rethink our philosophy. Some of us have to attend funerals and some of us have to attend more than others and I have to attend a good many funerals because I preside at some and very rarely do I ever sit down in a car with the pallbearers that someone does not say something about the transiency of human life. But it is remarkable how soon it is forgotten an hour or two later and the fact that came home to us as we stood in a cemetery as completely beyond our everyday experience. When you walk among the graves, you think of that. You will look at the epitaphs. I like to walk in cemeteries. I like to walk particularly in old cemeteries. And I like to come upon those in which there is obviously a Christian that has been buried here.

Not long ago in Pennsylvania, I stood before a grave of a man whom I recognized as being an outstanding Christian man in his day, 200 years before. And it was a thrill to read what was written on his tombstone as his epitaph. But I must confess when Mary, and I got in the car and laughed 30 minutes, that thought was completely gone from me. It is like the applause that we give when we have been entertained. We clap and in a few moments, we are forgotten. It is like the cheers that we give when a long touchdown

pass is completed at a football game and we are thrilled and excited and then in a few moments, it is all forgotten as the team has one completed against it, you know.

Pagans are not expected to have Christian sentiments. In the days in which Paul and Isaiah wrote, pagans did not have hopes as you and I have hopes. But surprisingly pagans had sometimes a philosophy of life that was almost the truth. Some of the pagans believe that the greatest blessing was to die and the greatest curse was to be born. Did you know that among some of the pagans, when a baby was born, there was mourning? And when a man died, there was quiet rejoicing. The Scythians had a philosophy much like that too. They sensed that there is something in human life that makes it misery. It is experiential.

I think that there are two things that we need to keep in mind when we think about life. We should estimate it as full of misery, for that is precisely what it is. As David said in that same 90th Psalm and the tenth verse, “The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.” That is one thing that we should keep in mind. Human life is full of trouble.

And when we come to troubles, we should not be surprised. But then there is something else that a Christian must keep in mind and I think a Christian must especially keep this in mind; that even though the Christian life is a life which has its share of misery and has its share of troubles, we are not to have the attitude that we want to escape this life at all costs. Paul said that he had the desire to depart and to be with Christ which is far better, but then he hastened to say that he felt that he was serving a particular purpose by remaining. In other words, life is in a sense a post, and we are to stay at our posts. He said it is more needful for you that I remain for he had something to do.

And so long as you and I are here, we can be sure of this if we are of the elect. God has some purpose for us being here. We are not here by accident. It is not that we are here just to live out our days. He may take us when we are young, at middle age, or

when we are old, and he does that and he does his own that way. Christians are not people who only die when they are old. Some of the greatest of Christians have died young. Robert Murray McCheyne, 29 years of age, magnificent Christian man. I think the reason he died young probably was because God’s purpose was completed in him. Never probably has a man in his generation attained to the degree of sanctification that McCheyne did. Perhaps that is why God took him. He saw his image in McCheyne and said it is time for you to come home.

So we should remember that life is full of trouble and full of misery and full of disappointment and full of hardship and full of trials but on the other hand, we should remember that if we are here, we are here for a purpose and I think we can also say as long as we are here, everything is optimistic for he has something for us to do.

Now Christian life then is more than just being present with the Lord, that’s blessing enough. The Bible tells us that there is something beyond being present with the Lord. It speaks about a new heavens and a new earth, wherein, Peter says dwelleth righteousness. And this chapter, Isaiah 65 is the first chapter in the Bible in which we have the mention of the new heavens and new earth.

Now I think we are going to see that this is tied in with a situation that existed in the past but it shall also exist in the future. But enough of that. Let us go to our subject. Isaiah chapter 65 and the first part of the 65th chapter, the first sixteen verses are entitled the vain and blessing of Jehovah’s answer. Israel had said in chapter 64, verse 1, “Oh that Thou wouldest rend the heavens, that Thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at Thy presence.” And remember Isaiah is a prophet. Prophets spoke messages that were designed to exhort and build up the people of their day as they saw in the prophet’s messages the great principles of God’s dealings with men, but prophets also spoke of the future.

We are inclined to think of prophets as primarily speaking of the future. We have talked about this and I have discussed with you the fact that prophets not only spoke of

the future, they not only foretold but they also spoke to their generation. They in a sense forth told, they not only told messages forth that had to do with the future but they had messages for their day.

Now Isaiah prophesied of the future in chapter 64 and he described Israel in the last days of their experience upon earth before their kingdom which is future from our day, the kingdom of God upon the earth and in the 64th chapter, he uttered in that first verse, the prayer that Israel in the future shall pray. In the midst of the great tribulations of the future, Israel shall cry out “Oh that Thou wouldst rend the heavens and come down.”

Now remember when we are talking about the present time, we are talking about what we may call the church age. That’s we are somewhere in the church age. Where we are, we do not know because the time of the conclusion of the church age is not known in Scripture. Following the church age, when the saints are called up to meet the Lord in the air, Rapture takes place.

I went to a college conference during Christmas and spoke for a week to between 300 and 400 students in Philadelphia on the subject of the person and work of Christ. By the way, we got of on the subject of election too. I had a wonderful time with those kids. But one of the messages that was given by one of the young man referred to the Rapture of the church as the great snatch. Well, that of course is an attempt to picture the vividness of the fact that when the Lord Jesus comes, we are going to be caught up to be with him in the air. The great snatch.

And then after that, there shall come the time of tribulation on the earth remember, a seven year minus period because apparently, it is going to be shortened a little because of the judgments of that time and then Jesus Christ is going to come to the earth in his second advent. This is the second coming. And there shall then follow the one thousand year kingdom of our Lord.

Now Isaiah in chapter 64 in verse 1 of this prophecy has said, “Oh that Thou wouldest rend the heavens, that Thou wouldest come down.” It is a prayer of Israel in the midst of The Great Tribulation period, a prayer for the second advent of the Lord Jesus. “Oh that Thou wouldest rend the heavens, that Thou wouldest come down.” So now in chapter 65 and verse 1 and following we have God’s answer to Israel petition. And the chief thought of this is that there are two parts to the answer. One, the beam of it in verses 1 through 7 and the second the blessing of it.

In the first few verses, he points out that destruction and not deliverance awaits the greater portion of the people in spite of this prayer of the remnant. So it is the remnant in Israel that prays and the answer of God is the great number, the great majority of the people are not responsive and therefore, judgment must come upon them. In other words, the judgment must reach their conclusion. But for the remnant who are faithful, there will come blessing.

Now let us read the first 7 verses which have to do with the judgment upon the great majority. He says,

“I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not: I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name. I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walketh in a way that was not good, after their own thoughts; A people that provoketh me to anger continually to my face; that sacrificeth in gardens, and burneth incense upon altars of brick.”

By the way, all of these descriptions are designed to show the apostasy of the great majority in Israel. They are those who sacrifice in the gardens, they burn incense upon altars of brick.

Now to understand Isaiah unfortunately, I say unfortunately because we are so ignorant of the Scriptures in the 20th Century, we need to understand the customs of Israel

in the ancient days. God told them in the law that they were never to construct an altar upon anything but a hewn stone, not upon bricks. In other words, the heathens constructed their altars upon bricks but God’s altars were to be constructed differently. Now we need not get into that but that is what he means when he says “burneth incense upon altars of brick.” It may not seem to be much to us but it was disobedience to God.

“Which remain among the graves,” in other words here are people that like to walk in cemeteries too. But they do not walk in cemeteries for the purpose of reading epitaphs. They walk in cemeteries or among the graves in order that they might talk with the dead. And so he says, these are guilty of practicing spiritism. That is what he means there. “And lodge in the monuments, which eat swine’s flesh,” now everybody knows that the Jews were not supposed to eat swine’s flesh.

“And broth of abominable things is in their vessels; which say, Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou.” That is where we get that expression, for I am holier than Thou. There it is. There are the ancient fundamentalists. No really, I was just kidding. The fundamentalists, true fundamentalists are those who believe the Bible. Here are the ancient Pharisees. “I am holier than thou.”

“These are a smoke in my nose, a fire that burneth all the day. Behold, it is written before me: I will not keep silence, but will recompense, even recompense into their bosom. Your iniquities, and the iniquities of your fathers together, saith the Lord, which have burned incense upon the mountains, and blasphemed me upon the hills: therefore will I measure their former work into their bosom.”

Now I want to ask you before we look at the first couple of verses, to turn with me to a passage in the New Testament. Let us turn over to Romans chapter 10 and we are going to see that a man who read Isaiah chapter 65 was a man by the name of Paul. In fact, this chapter Isaiah 65 apparently was a chapter that he was extremely familiar

with. So if you are reading Isaiah chapter 65 and you are not getting so much out of it and I think I understand how you feel. Don’t give up.

There was a man who read this chapter and no doubt read it a lot of times and eventually thought that it was important enough to quote to the church at Rome and he said, verse 20 of Romans chapter 10, “But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me.” He is speaking of the gentiles. “But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.”

So turning back now to chapter 65 and verse 1 and verse 2, we are reading verses that the Apostle Paul cites in Romans chapter 10 to show us that Gentiles would be saved and that Israel would be disobedient. So Esaias is very bold. That is the way Paul interprets verse 1. He said Esaias is very bold to say I am sought of them that ask not for me.

Why was Isaiah very bold to say that he was sought of them that asked not for him? To say I am found of them that sought me not. I said behold me, behold me unto a nation that was not called by my name. Why was Isaiah very bold to do this? Why Paul means simply this? What is Isaiah saying in verse 1? Why he is saying that the Gentiles are going to turn to the Lord?

Those who were not called by his name, those are gentiles. And furthermore, he is saying to Jews that Gentiles have sought for him. That those who were his own have not turned to him, but those who were not called by his name, who did not even seek after him, they have sought him and furthermore, he has been found by those who sought him up. What he is saying then is that God is going in the future to save gentiles when Israel is disobedient.

Now I think I am beginning to understand why Paul said Isaiah was very bold. Or just suppose that you are Jews and you are the people of God, you have the revelation of God. Your father was Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, and God entered into the special

relationships that he entered into with those men, with your ancestors. Then there came Moses and he was one of your fathers and God gave Moses the great Mosaic revelation in a sense God was your God and you were named by him and down through the years, you have the history. The great history of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, all of the great men of the faith.

Now I stand up as one of you and say to you, your disobedience has brought it to pass that in the future God is going to save Gentiles and you are going to be left out. You have resisted a God who has all day long had his arms open toward you, you have walked in a way that was not good, you have walked after your own thoughts, and the result is that you are lost and you are going to come under the judgment of God.

And I want to tell you it takes a great deal of bones to get up and speak to religious people and tell them that they are lost. That is why Paul said Isaiah is very bold. In fact, many a man has lost his life because he said things like this. John Wesley, he rose up in a day when the church that he knew was largely disobedient. Have you ever read Wesley’s journals? It is very interesting. Now I am not going to be precise because it has been a few years since I read them, but you will read and day after day it will be something like this.

He was an Anglican remember. Yesterday I preached in St. Paul’s, I was told I should never preach there again, the next day of the journal. Today I preached in St. George’s and I was told that I should never preach there again. Today I preached in St. Andrew’s and I was told I should never preach there again. Today I preached in St. Michael’s and All Angels and I was told I should never preach there again. Day after day, until finally Wesley and his Methodists were driven out so that they had to preach in the fields. And often, their lives were in danger. That is what Paul means when he says Esaias is very bold speaking to religious people and telling them that they were lost, requires courage to cast against the self-righteous.

When I was in home city a few weeks ago, I attended my home church. All of my family are members of it. The man who is a pastor is a very fine man. I respect him and he is a Christian. And when I am going to say, all of your will understand in the light of its context I am thankful for what he said. But as I looked out over that audience and saw many of them I knew and I knew that they were not Christians. Some of them have said that too.

There was only one statement in all of the messages that could have possibly been offensive. We have lost the courage to be offensive properly with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. And I think that any man who is able to preach the gospel and to not offend anyone among the lost, he surely is not preaching the message of the New Testament.

Listen, it is treason to tone down God's words. It is treason. It is treachery against the throne of God to soften his message. It is not my duty to tone down God's message. It is not my duty to make it a tactful message. It is my duty to render, to give the message. And to give the message plainly and clearly. It is God's responsibility to do the work that follows the giving of the word.

So Esaias is very bold. I think I understand what Paul meant when he said that but now there is something else about this text. You know, this is one of the great texts on free grace. Look at it. “I am sought of them that ask not for me.” Look at it. “I am sought of them that ask not for me. I am found of them that sought me not.” What does that mean? What if it means that they did not seek him and but he has been found by them. What does that mean? It means that he has sought them.

I am found of them that sought me not. You know what that is? That is grace. That is just exactly what we have been talking about in the doctrine of election. It means that you were not seeking God but he worked and brought you to himself so that you are found though you have not sought him. That is what it means. Did you notice that? Did you read it and you say, my goodness, that is exactly like me. I am found when I did not seek him. That is what Paul is talking about.

Notice the personality of God in this text. “I am sought of them that ask not for me. I am found of them that sought me not. I said behold me, behold me unto a nation that was not called by my name.” Great stress upon the pronouns and the Lord is the speaker and also the Lord is the theme. Did you notice? Behold me, behold me. What is the great object of our faith? It is God. That is a simple summary of the gospel message, isn’t it? “Behold me, behold me.”

Suppose I got up and said to you, look behold me, behold me. You would laugh. Most of you are laughing already. It would be ridiculous. The only person who can say something like this is our Lord Jesus Christ or the father who says it of himself through the prophet. And I think of course that we have in this text a great stress again on the fact that it is not so much a thing as a person. I am not against the doctrines. You know that but if I our doctrine does not lead us to him personally, then we have missed the point of our doctrine.

Let me illustrate it this way. Let’s suppose that we have a little child here. And lets suppose that that little child is dirty, cold, ill clothed, what else can you say? All of the things that that child might need. What does it need? Well, it needs washing, it needs clothing, and we could go on. It needs affection. Actually, we could sum it all up by saying what the child really needs is not so many things as the child needs a mother. That is what the child needs. For in having a mother, the child has all of these things. Clothing, food, care, love, affection, warmth.

You remember the story of the prodigal. The prodigal who left, wasted all of his substance, and rot his living and then when he came to himself, I firmly believe that every man outside of the personal relationship to God is a little insane. The text says when he came to himself, he said, “I will arise and go to my father.”

And so in our text, “Behold me, behold me.” By the way, did you notice in this text, you know I could just preach on this text forever. Did you notice that in this text, we are introduced to the thoughts of God? God does not often tell us what goes on in his

mind but that is what he is telling us here. “I am sought of them that ask not for me.” How would anyone know that? God is telling us this. “I am found of them that sought me not. I said, behold me, behold me unto a nation that was not called by name.”

So he is telling us all about the things that go on in his mind. I have been found by those who sought me not and you can almost sense the joy and the exhilaration that God seems to get by the fact that those who do not seek after him, he has won to himself. So we have an insight into the joy of the Lord.

You fellows who fish, I think you can see something like that here. You know how you cast and you feel something on the line and you say to your friend, I got a nibble and you get excited and it is just like that with this text. “I am sought of them that ask not for me. I am found of them that sought me not.” And it is almost as if you see the joy of God in the fact that some are going to come to him and he is going to bring them to himself.

Mr. Spurgeon says there is only a semicolon between being sought and being found in this text. Well we are going to have to hasten on, but notice that second verse. If the gentiles are going to respond and we are living by the way in the age of verse 1 as Paul says in Romans 10, we are living here. If we are living in the Gentile salvation age, verse 2 speaks of Israel’s disobedience. “I have spread out my hands all the day long unto rebellious people.”

If you had been an Israelite and you were a student of Isaiah, you would have come to Isaiah and say look Isaiah, what you have seen to be prophesying is that sometime in the future, the nation is going to be disobedient to God and gentiles are going to be saved. And that would have been a thing that would have turned their theological thinking upside down. For they felt that God of course had to work only through them but this text says that gentiles shall be saved and that is why Paul uses it in Romans 10. With reference to the Jews, he tells them that the Old Testament said there was a day when gentiles should be saved and that Jews would be disobedient. So he said

I am sought of them that I ask not for me but I have spread out my hands all the day long unto a rebellious people who walk after their own thoughts.

And the tenth chapter of the Epistle of the Romans ends with the picture of God holding out his hands to rebellious people and it was I think Augustine in origin and some of the early church fathers who pointed out the fact that this picture of God with outstretched hands holding out his hands all the day long to a rebellious people was a vivid picture of Jesus Christ hanging upon the cross with arms outstretched toward the nation Israel and so this picture that the apostle uses is a picture which does vividly illustrate the attitude that God has to Israel. Well, that’s his attitude today. The nation Israel is pointed constantly to the cross where Jehovah’s servant hangs in thought as the one who was crucified for them.

Now in the eighth verse, Isaiah speaks of the blessings of the faithful mingled also with further reference to the failures of the faithless. So we read in verse 8, “Thus saith the Lord, As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not; for a blessing is in it: so will I do for my servants’ sakes, that I may not destroy them all.”

In other words, there is going to be a remnant of Israel and in our little diagram here, that remnant in the day of the tribulation will be the 144,000 plus their converts who are sealed and are the servants of God in the proclamation of the gospel during that day of the tribulation. So he is speaking about them here, verse 9, “And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains: and mine elect,” isn’t that interesting, “Mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there.” You see, God has elect among the Gentiles and he has elect among the Jews and by the way in the reading of the Bible we must bear this in mind.

For example, when you turn over to Matthew chapter 24 with me for just a moment, in Matthew 24 and the Great Olivet Discourse, in speaking of the second coming of the Lord Jesus in verse 29, the Lord said to the apostles, “Immediately after the tribulation of those days,” this is Matthew 24 verse 29,

“Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect.”

Now who are his elect in this chapter. Well they are the remnant of Israel. The church is not mentioned in this chapter. This is a reference to the future and his elect are Jewish believers. So this term, “his elect” in Matthew 24:31 is a reflection of the term “mine elect” in verse 9 of chapter 65. So when you see elect in the New Testament, don’t think always of the church necessarily. Look at the context.

Verse 10 of Isaiah 65 and “And Sharon shall be a fold of flocks, and the valley of Achor a place for the herds to lie down in, for my people that have sought me. But ye are they that forsake the Lord,” now he speaks about those who are faithless. “Ye are they that that forsake the Lord, that forget my holy mountain, that prepare a table for” Gad, the god of fortune, “and that furnish the drink offering unto that” goddess of destiny. I am translating the Hebrew text. “Therefore will I number you to the sword, and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter: because when I called, ye did not answer; when I spake, ye did not hear; but did evil before mine eyes, and did choose that wherein I delighted not. Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, my servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry:”

The remnant of the believers shall experience the blessing of God. Those who do not believe, shall not. “Behold, my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty: behold, my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed: Behold, my servants shall sing for joy of heart, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall howl for vexation of spirit. And ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen: for the Lord God shall slay thee, and

call his servants by another name: That he who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth.” You know in the original text, that is the God of the Amen, the God of truth. Elohi Amen. In the God of the Amen, or the God of truth. “And he that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of truth; because the former troubles are forgotten, and because they are hid from mine eyes.”

And that brings us to verse 17, in which we have the blessing of the new heavens and the new earth. Here we read, “For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.” Now notice the context verse 16, he has said, “That he who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth and he that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of truth; because the former troubles are forgotten.” Now when shall they be forgotten? Well, they shall be forgotten when the new heavens and the new earth is created by the Lord.

But what does he mean here when he says “For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth”? Does he speak about the day of the eternal state? When there shall be a new heavens and a new earth according to Revelation chapter 21 and 22, or actually 21:1 through 22:25. Or is he using create in the sense which would mean specifically the renewal of the earth for the kingdom of our Lord.

And if you have a Scofield Bible, you will look at the bottom of the page and Mr. Scofield says that verse 17 has to do with the eternal state but in verse 18 through verse 25, we have to do with the kingdom, the reason being that in those verses, it is presupposed that there shall be death during the time and therefore, it could not be a reference to the eternal state when there shall be no death. It must therefore be a reference to the kingdom.

I have a friend who is a Hebrew scholar. In fact, he teaches in our theological seminary and I asked him about this the other day. I said what is your interpretation of verse 17 of Isaiah chapter 65 and what do you think of this expression, “Behold, I create a new heavens and a new earth.” Does that have to refer to the eternal state or might it

possibly refer to the kingdom? He said well in my opinion, the word create in Hebrew, the word bara does not necessarily refer to the creation of something that is entirely new and frankly I think that that create refers to the renewing of the earth for the kingdom age.

Now I did not get a chance to ask him this but I am going to ask him when I see him this week. You know in the New Testament, it says that when I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, I become a new creature. II Corinthians chapter 5 verse 17 says if any man be in Christ, he is a new creation. And yet I am not a new creation entirely.

Look at me Cliff, I am getting old. It is obvious. I bear the marks of age. And these kids think I am ancient. They would not say it right now but that is really what they are thinking and they are right. I am not new and yet I am new. My spirit is new but I do not have my new body yet but when the resurrection comes Cliff, then you and I are going to have a body that that young girl there is going to be amazed at. She is going to look and she is going to say, that is Dr. Johnson. I know him, but have you ever seen such a handsome man. And Cliff, the same thing about you. Because at the resurrection, then the new creation that we are, you know our spirits, is going to be completed and we are going to have a new body.

Now it seems to me that this interpretation is reasonable. I am not sure that it is the correct one. I would not be honest if I were dogmatic. I believe when you know something, you ought to say you know it. And if you don’t know it, you ought to say you don’t know. And if you think you are sort of persuaded that this is right, but you are not sure that is what you are ought to say too. Don’t fool anybody. Now I am just kind of persuaded.

In the light of the context that when this text says I create a new heavens and a new earth, it means that there is going to be a renewing of the creation such as the renewing which took place when I believed in Jesus Christ but is not complete. That is going to be something like a resurrection of the creation here at the conclusion of the

kingdom when there is to be a creation of a glorified universe by God like a resurrection in which we shall dwell forever. So it seems to me that what Isaiah is saying when he says, behold I create a new heavens and a new earth, is simply this. The all troubles are going to be gone, Israel, because when the kingdom comes, we are going to have a situation in which all of these various blessings are going to be yours.

And verses 18 through 25 tell us what they are. Look at them. So I think then that Mr. Scofield if I may say so in this case is not precisely correct. But now he may be laughing in heaven. He may be saying when you get to heaven, Lewis, then you will discover that I was right. Until that time, we will just have to go with what we have.

Now notice verse 18. “But be ye glad and rejoice,” here are the blessings of the kingdom age then, “be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old;” in other words what this means is that death and sin exist but they exist under severe restraint during the kingdom age.

Christ is reigning, Satan is bound, longevity is restored such as it existed in the early days and someone who dies at age 100 is called a child. Isn’t that amazing? Somebody dies at age 100 and they say an infant had just died. And the “sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed.” In other words, he shall not come under judgment of death before 100 or perhaps a better interpretation is if he dies at 100, if a person dies at age 100, then everyone concludes that his death must be a curse from God because of sin, because such an early death means judgment. But you can see from this death does exist but longevity is restored.

I am glad I am not living in that age. Under present circumstances, I would hate to live 900 years, to be 900 years old, in this day, an age, wouldn’t you? Or you rather

live 900, I say. You are the people who tell me privately you would love to go home to be with the Lord, but not right now. Mr. Newell one time is supposed to have said this. He asked an audience how many of you want to be in the presence of the Lord, raise your hand. Everybody raised their hands. He said how many of you want to be in the presence of the Lord now. And most of them dropped their hands. They were not too happy about now.

But listen, read on verse 21, “And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people,” now I am glad that he is talking about other’s trees and not my trees because the days of my trees are often only a year or two. But as the days of a tree, just think of an oak tree that may live 200, 300, 400, 700 years.

“As the days of the tree are the days of my people and mine elect,” of Israel “shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them. And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.” Isn’t that amazing?

In some of our churches and I remember in my old church, every Sunday morning, we used to repeat the Lord prayer. Remember. I can still remember how I used to introduce it. When I used to lead the congregation in it, I would begin with a few petitions and then would say something like, Lord, we thank Thee for the prayer that Thou hast given to us, that after this manner are we to pray. The congregation would join in.

Our Father, which art in heaven. Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. And if you had asked the average audience and today if you were to ask the average audience that repeat, Thy kingdom come, and you would say to them, what kingdom is our Lord speaking about. Ninety five percent would not know. Would they? Thy

kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. It is a petition for the coming of the messianic kingdom upon the earth when the will of God shall be done on earth as it is done in heaven. Before they call I will answer. You see, a man will not even have time to offer up a petition, the prayers to God are answered. His will is done on earth as it is in heaven. That is what he means.

Verse 25, “The wolf and the lamb shall feed together,” they never feed together now except when the lamb is inside the wolf. “The lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and” notice “dust shall be the serpent’s meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord.”

People often say that animals live at peace when men do not. They don’t know anything about the animal kingdom. The animal kingdom is a jungle. Its wolf eat lamb and lion eat and so forth. But the time is coming when there shall be peace not only in the world but peace in the creation of God.

And then that you notice dust shall be the serpent’s meat. Now that is not an accident. He is no fanatic. These are not just beautiful dreams either. When he says dust shall be the serpent’s meat, he is alluding to the great promise of redemption in the Garden of Eden. Remember, when Adam and Eve sinned, God spoke to the serpent and he said, I will put enmity between Thee and the woman and between Thy seed and her seed. It shall crush Thy head. Thou shall crush his heel.

In other words, there is going to be continuing warfare between the descendants of the woman and the descendants of the serpent. It shall finally reach its climax in a personal struggle. In which head and heel are involved. The heel of the woman seed shall be crushed, shall be wounded but it is not a mortal wound for it’s only the crushing of the heels. That is the reference to the cross of our Lord which was not a mortal final wound for him. He arose from the dead.

But also God said the woman seed shall crush the serpent’s head. That is what happened when Jesus Christ took our sins upon the cross at Calvary for he removed sin

and the judgment of it. And Satan’s authority and power which rested in the fact that we were sinners has now been removed and we are delivered from the power of Satan. And as a result of that, that serpent has come under a model judgment which has determined his destiny forever. He shall finally be placed, the Book of Revelation says, in the lake of fire which was made for the devil and his angels and dust shall be the serpent’s meat.

Remember, God in token of the fact that he was going to judge, spoke to that beautiful serpent in the garden and said upon Thy belly shall Thou go and dust shall be Thy meat all the days of Thy life and in the kingdom age. The reason this kingdom age takes place is because the cross has taken place. It is the product of redemption and it is not the final product.

The final product is the eternal state, but this is the stage on the way and in the kingdom days when the Nation Israel, the living saints, are upon the earth and we are in the new Jerusalem with the resurrected saints of Israel enjoying the presence of the Lord, we shall look out and see the serpent crawling upon the ground eating dust in token of the fact that God’s plan of redemption has reached the next stage towards its ultimate fruition.

Isn’t it magnificent the prophecy that Isaiah has given us. Dust shall be the serpent’s meat. So girls every time you look at the serpent and you see them slithering along the ground, just remember the cross work of Jesus Christ has taken place and his death redeems us. The victory is our Lord’s and all who believe in him. Time is up. Let’s close in a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we thank Thee for these wonderful passages from the prophecy of Isaiah and we thank Thee for the hope that we have in the Lord Jesus and we want to praise Thee and thank Thee that Thou didst include us, that we found Thee because Thou didst first found us. Accept our thanks in Jesus name. Amen.