

# CHAPTER 65

## INTRODUCTION TO ISAIAH 65

This chapter contains an answer to the prayer begun (<sup>(23615)</sup> Isaiah 63:15), and continued in the preceding chapter; in which reasons are given by the Lord for suffering such calamities as are before mentioned to come upon the Jewish nation; particularly their rejection of the Gospel as preached by Christ and his apostles, and cleaving to the traditions of the fathers, and to their own righteousness; which disobedience and rebellion are aggravated by the Gentiles quick reception of the Gospel, as soon as preached to them, (<sup>(23618)</sup> Isaiah 65:1,2) as also the idolatry of their fathers, their impurity and breach of the divine laws, (<sup>(23618)</sup> Isaiah 65:3,4,7), as well as their own pride, hypocrisy, and self-confidence, (<sup>(23618)</sup> Isaiah 65:5) all which being observed by the Lord was highly provoking to him; and he was determined to recompense into their bosoms their own sins, and the sins of their fathers, whose measure they filled up, (<sup>(23618)</sup> Isaiah 65:6,7), nevertheless he would have a regard to a remnant among them, in whom the true grace of God would be found, and who should have a name and a place in the Gospel church state, and be preserved from the general destruction, (<sup>(23618)</sup> Isaiah 65:8-10), but as for the unbelieving Jews, they should be punished with the sword, with famine, with disgrace, with distress, vexation, and a curse; when the servants of the Lord should have food, and joy, and honour, and bless themselves in the Lord, and serve him, (<sup>(23618)</sup> Isaiah 65:11-16) and the chapter is concluded with promises of a new and happy state to the Jews upon their conversion in the latter day; which will be attended with much spiritual joy, with abundance of outward felicity, with great safety and security, and with the presence of God, (<sup>(23617)</sup> Isaiah 65:17-25).

**Ver. 1.** *I am sought of them that asked not for me, &c.*] That this is a prophecy of the calling and conversion of the Gentiles is not to be doubted, since the Apostle Paul has quoted it, and applied it to that case, (<sup>(4510)</sup> Romans 10:20) and is here mentioned as an aggravation of the sin of the Jews, in rejecting Christ, when the Gentiles received him; and was the reason of their being rejected of God, and the Gospel being taken away from them, and given to another people, and of the Lord's removing his

presence from the one to the other. The Gentiles are described as those that “asked not for” Christ, or after him, as the apostle supplies it; they had not asked for him, nor after him, nor anything about him; nor of him “before” this time, as the Vulgate Latin version renders it; they were without Christ, the promises and prophecies concerning him; and so had no knowledge of him, nor made any inquiry about him, who or what he was; they did not ask after his coming, or for it; did not desire it, or him, and were in no expectation of it; they asked no favour of him, nor saw any need of him, or worth in him; and yet now he was “sought of them”; or, as the apostle has it, “was made manifest unto them”; and so the Septuagint version; that is, he was manifested to them in the Gospel, and by the ministry of it; which is a revelation of him, of salvation by him, of justification by his righteousness, of peace and pardon by his blood, of atonement by his sacrifice, and of eternal life through him; and the words will bear to be rendered, “I was preached unto them”: for from this word are derived others<sup>f1265</sup>, which signify an expounder, and an interpretation, or exposition; and this was matter of fact, that Christ was preached to the Gentiles upon the Jews’ rejection of him, which is one branch of the mystery of godliness, (~~5486~~ 1 Timothy 3:16) and upon this he was sought of them: they sought him early and earnestly, and desired to have him and his Gospel preached to them again and again, (~~4430~~ Acts 13:42-48) they sought after the knowledge of him, and for an interest in him, and for all grace from him, righteousness, salvation, and eternal life; and for all the supplies of grace, as all sensible sinners do; this they did as soon as he was made manifest to them by the word, and especially as soon as he was revealed in them, or made manifest in their hearts by his Spirit:

*I am found of them that sought me not*; that had not sought him before the Gospel came to them; they sought the world, and the thing, of it, “for after all these things do the Gentiles seek”; they sought after the wisdom of the world, the vain philosophy of it; “the Greeks seek after wisdom”; and at most and best they only sought after morality and outward righteousness, but not after Christ, till he was set up in the Gospel as an ensign to them, (~~23110~~ Isaiah 11:10), but being preached in it, they were set a seeking after him, and “found” him in it, of whom it is full; in the doctrines, promises, and ordinances of it; in whom they found righteousness, life, and salvation, food, and plenty of it, rest, spiritual and eternal, and everlasting glory and happiness:

*I said, behold me, behold unto a nation that was not called by my name;* which still describes the Gentiles, who formerly were not called the people of God, even those who now are, (<sup><3123></sup>Hosea 2:23 <sup><3120></sup>1 Peter 2:10), this Christ says to them in the Gospel, whose eyes he opens by his Spirit, to behold the glory of his person, the riches of his grace, his wondrous love and condescension, the abundance of blessings in him, and the complete salvation he has wrought out for sinners; and the words are repeated to show that Christ is only to be beheld, and is always to be looked unto; as well as it declares the heartiness of Christ, and his willingness that sinners should look unto him, and be saved; and all this is a proof of the preventing grace of God in the conversion of men, he is first in it; before they ask anything of him, or about him, or his Son, he manifests himself; he reveals Christ, bestows his grace, and presents them with the blessings of his goodness. R. Moses the priest, as Aben Ezra observes, interprets this of the nations of the world; and that the sense is,

“even to the Gentiles that are not called by my name I am preached;”

which agrees with the apostle’s sense of them; (see Gill on “<sup><5101></sup>Romans 10:20”).

**Ver. 2.** *I have spread out mine hands all the day unto a rebellious people,* &c.] Meaning Israel, as the apostle explains it, (<sup><5101></sup>Romans 10:21), whom he calls a “disobedient and gainsaying people”; who believed not in Christ, obeyed not his Gospel, but contradicted and blasphemed it; and were rebellious against him, would not have him to reign over them, nor submit to his ordinances; though he most affectionately invited them, earnestly pressed and urged them, and that daily and frequently, to attend his ministry; and used all human methods to gain audience of them, and acceptance with them, but all to no purpose; (see <sup><4135></sup>Matthew 23:37), they remained obstinate and inflexible, and so they did under the ministry of his apostles; for, notwithstanding their ill usage of him, he ordered the Gospel to be first preached to them, as it was, till they treated it with such indignity and contempt, that the apostles turned away from them to the Gentiles, as they were bid; (see <sup><4136></sup>Acts 13:46,47). The Targum is,

“I sent my prophets every day, &c.”

*which walketh in a way that was not good, after their own thoughts;* in their own way, of their own devising, choosing, and approving, and which

was a wicked one; and after their own imaginations and inventions; after the traditions of the elders the doctrines and commandments of men; and after a righteousness of their own, which they sought by the works of the law, and so submitted not to, but rejected the righteousness of Christ.

**Ver. 3.** *A people that provoketh me to anger continually to my face, &c.]*

They committed their sins openly, without any fear of the divine Being, and in defiance of him, not at all awed by his omniscience and omnipresence; they committed them in the open streets, and even in the temple, the place of the divine residence; and these they did constantly, which provoked him to anger and wrath against them; particularly the following sins:

*that sacrificeth in gardens;* to idols, as the Targum, placed there, as they were under every green tree; or in groves, where idols were worshipped. Fortunatus Scacchus<sup>f1266</sup> thinks this refers to their having their sepulchres in their gardens, where they consulted the dead; which is favoured by a clause in the next verse:

*and burneth incense on altars of brick:* or, “upon bricks”<sup>f1267</sup>. Kimchi says, when they made bricks, they put upon them incense for idols; or, “upon tiles”; upon the roofs of their houses, which were covered with tiles; (see <sup><4193></sup>Jeremiah 19:13) when incense should only have been burnt upon the golden altar erected for that purpose, (<sup><4200></sup>Exodus 30:1,3), not that these idolatrous actions were committed by the Jews in the times of Christ and his apostles, the times preceding their last destruction; for, after their return from the Babylonish captivity, they were not guilty of idolatry; but these were the sins of their fathers, which God would recompense into their bosoms, according to (<sup><2607></sup>Isaiah 65:7) they now filling up the measure of their iniquities, (<sup><4132></sup>Matthew 23:32).

**Ver. 4.** *Which remain among the graves, &c.]* In order to practise necromancy, to consult the dead, where they imagined demons and departed spirits haunted, and of whom they fancied they might get knowledge of future things:

*and lodge in the monuments:* whole nights for the same purposes. The Vulgate Latin version is, “that sleep in the temples of idols”; after the manner of the Heathens, who used to sleep there in order to obtain dreams, whereby they might be able to foretell things to come, as they did in the temple of Aesculapius; or, “in desolate places”<sup>f1268</sup>, as Kimchi and Ben Melech interpret it; where they expected to meet with demons and noxious

spirits, to give them knowledge of things to come. The Targum paraphrases both clauses thus,

“who dwell in houses built of the dust of graves, and lodge with the corpse of the children of men;”

so corpse, according to Jarchi, are expressed by this word, which signifies “kept”, or “preserved”<sup>f1269</sup>, as in (~~2306~~ Isaiah 49:6), because they are put in a strait place, from whence they cannot get out; though some think idols are meant, called so by way of derision, because kept for fear of being stolen, or because they cannot keep themselves, nor their votaries:

*which eat swine’s flesh*; forbidden by the law, (~~CR10~~ Leviticus 11:7):

*and broth of abominable things is in their vessels*; or “pots”: broth made of swine’s flesh, and of other sorts of flesh which were unclean by the law. Our version follows the marginal<sup>f1270</sup> reading; as do the Targum, Aben Ezra, Jarchi, and Kimchi; but the written text is, “a fragment”<sup>f1271</sup>, or piece, or pieces, of abominable things; both may be retained in the sense of the passage; slices of flesh unclean, and so abominable by the law, were put into their pots and stewed, and made broth of, which they drank. Spencer<sup>f1272</sup> thinks the milk in which kids were boiled is meant, which the Zabians kept in vessels, and sprinkled on the trees in their gardens, to make them more fruitful; hence mention is made of idolatrous practices in gardens, in the preceding verse.

**Ver. 5.** *Which say, stand by thyself, &c]*, According to Aben Ezra, Jarchi, and Kimchi, these are the unclean persons that did the above things; who say to the righteous, “draw near to thyself”<sup>f1273</sup>; so the words are, go to thine own place, or to thine own company:

*and come not near to me*; keep off at a distance, as unworthy of such company:

*for I am holier than thou*; but this is the language of a self-righteous man, of a Pharisee that strictly observed the rituals of the law; and fitly describes such who lived in the times of Christ; and exactly agrees with the characters of such, who not only would have no dealings with the Samaritans, but washed themselves when they came from market, or any public place, lest they should be defiled with the common people of their own nation; and, even with religious persons, would not stand near them while praying; but despised them, if they had not arrived to that pitch of

outward sanctity they had; (see ~~300~~John 4:9 ~~400~~Mark 7:4) (~~280~~Luke 18:9,11,12). The phrase may be rendered, “do not touch me”<sup>f1274</sup>; and the Pharisees would not suffer themselves to be touched by the common people, nor would they touch them. Maimonides<sup>f1275</sup> says,

“if the Pharisees touched but the garments of the common people, they were defiled all one as if they had touched a profluous person, and were obliged to dip themselves all over;”

so that, when they walked in the streets, they used to walk on the sides of the way, that they might not be defiled by touching them<sup>f1276</sup>. So Epiphanius<sup>f1277</sup> relates of the Samaritan Jews, that when they touch one of another nation, they dip themselves with their clothes in water; for they reckon it a defilement to touch anyone, or to touch any man of another religion; and of the Dositheans, who were another sect of the Samaritans the same writer observes<sup>f1278</sup>, that they studiously avoid touching any, for they abhor every man. A certain Arabic geographer of note<sup>f1279</sup> makes mention of an island, called the island of the Samaritans, inhabited by some Samaritan Jews, as appears by their saying to any that apply to them, do not touch; and by this it is known that they are of the Jews who are called Samaritans; and this same arrogant superstition, as Scaliger observes<sup>f1280</sup>, continues in that people to this day, as those relate who have conversed with them:

*these are a smoke in my nose, a fire that burneth all the day*: very offensive to the divine Being, as smoke is to the eyes and nostrils; very abominable to him; and whose proud and vain conduct raised indignation in him, and kindled the fire of his anger, which was continually exercised on them; (see ~~265~~Luke 16:15). The Targum is,

“their vengeance is in hell, where the fire burns all the day.”

**Ver. 6.** *Behold, it is written before me*, &c.] This account of their sins; it was in his sight and constant remembrance, and punishment for them was determined by him, written in the book of his decrees:

*I will not keep silence*; but threaten with destruction, and not only threaten, but execute; plead against them really, as well as verbally, with sore judgments:

*but will recompense, even recompense into their bosom*; full and just recompence of punishment for all their transgressions, as it follows. The Targum is,

“I will recompense to them the vengeance of their sins, and deliver their bodies to the second death.”

**Ver. 7.** *Your iniquities, and the iniquities of your fathers together (saith the Lord)*, &c.] That is, the punishment both of the one and of the other; these being alike, and continued from father to son, and approved of, and committed by one generation after another, till the measure was filled up; and then the recompence of reward is given for all of them together at once: which have burnt incense upon the mountains, and blasphemed me upon the hills; where they offered incense and other sacrifices to idols, which was interpreted by the Lord as a blaspheming and reproaching of him; (see <sup>2570</sup>Isaiah 57:7 <sup>2421</sup>Jeremiah 2:20 3:6):

*therefore will I measure their former work into their bosom*; punish them for their former sins as well as their latter ones, and both together.

**Ver. 8.** *Thus saith the Lord, as the new wine is found in the cluster*, &c.] Now, lest the truly godly and gracious among these people should be distressed at such denunciations of wrath and destruction, it is suggested that these few, this remnant according to the election of grace, should be saved from the general ruin; as when men are about to cut down a vine, or pluck it up, or prune the unfruitful branches of it, a single cluster of grapes is observed upon it, in which new wine is supposed to be:

*and one saith, destroy it not, for a blessing is in it*; one that stands by, perhaps the owner of the vine, seeing it, says to his servant, spare the vine, do not cut it down; or do not cut off the branch on which the cluster is, for there is life and sap in it, and it may grow, and bring forth much fruit:

*so will I do for my servants' sake, that I may not destroy them all*; as formerly he spared Noah at the deluge; of whom the Targum paraphrases the former clause; and Lot at the burning of Sodom; and Joshua and Caleb, when all the rest that came out of Egypt perished in the wilderness; so there would be, and were, a few whom God called by his grace, among the Jews, brought to the knowledge of Christ, and into a Gospel church state in Jerusalem; and these he preserved from the destruction of it, of which they had previous warning, and were directed to Pella, where they were safe: and so, wherever the truth of grace is, such shall not be destroyed;

and which is a blessing, and a blessed work in the heart of man, and is a new thing there; and, like new wine, delightful to God and man; and like wine in the cluster, all grace, and all spiritual blessings are with it; and which must be tried by afflictions, to be brought into exercise, as the cluster is pressed; and which is found but in a few, like wine in a single cluster, concerning whom the Father says, destroy them not, being loved and chosen by him; and so says the Son, being redeemed by his blood; and the same says the Spirit, being regenerated and sanctified by his grace; and such being the servants of the Lord, and partakers of his grace, he will not suffer any of them to be destroyed; but encompasses them with his favour; holds them with his right hand; suffers no enemy to do them wrong, and guards them with his power.

**Ver. 9.** *And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, &c.*] Jerom says most understand this of Christ; and who indeed is called the seed of the woman, the seed of Abraham, the seed of David, and sprang from Jacob or Israel, and came out of the tribe of Judah; and may be fitly signified by the cluster, in which new wine and a blessing were, which “seed” here is explanative of; since the clusters of all divine perfections, of all the blessings of grace, and of all the promises of it, are in him: and since he is that seed in whom all the nations of the earth are blessed, and with whom the covenant of grace was made, (<sup><816></sup>Galatians 3:16), but others, the above ancient writer observes, understood it of the apostles; and it seems to design the first that believed in Christ, who were of the Jewish nation, the apostles and others; for though the generality of that people rejected the Messiah, there were a few that believed on him, a remnant according to the election of grace, whom the apostle calls a seed, the Lord left among them, and reserved for himself, (<sup><812></sup>Romans 9:29) (<sup><810></sup>Romans 11:4,5) such who received the seed of the word into their hearts, and were born again of incorruptible seed, and which remained in them; these were distinguished by the grace of God from the rest of the people, and were called and brought forth from among them:

*and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains;* this also is true of Christ, who not only came out of the tribe of Judah, as was foretold he should, and as it is manifest he did; hence he is called the Lion of that tribe; but he is also an heir or inheritor of the mountains of God; he is indeed heir of all things, (<sup><810></sup>Hebrews 1:2), as he is the Son of God, he is heir by nature of all the Father has; and, as Mediator, he is heir by appointment of all persons and things; he has all persons for his inheritance, and in his



possession, and at his dispose, angels and men; and he is possessed of all things, of all blessings of goodness, natural and temporal, spiritual and eternal; and his chosen people are joint heirs with him, and who may be here meant; such as are the seed of the Lord are sons and heirs; they are heirs of God, being the sons of God; heirs of his covenant, the blessings and promises of it, which is as a mountain, firm and immovable; they are heirs of the grace of life, and of the kingdom; heirs of righteousness, life, and salvation; of eternal glory, the heavenly Canaan, signified by the mountains of the Lord; alluding to the mountains on which the temple and Jerusalem stood, or to those about Jerusalem, or in the land of Judea in general:

*and mine elect shall inherit it*; Christ is God's first and chief elect, and his people are chosen in him through grace to glory; and these are the seed and heirs that do inherit grace, and shall inherit glory; for this is to be understood not literally of the land of Judea, which was not long inherited by any after the times of Christ and his apostles, to which this prophecy respects; unless it can be thought to belong to the latter day, when the Jews will be converted, and return to it; but figuratively of Mount Zion, or of the heavenly country:

*and my servants shall dwell there*; my righteous servants, as the Targum; these are the same with the seed, the inheritor, and the elect, who become the servants of God, through the power of his grace, and serve him cheerfully, willingly, and without selfish ends and views; to this they are chosen, and for this purpose become a spiritual seed; nor is this inconsistent with their being heirs; and who shall receive the inheritance in a way of grace, and possess it for ever; they shall dwell in the church below, and enjoy all the privileges of it, and shall dwell upon their estate for ever; for their inheritance is an eternal one, reserved in the heavens.

**Ver. 10.** *And Sharon shall be a fold of flocks*, &c.] This was a champaign country about Joppa and Lydda, in which were rich pastures for herds and flocks, (<sup>1373</sup>1 Chronicles 27:29), it seems to be a prophecy of the conversion of some in those parts, which had its accomplishment in the times of the apostles, (<sup>4085</sup>Acts 9:35), here Christ had his sheep, and here was a fold for them; or, however, this may be expressive of the word and ordinances, which are like Sharon, green and fat pastures, for the flocks of Christ to be folded and fed in:

*and the valley of Achor a place for the herds to lie down in*; which, Aben Ezra says, was round about Jerusalem; but it was the valley in which Achan was stoned, and because of the trouble he gave to Israel, and had himself, it was called the valley of Achor, (<sup><10726></sup>Joshua 7:26), this the Lord promises shall be given for a door of hope, (<sup><2025></sup>Hosea 2:15) and such the word and ordinances are, where Christ causes his church and people to lie down and rest, (<sup><2007></sup>Song of Solomon 1:7,8 <sup><19210></sup>Psalms 23:2) and which are an earnest and pledge of future glory and happiness, and give hope thereof; are the firstfruits of it, as the valley of Achor is said to be the first place the children of Israel set footing on, when they had passed over Jordan; it lay to the north of Jericho, over against Ai:

*for my people that have sought me*; with their whole hearts, being first sought and found by him; (see Gill on "<sup><2610></sup>Isaiah 65:1").

**Ver. 11.** *But ye are they that forsake the Lord*, &c.] Here the Lord returns to the body of the people again, the unbelievers and rejecters of the Messiah, who turned away from him, would not hear his doctrine, nor submit to his ordinances; they forsook the worship of the Lord, as the Targum; yea, some that professed to be his disciples, and followed him for a while, left him, and walked no more with him, (<sup><1161></sup>John 6:60,66):

*that forget my holy mountain*; Mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, the Gospel church, to which the seed or heirs, the chosen of God, and the servants of the Lord among the Jews, came, and enjoyed the immunities of it, and worshipped the Lord there; but these men forgot it, and either never came, or, if any of them did, they soon forsook the assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some was, (<sup><3122></sup>Hebrews 12:22 10:25):

*that prepare a table for that troop*; or, "for a troop"; a troop of idols worshipped; or, "for Gad", which some take to be the name of a star; and R. Moses the priest says it is the name of the star Jupiter, in the Arabic language, a lucky star. The Vulgate Latin version renders it, "for fortune": and the word is used by the Jewish writers<sup>f1281</sup> for the goddess Fortune, or good luck, and who make mention of "the bed of fortune"<sup>f1282</sup>; a bed, which, they say, is prepared for a star, and no man may sleep on it; and a table also, which they might not use but for that star, the same with the table here; for they used beds or couches at their tables, or at eating. And Jerom on the place says, it was an old custom in Egypt, particularly in Alexandria and other cities, on the last day of the year, to prepares table,

with all kind of provisions for eating and drinking, by way of thankfulness for the fertility of the last year, and in order to obtain it in the year following; and this the Israelites did. “Table” seems to be put for an altar, on which sacrifice was offered to idols. Mention is made by Herodotus<sup>f1283</sup> of the table of the sun among the Ethiopians.

*And that furnish the drink offering unto that number:* or, “to a number”; to a number of deities, which were as numerous as their cities, (<sup>242B</sup>Jeremiah 2:28) and according to the number of them they provided drink offerings, or a mixture of wine and water; and also according to the number of the priests that sacrificed they filled cups of wine, as Jarchi observes; or according to the number of letters in a person’s name they wished well to, as many cups they drank, to which Sanctius thinks the allusion is; or to “Meni”, which R. Moses takes to be the name of a star; some interpret it of a number of stars or planets, the seven planets particularly; and others of the planet Mercury. Some think it is the name of an idol, either, of an idol of the Arabians, as Pocock<sup>f1284</sup>; or of the Armenians, as others, Armenia being called Minni, (<sup>245B</sup>Jeremiah 51:27). The Targum interprets both clauses of idol deities; and so, in the gloss on the Talmud<sup>f1285</sup>, they are both said to be the names of idols. Bynaeus<sup>f1286</sup> seems to me to have advanced the best notion of Gad and Meni, translated “that troop”, and “that number”, which is, that the one signifies the sun, and the other the moon, which he supports with many reasons; so Vitringa; and yet there is a difficulty in the words, how they are to be applied to the Jews in the times of Christ and the apostles, when they were not guilty of such idolatrous practices; unless this is to be understood of the sins of their forefathers visited on them, as in (<sup>246B</sup>Isaiah 65:3,4,7), though this is said of the same persons that forsook the Lord, and forgot his mountain; wherefore I am inclined to think that some thing like this is the sense of the words; that the evil charged upon this people, and of which they were guilty, was, that they regarded the stars, and attributed their case and circumstances to the influences of them, or to fate and fortune, rather than to the providence of God; or trusted in their troops and numbers, and so defied and despised the Roman army that besieged them, which was their ruin.

**Ver. 12.** *Therefore will I number you to the sword,* &c.] There is an elegancy in the expression, alluding to Meni, that number, they furnished a drink offering for, or trusted in; and since they did, God would number them, or appoint a number of them to the sword; or suffer them to be slain in great numbers, even from one end of their land to another, (<sup>242D</sup>Jeremiah

12:12), they should be numbered and told out, or care taken that none of them should escape the sword of the Romans, or not be taken by them:

*and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter*; be obliged to submit to the conqueror, and lay down their necks to be sacrificed by him:

*because, when I called, ye did not answer; when I spoke, ye did not hear*; when Christ called unto them personally, to come and hear him, they turned a deaf ear to this charmer, charming so wisely, and would not attend upon his ministry, (<sup>20024</sup>Proverbs 1:24 <sup>4237</sup>Matthew 23:37), and when he called to them in the ministry of his apostles, they rejected him and his word with contempt; they put it away from them, contradicting and blaspheming it, (<sup>4135</sup>Acts 13:45,46). The Targum is,

“because I sent my prophets, and ye turned not; they prophesied, and ye did not receive them:”

*but did evil before mine eyes, and did choose that wherein I delighted not*; adhered to the traditions of the elders, and taught for doctrines the commandments of men; and which they chose and preferred to the word of God, and the Gospel of Christ; and these were things the Lord delighted not in, yea, abhorred; and their embracing and cleaving to them were evil in his sight; (see <sup>4038</sup>Matthew 15:3-9).

**Ver. 13.** *Therefore thus saith the Lord God, &c.*] This being the case, the following contrast is formed between those that believed in Christ, and those that rejected him:

*behold, my servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry*: which has been verified in a literal sense; for the Christians, the Lord’s righteous servants, as the Targum in the several clauses calls them, were, as Eusebius<sup>f1287</sup> relates, by a divine warning, directed to leave Jerusalem, before the destruction of it; when they removed to a place called Pella, beyond Jordan, where they had proper accommodations; while the unbelieving Jews were penned up in the city, and were starved, and multitudes of them died by famine: and in a figurative sense they had a famine, not of bread, or of water, but of hearing the word of the Lord; the Gospel being taken from them, and sent to another people, who received it, and ate it, and were nourished by it; which is bread that strengthens, meat that is savoury, milk that nourishes, honey that is sweet to the taste, delicious fruit, and all that is wholesome and healthful; Christ in the word particularly, who is the Lamb of God, the fatted calf, the hidden manna, the bread of life and

spiritual meat, as his flesh is, is the food which believers eat by faith, and feed upon, and are nourished with; while others starve, feeding upon ashes and husks, on that which is not bread. Kimchi interprets this and the following clauses, figuratively, of the reward of the world to come, and of the delights and pleasures of the soul, signified by eating and drinking; and so, he says, their Rabbins interpret it; (see <sup>עליו</sup> Luke 14:15).

*Behold, my servants shall drink, and ye shall be thirsty*; which has the same sense as before, the same thing in different words. Particularly true believers in Christ drink of his blood by faith, which is drink indeed; and of the grace of Christ, which is the water of life, of which they may drink freely; and of the Gospel of Christ, which is as wine and milk, and as cold water to a thirsty soul; and of the love of Christ, which is better than wine; and they shall drink of new wine with him in the kingdom of his Father; while the wicked shall thirst after their sins and lusts now, and have no satisfaction in them, and hereafter will want a drop of water to cool their tongues.

*Behold, my servants shall rejoice*; in Christ, in his person, grace, and fullness; in his righteousness and salvation; and in hope of the glory of God by him:

*but ye shall be ashamed*; of their vain confidence; of their trust in their own righteousness, in their temple, and the service of it; in their troops and numbers, particularly when taken and carried captive; and more especially this will be their case at the great day of judgment, when they shall see him whom they have pierced.

**Ver. 14.** *Behold, my servants shall sing for joy of heart, &c.*] The songs of electing, redeeming, and calling grace, with which they come to Zion now, and will hereafter; having their hearts filled with joy unutterable, and full of glory, under a sense of the great things which God has done for them:

*but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall howl for vexation of spirit*; under the sore judgments of God upon them, the sword and famine; more especially during the siege of Jerusalem, and when wrath came upon them to the uttermost, in the destruction of their city, temple, and nation, and they fell into the hands of the Romans, who carried them captive, and dispersed them in various places; and as the wicked will in hell to all eternity, where is nothing but weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth.

**Ver. 15.** *And ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen, &c.]* Execrable and abominable to them, as the name of a Jew is to this day, and in all places; for their unbelief and impenitence, for their perfidy and insincerity, for their tricking and covetousness, and other crimes they are addicted to; (see <sup><2419></sup>Jeremiah 24:9):

*for the Lord God shall slay them;* by the sword of the Romans, and by his judgments, which continue upon them; the Targum says, with the second death; and so Jarchi interprets it of eternal death, which is the just wages of sin:

*and call his servants by another name;* a new name, as the Septuagint and Arabic versions; the name of the people of God, the Gentiles formerly were not called by; but now all that believe in Christ, whether Jews or Gentiles, are his people; the name of the sons of God, a name better than that of sons and daughters of the greatest potentate; the name which the mouth of the Lord calls, “Hephzibah” and “Beulah”, being delighted in by the Lord, and married to him; or rather the name of Christians, first given to the disciples of Christ at Antioch, and ever since continued, (<sup><4113></sup>Acts 11:26).

**Ver. 16.** *That he who blesseth himself in the earth, &c.]* That is sensible he stands in need of blessings, and wishes for them, and prays he might have them; or that takes notice that he is blessed with them, and acknowledges them, and is thankful for them:

*shall bless himself in the God of truth;* shall pray to him for blessings he wants, and ascribe what he has unto him, and give him the praise and glory of them; by whom is meant, either God the Father, in opposition to idols, the fictitious deities of the Gentiles, those lying vanities, which were not gods by nature, and to whom the God of truth, or the true God, is often opposed, and whom the Targum here calls the living God; or rather the Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ: for the words may be rendered, “shall bless himself in God Amen”<sup>f1288</sup>; that is, in God, who is the “Amen”, which is one of the names of Christ, (<sup><4134></sup>Revelation 3:14) in whom believers are blessed with all spiritual blessings, and reckon themselves blessed in him, and ascribe blessing to him for them; in whom all the promises of God are yea and amen, and who is the true God, and eternal life, (<sup><4001></sup>2 Corinthians 1:20 <sup><4151></sup>1 John 5:20):

*and he that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of truth;* when an oath is necessary on any account, and it is proper to appeal to the supreme

Being for the truth of anything, this, in Gospel times, should be done in the name of Christ; he, who is the Amen and faithful witness, is to be appealed unto, who is God omniscient, the discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Of forms of swearing by Christ, (see ~~600~~Romans 9:1 ~~472~~2 Corinthians 12:19). Besides, swearing, as it is a part of religious worship, may here be put for the whole; so it signifies, that as all blessings come from Christ, so all worship and duty should be performed unto him, and in his name.

*Because the former troubles are forgotten, they are hid from mine eyes;* which is to be understood not of afflictions and persecutions for the sake of Christ and his Gospel, for these, especially in the first times of it, were very great; though in the latter day they will cease, to which indeed this prophecy extends: but rather either of the idolatry and superstition of the Gentile world, which were troublesome and offensive to God, but now removed by the clear light of the Gospel, and so forgotten by him, and hid from his eyes; or the carnal ordinances of the legal dispensation, which gave great trouble to the worshippers then, and could not cleanse their consciences, and through the fear of death, on the breach of them, were all their lifetime subject to bondage; but now these are all done away by Christ, and in Gospel times forgotten by men, and hid from the sight of God, who regards them no more; (see ~~248~~Jeremiah 3:16), which sense suits with what follows.

**Ver. 17.** *For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth,* &c.] This prophecy began to have its accomplishment in the first times of the Gospel, when through the preaching of it there was a new face of things appeared in Judea, and in the Gentile world, so that the whole looked like a new world; and this was all the effect of creating power, of the mighty, powerful, and efficacious grace of God attending the word, to the conversion of many souls; a new church state was formed, consisting of persons gathered out of the world, the old national church of the Jews being dissolved, and Gospel churches everywhere set up; new ordinances appointed, to continue till Christ's second coming and the old ones abolished; a new way of worship observed, at least in a more spiritual and evangelic manner; a new covenant exhibited, or the covenant of grace held forth in a new form of administration, the former waxen old and vanished away; and the new and living way to the Father, through Christ, made more manifest: this will have a further accomplishment at the conversion of the Jews, which will be as life from the dead, and things will look like a

new world with them; their blindness will be removed, the veil will be taken away from them; they will part with all their legal rites and ceremonies, and the traditions of the elders, and embrace the Messiah, and all his truths and ordinances; old things shall pass away, and all things become new: and it shall have its complete accomplishments in the New Jerusalem state, when not only Christ will appear, and make all things new in a spiritual sense, and that completely; but even in a literal sense there will be new heavens, and a new earth, which John in vision saw; and which Peter says he and other believers expected, according to the promise of God, when these heavens and earth shall be dissolved and pass away; and unless this passage is referred to by him, it will be difficult to find where this promise is; (see ~~6201~~ Revelation 21:1,2,5 ~~6083~~ 2 Peter 3:13):

*and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind*; either the old heavens and earth, which shall pass away, and be no more seen; or the former state both of the Jewish, and Gentile world; or the former troubles, as in the preceding verse, taken in the sense of affliction and persecution; all antichristian troubles shall cease in the latter day, after the conversion of the Jews, and especially in the New Jerusalem state; (see ~~2304~~ Isaiah 2:4 11:9 ~~6176~~ Revelation 7:16,17 21:4).

**Ver. 18.** *But be you glad, and rejoice for ever in that which I create, &c.*] This may refer either to persons converted, both at the beginning of the Gospel, and in the latter day, whether Jews or Gentiles; who are the Lord's creation, or new creatures, being made new men; having new hearts and spirits given them, or created within them; new principles of life, light, grace, and holiness, wrought in them, which are the produce of almighty and creating power; and all such instances are matter of joy, as to the angels in heaven, so to the saints on earth, and especially to the ministers of the Gospel; because of the grace bestowed on men, the glory brought to God, and their own ministry blessed and succeeded, and so their hands and hearts strengthened: or else this refers to the state of things under the Gospel dispensation, in every age of it, and especially in some periods of it, particularly the first and last; and the whole indeed is a new world or state of God's creating, and is matter of joy to all the people of God. The Targum renders it,

“rejoice in the world of worlds, which I create:”

agreeably to which is the version of Bishop Chandler<sup>f1289</sup>,



“rejoice for the age to come, that I create;”

the world to come, (<sup>3015</sup>Hebrews 2:5), which Christ is said to be the father of, in the Septuagint version of (<sup>2916</sup>Isaiah 9:6), the Gospel dispensation, the Messiah’s future world, as opposed to the legal dispensation.

*For, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy;* that is, do that for them, through the mighty power of his grace, as will justly occasion joy to them, and to all others well affected to them; the conversion of the Jews will be matter of joy to the Gentiles; and that, and the bringing in of the fulness of the Gentiles, as well as the destruction of antichrist, which will occasion a new face of things in the world, will be matter of joy to the whole church; (see <sup>6830</sup>Revelation 18:20 19:1-8).

**Ver. 19.** *And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people, &c.]* God himself rejoices in his people, as they are considered in Christ; so he did from all eternity, and so he does at the conversion of them; which is the day of their espousals, and when he manifests his love to them, and rejoices over them to do them good, and continues to do so; and he rejoices in the exercise of his own grace in them, and will do so throughout the New Jerusalem state, and to all eternity. This seems chiefly to respect the time of the Jews’ conversion, and the latter day glory; and will have its most complete accomplishment when the tabernacle of God shall be with men, and he shall dwell among them. (<sup>6818</sup>Revelation 20:3), and then what follows will be perfectly fulfilled,

*and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying;* either on account of outward afflictions and persecutions; or on account of inward darkness, desertion, and temptation, or the prevalence of corruptions, (<sup>6804</sup>Revelation 21:4).

**Ver. 20.** *There shall be no more thence an infant of days, &c.]* That is, there shall no more be carried out from thence, from Jerusalem, or any other place where the church of God is, to the grave, in order to be interred, an infant that has lived but a few days, a very common thing now; but, in the latter day, such instances will be rare, or rather there will be none at all; every child born will live to the age of man, and not be cut off by any premature death, either by any natural disease, or by famine, or sword, or any other calamity, which will now have no place:

*nor an old man that hath not filled his days;* who, though he may in some sense, or in comparison of others, be said to be old, yet has not arrived to

the full term of man's life, threescore years and ten, or more; for it seems, by what follows, as if the term of human life will be lengthened in the latter day, and reach in common to a hundred years; so that as long life is always reckoned a temporal happiness, among the rest that shall be enjoyed, this will be one in the latter day; and which is to be understood not of the Millennium state, in which there will be no death, (~~620~~ Revelation 21:4), which yet will be in this, as the following words show; but of the state preceding that, even the spiritual reign of Christ:

*for the child shall die an hundred years old*; not that that shall be reckoned a child that shall die at a hundred years of age<sup>f1290</sup>, the life of man being now, in these days of the Messiah, as long as they were before the flood, as the Jewish interpreters imagine; but the child that is now born, or he that is now a child, shall live to the age of a hundred years, and not die before: but lest this outward happiness should be trusted to, and a man should imagine that therefore he is in a happy state for eternity, being blessed with such a long life, it follows, "but" or

*though the sinner, being an hundred years old; shall be accursed*; for though this shall be common in this state to good men and bad men, to live a hundred years, yet their death will not be alike; the good man will be blessed, and enter into a happy state of joy and peace; but the wicked man, though he lives as long as the other in this world, shall be accursed at death, and to all eternity; (see ~~2082~~ Ecclesiastes 8:12,13).

**Ver. 21.** *And they shall build houses, and inhabit them*, &c.] In Jerusalem, and other parts of Judea: though this need not be limited to the Jews, but be considered as reaching to all the Lord's people, the Gentiles also; who will be in no fear of enemies, or ever be disturbed by them, but shall dwell in their own houses peaceably and quietly; this is the reverse of what is threatened to the wicked, (~~4530~~ Deuteronomy 28:30):

*and they shall plant vineyards*, and eat the fruit of them; they shall both live to dwell in their houses when built, and till their vineyards bring forth fruit, and then eat of them; and they shall be preserved from enemies breaking in upon them, and wasting their plantations.

**Ver. 22.** *They shall not build, and another inhabit*, &c.] As the Canaanites did, whose houses the Israelites inhabited; but they shall inhabit the houses they have built, and shall not be dispossessed by an enemy:

*they shall not plant, and another eat*; the fruit of the vines, olives, fig trees, or others, planted by them:

*for as the days of a tree are the days of my people*; not as of a leaf which falls every year, but as of a tree, and as of such that last long, as oaks, cedars, and the like; though perhaps a tree bearing fruit fit to eat is meant; and the sense be, that the Lord's people should live as long as the trees planted by them, and so should eat the fruit thereof, and not leave them to others to partake of. The Targum, Septuagint, and Arabic versions, render it,

“as the days of the tree of life;”

which, some of the Rabbins say, were five hundred years. The allusion may be to the tree of life in paradise, and may be expressive of the long life of good men in this state; and as the tree of life was typical of Christ, who is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon him, it may denote that eternal life his people have by him.

*And mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands*; what they have built and planted; they shall live long in their houses, and for many years partake of the fruit of their vineyards. The blessing of long life is carried on with the promises of all other instances of outward happiness.

**Ver. 23.** *They shall not labour in vain*, &c.] As they do, who build houses, and enemies come and turn them out of them, and dwell in them themselves; or who plant vineyards, and sow their fields, and strangers come and devour them; or they are smitten with blasting and mildew:

*nor bring forth for trouble*; for death, as the Targum; or for a curse, as the Septuagint: the tense is, they shall not beget and bring forth children, that shall immediately die by some distemper or another, or be taken off by famine, sword, or pestilence, to the great grief and trouble of their parents; but these shall live, and outlive their parents, so that their death will never be a trouble to them:

*for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them*; or, “they are a seed, the blessed of the Lord”<sup>f1291</sup>; or, “they are the seed blessed of God”, or “the Lord”, as the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions; or, as the Targum,

“a seed whom the Lord hath blessed;”

a spiritual seed of the church, a seed raised up to serve the Lord, whom he blesses with temporal and spiritual blessings; and their offspring also, being made a spiritual seed by the grace of God, and succeeding them in the church, and treading in their steps.

**Ver. 24.** *And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer,* &c.] The sense is, should they be attacked by any enemy, or fear that they shall be disturbed by them, and so bethink themselves of making application to the Lord for help; while they are preparing for prayer, stirring up one another to it, and appointing a season for it, to meet together on that account; before they are able to put up one petition in a regular way, the Lord will appear for them, and give an answer of peace:

*and while they are yet speaking, I will hear;* while they are praying to him, he hears and answers, and grants their requests, and more, as he did Daniel. This shows the readiness of the Lord to help and assist his people in any time of trouble, or when they may fear an enemy; and is a great encouragement to attend the throne of grace constantly.

**Ver. 25.** *The wolf and the lamb shall feed together,* &c.] Or, “as one”<sup>f1292</sup>; as if they were one, of the same kind and nature, and lived upon the same food. The people of God are comparable to lambs, for their harmlessness and innocence; and wicked men to wolves, for their fierceness and cruelty; but, by the grace of God, the latter become as mild and as gentle as the former, and live upon the same spiritual food, and join with them in attendance on the word and ordinances, where they find spiritual refreshment and comfort together; such who have been persecutors of the church shall now become members of it; and many instances of this kind, as there were in the first times of the Gospel, so there shall be in the latter day:

*and the lions shall eat straw like the bullock,* or “ox”; to which creature the ministers of the Gospel are compared for their laboriousness, as wicked persecutors are to lions; and sometimes the latter have been so changed by the grace of God, as to become preachers of it, as Saul was, and very probably many will hereafter; however, there will be no persecution of the church after those days; wolves and lions will have their nature changed, and be in fellowship with the saints, and be better employed than before in persecuting them:

*and dust shall be the serpent's meat*; the meat of the old serpent, the devil, as was threatened, (<sup><OR&B4></sup>Genesis 3:14) to which he shall now be confined; he shall not be able to bite the saints, being bruised under their feet; he shall only have power over carnal, worldly, earthly minded men; and shall not be able to give the church any trouble, by instigating men to persecute it:

*they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord*; that is, Satan and his emissaries; wicked men, comparable to lions and wolves, shall no more drink the blood of the saints, or persecute the church of God; after the calling of the Jews, and the bringing in the fulness of the Gentiles, and the destruction of antichrist, there will be no more persecution of the church of Christ, the mountain of God's holiness; he has said it, and we may be assured of the truth of it; (see Gill on <sup><<2310></sup>Isaiah 11:9").