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The Wolf and the Lamb Will Feed Together, and the Lion Will Eat Straw Like the Ox 65: 17-25

The wolf and the lamb will feed together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox DIG: What emotion will typify the relationship of the restored people to ADONAI? Of God to them? What accounts for this new state of affairs? What will life be like when the exiles are freed? What is the reality that lies behind each figure of speech? How does the account of the creation and the fall figure as background to this passage? What do we learn here about the LORD's promises?

REFLECT: How does this new creation come into being for us (see Second Corinthians 5:17)? What will be the impact of this truth on our lifestyle (see Second Peter 3:11-3)? What does this vision ultimately mean to us (see Revelation 21:1-5)? Which of these New Covenant applications of this heavenly vision especially strikes you now? Why? Try to picture your life without any of the causes or results of grief, sin, or pain. What would that free you to do? How might this vision of what God will bring about affect the way you deal with the struggles you do face now?

The fervent prayer of the believing remnant in Chapter 64 is answered by God in Chapters 65 and 66. ADONAI makes it very clear that their sins and unfaithfulness were responsible for the judgment they had endured during the Great Tribulation. But their sins had not frustrated His promises and purposes concerning Isra'el; therefore, He gives a vision of the Messianic Kingdom and her position in it.

Behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind (65:17). These verses describe the glories and marvels of a new era in which all existing earthly conditions will undergo a complete makeover. A distinction needs to be made between the **new heavens and a new earth** in this passage and the **new heaven and a new earth** in **Revelation 21** and **22**. The **new heavens and new**

earth in **Revelation 21** and **22** describes the Eternal State (see the commentary on **Revelation**, to see link click **Fq - The Eternal State**), which has unique characteristics not found in the Messianic Kingdom. For example, **there was no longer any sea (Revelation 21:1)**, and **the New Jerusalem will come down out of heaven. The City will be laid out like a square (Revelation 21:16)** with room for fifty-three billion people. In addition, **there will be no more death (Revelation 21:4)** and we know that there *will* be **death** in the Messianic Kingdom as we will see in this passage. The conditions of the **new heavens and new earth** described here are often opposite of the Eternal State found in **Revelation**.

We must remember that the Messianic Kingdom was the high point of messianic prophecy. No prophet in the TaNaKh ever saw beyond it. Having only the TaNaKh to guide them they thought that once the Kingdom was established, the conditions described concerning it would be eternal. An example of this in the New Covenant is at the Mount of Transfiguration (**Matthew 17:1-13**). After **Jesus Christ was transfigured before** the three disciples, and **Peter saw the Lord's face shining like the sun and His clothes became as white as the light**, he thought **Yeshua** was ushering in the Kingdom. And as a good Jew he knew that the Feast of Tabernacles would be celebrated in the Kingdom (**Zechariah 14:16**). So he **said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here** (in the Messianic Kingdom). **If you wish, I will put up three shelters** (or booths, or tabernacles) - **one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah."** **Peter** has received a lot of grief for putting his foot in his mouth, and many times he deserves it. But here, **Peter** makes a correct statement based upon revelation that he had at the time. The point is that **Peter** thought conditions of the Kingdom would be eternal. But the book of **Revelation** teaches us that the Kingdom will last **a thousand years (Revelation 20:2)**, and after that there will be **a new eternal heaven and a new earth (Revelation 21:1)**. So as the Messianic Kingdom is the high point of prophecy in the TaNaKh, the Eternal State is the high point of prophecy in the B'rit Chadashah.

This present earth will undergo a massive renovation during a **seventy-five day interval** between the end of the Great Tribulation and the start of the Messianic Kingdom (see the commentary on **Revelation Ey - The Seventy-Five Day Interval**). In addition, **all the Jews** who are a part of the national regeneration of **Isra'el** at the end of the Great Tribulation (see the commentary on **Revelation Ev - The Basis for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ**) will receive **their resurrection bodies** (see the commentary on **First Corinthians Dv - Our Resurrection Bodies**).

As **ADONAI** answers **the believing remnant** at the end of the Great Tribulation (**53:1-9**), **He** describes the Millennial **Jerusalem**, which points to the fact that **Israel's** past sins could not frustrate **His** ultimate promises and plans for **her**. **But be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create.** The pair of roots for *gladness* and *rejoicing* occurs three times in **65:18-19**, emphasizing how completely the wonder of **the LORD's** creative work will blot all the memory of the former world. **For I will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy (65:18). Jerusalem will be a delight;** but it is not that today. It has the Wailing Wall and a lot of unhappy people. The day will come, however, when the **people** themselves will be **a joy** to **God**. The very nature of **Jerusalem** will be a **delight** and the very nature of **its people** will **be joy**. **The new creation and the New Jerusalem** will be the perfect setting for **His new people**.

The LORD continues to give **His** vision of the Messianic Kingdom to the faithful remnant at the end of the Great Tribulation. **Zion** will not only be **a joy** to itself, but also to **God**. **He** declared to them: **I will rejoice over Jerusalem and take delight in My people; the sound of weeping and of crying, literally screaming, will be heard no more (65:19). The Jerusalem** that had so often been a source of grief, disgust and rage will one day bring **Him** nothing **but joy**. What a change there is going to be for **Jerusalem!** This is one of the most touching thoughts in the book of **Isaiah**.

Never again in the Messianic Kingdom **will there be an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not live out his years; he who dies at a hundred will be thought a mere youth; he who fails to reach a hundred will be considered accursed (65:20).** This verse describes the existence of life, death, and sin in the Kingdom. Many people are surprised to discover that there is sin in the Millennial Kingdom. But sin and death are precisely what distinguishes the Kingdom from the eternal state. The Kingdom, while more perfect than anything we will experience during our lifetime, will still have the existence of sin and death. The key to grasping this concept lies in understanding Hebrew poetry.

In line one, we learn that **never again will there be an infant who lives but a few days.** According to the first line **there will be** no **infant** mortality in the Kingdom. The reason for this is given in the second line.

The second line will further explain the first line. **Or an old man who does not live out his years.** Everyone will be allowed to live up to a certain point.

In the third line, **he who dies at a hundred will be thought** of as **a mere youth**. In the Kingdom, the one who is considered to have died young is the one who dies at one hundred years old. That is the minimum that all **unbelievers** will be allowed to live.

The fourth line goes on to explain that **the sinner who reaches** (Hebrew: *vehachovte*, meaning *the sinner who reaches*) **a hundred will be considered accursed**. This verse tells us why death is greatly reduced in the Kingdom, but at the same time not eliminated; **because death will be for unbelievers only**. We should not be surprised that there are those who will not believe in **Messiah** even though **He** will be in their presence. Most of **His** hearers did not believe the first time **He** came, either.²⁵⁵ The one **who dies at a hundred will be** the **accursed sinner**. At the beginning of the Kingdom, most of the people in the world have been killed by the plagues described in the book of **Revelation**. Most of the people will be resurrected saints with resurrection bodies who **will neither marry nor be given in marriage (Matthew 22:30)**. The Gentiles who survive the Judgment of the Gentiles for their treatment of **Isra'el** are the ones who will enter and populate the Gentile nations in the Millennium. These are the **sheep** Gentiles (see the commentary on **Revelation Fc - The Sheep and the Goats**) who, because of their pro-Semitism, will all be able to participate in and populate the Kingdom.²⁵⁶ They will be marrying and being given in marriage. In their natural bodies they will produce children who will be born with the same sin nature inherited from Adam that we are born with today. Those born in the Kingdom will be given up to their **one-hundredth year** to accept **Messiah**. If **they** do, **they** will receive **their** perfect, eternal bodies at the time. But if **they** do not accept **Him** by the time **they** are one hundred **they** will die. So, death will be greatly reduced because it will be for unbelieving Gentiles only.

In a parallel passage, **Jeremiah 31:31-34** tells us that in the Kingdom there will be no Jewish unbelievers. Every **Jew** will accept **Christ** when the time comes. **Jeremiah 31:34** says: **No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, "Know ADONAI," because they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest," declares the LORD. "For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more."** Therefore, **65:20** gives us the key concerning life and death in the Kingdom.

As **God** continues to describe the Messianic Kingdom to the believing remnant **He** says that it will be a new society characterized by prosperity and longevity. **They will build houses and dwell in them; they will plant vineyards and eat their**

fruit. No longer will they build houses and others live in them, or plant and others eat (65:21-22a). One of the curses for Torah disobedience was that people would never be able to enjoy the fruits of their work (**Deuteronomy 28:15-46**, especially **verse 30; Amos 5:11; Micah 6:15; Zephaniah 1:13**). One would build a house, but another would live in it; one would plant a vineyard, however someone else would eat its fruit. One's own efforts would fail, or would be driven out, or one's life would be cut off prematurely.

By contrast, Torah obedience would have the opposite effect (**Deuteronomy 28:1-14**). That is the picture here: **For as the days of a tree, so will be the days of My people; My chosen ones will long enjoy to the absolute maximum the works of their hands. They will not toil in vain or bear children doomed to misfortune, literally, for terror; for they will be a people blessed by the LORD, they and their descendants with them (65:22b-23).** Instead of tears and frustration there will be smiles and satisfaction. Why? Because the people will be able to enjoy the fruits of their labor. The Messianic Kingdom will be like an enduring tree. Instead of dead chaff being driven by the wind (**5:24, 17:13, 29:5, 33:11**), or great trees cut down by the axe of **God (30:34)**, the believing remnant will be like trees **planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever they do will prosper (Psalm 1:3).**

All their prayers will be answered because they will have perfect communication with **ADONAI**. In fact, **the LORD** says that **before they call I will answer; while they are still speaking I will hear (65:24)**. The sin nature of **the Jews** had prevented **them** from communicating with **God** in a personal way. But after **their** national regeneration (**Romans 11:26**), **all** godly prayers **will be divinely fulfilled even before they have been expressed.**



In **God's** vision of the Messianic Kingdom, **His** peace will even extend down to the animals. **The wolf and the lamb will feed together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox (65:25a) but dust will be the serpent's food (65:25a)** We are told that all animals will become vegetarians; they will not feed upon each other. This was the state of the animal kingdom in the Garden of Eden before the fall. Animals will be killed to sacrifice during the Kingdom (**Ezekiel 46:2**), and man **will eat** meat as well. So animals will be killed but humans will kill them. **But dust will be the serpent's food (65:25b)**. In **Genesis 3:14**, **God** condemned **the serpent** to **crawl on his belly and eat dust all the days of his life**. When that happens the prophecy will be fulfilled and the curse will be truly broken.

The wolf eating with **the lamb** is not the picture today. If **the wolf and the lamb** lie down together, the wolf has **lamb** chops. Not only that, **the lion will eat straw**. That seems pretty impossible to us today. But if **God** can make **the lion**, **He** can make **the lion eat straw**. The law of the jungle will be changed to conform to the rule of **the King**. There will be nothing to hurt or harm and as **the LORD** says, there **will neither harm nor destruction be on all My holy mountain (65:25c)**. Earlier, **Isaiah** had said that **in the last days the mountain of ADONAI's Temple will be established as chief among the mountains (2:2a)**. At the time of the Second Coming, **Isra'el** will experience some incredible geographical and topographical changes. One of the most striking changes will be the rise of a very high **mountain** that will become the highest **mountain** in the world. On top of this **mountain** will stand the millennial **Jerusalem** and **Temple (Ezekiel 40-43)**. Here, **God's** rule from this **mountain** and **Temple** will be preeminent.