

Sabbath School Lesson #13 – Rebirth of Planet Earth – 20-26 March 2021

Christ promises to create a new earth. “For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind” (Isaiah 65:17). Read further: “... The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock; and dust shall be the serpent’s meat.” (verses 18-25). What! lions and wolves in the new earth, the saints’ eternal inheritance? Yes, most certainly, for this will be Eden restored. While Isaiah 66 may be made to apply to a time before the Second Coming, it most appropriately bring to view scenes at the beginning and at the end of the 1000 years.

Sunday: New Heavens and a New Earth – Isaiah 65:17-25 bring to view the new earth. “For the Lord shall comfort Zion; He will comfort all her waste places; and He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody” (Isaiah 51:3). What class of people shall live in it? “Thy people also shall be all righteous; they shall inherit the land forever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified” (Isaiah 60:21). And we “look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness” (2 Peter 3:13).

Monday: Divine “Magnet” – Read Isaiah 66:1-14. It is in Exodus 25:8 that we find the reason why the tabernacle was built. God told Moses to have the people bring offerings of gold, silver, and brass, fine linen, etc, and said, “Let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them.” In one sense this was a great honour; for, as Moses said, “What nation is there so great, that hath God so nigh unto them as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon Him for?” (Deuteronomy 4:7). Yet when we consider this further, the command to build the sanctuary, together with the statement of the reason why it was to be built, is one of the most sorrowful things to be found in the Scriptures. “Let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them!” What a sad thing! that God’s people, whom He had delivered from bondage for the express purpose of dwelling not simply among them, but in them, had to have a house made with hands in order that His glory might be seen among them. Thus the tabernacle was at once a witness of God’s presence and of the unfaithfulness of the children of Israel. “The Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands” (Acts 7:48). “Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool; where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest? for all these things hath my hand made” (Isaiah 66:1-2). It is evident that the tabernacle built by Moses could not be the real dwelling-place of God, and every Jew ought to have been impressed by that truth every time he looked at it. Solomon knew it well, for at the dedication of the temple that he built, which was far larger and grander than the first tabernacle, he said, “Will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded” (1 Kings 8:27). What then is God’s dwelling place? He Himself indicated it when, after asking, “Where is the place that ye build unto Me? and where is the place of My rest?” He said, “But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at My word” (Isaiah 66:1-2). “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are” (1 Corinthians 3:16-17). The human body is the temple of God’s Spirit (1 Cor 6:19). This is the true dwelling place of God.

Isaiah 66:5-14 brings to view the coming of the Lord at the beginning of the thousand years. We may learn this by comparing scripture with scripture. Compare verse 5 with Matthew 24:30 and John 14:3 and Acts 1:11 and 1 Thessalonians 4:16 and Hebrews 9:28. Compare verse 6 with Jeremiah 25:30 and Joel 3:16 and Rev. 16:17. Compare verse 7 with Revelation 12:5. Compare verse 8 with Isaiah 26:19 and Ezekiel 37:12, 22 and John 5:28-29 and Rev 20:5 and Colossians 1:18 and 1 Corinthians 15:23 (Christ the first fruits; afterwards they that are Christ’s at his coming). Verse 8: The earth’s bringing forth a nation in one day, is the resurrection of God’s people from their graves; and this is called a birth, as is the resurrection of Christ. “For as soon as Zion travailed she brought forth her children.” Zion here is a figure of the people of God, referring back to the commencement of the gospel dispensation, during which time the subjects for this nation were to be brought in. Compare verse 12 with Acts 15:7-17 and Romans 9:23-30. Verse 13 “As one whom his mother

comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem.” This must refer to the saints in the New Jerusalem in heaven after the second appearing of Christ, and the first resurrection. Compare with Galatians 4:26: But Jerusalem, which is above, is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written, Isaiah 54:1. John 13:36: Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, whither I go, thou canst not follow me now, but thou shalt follow me afterwards. John 14:2-3: In my Father’s house are many mansions; I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself. 1 Thessalonians 4:16: For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, etc. Here the saints, dead and living, are caught up to meet their Lord in the clouds in the air; and according to the promise of Christ to Peter, they follow him whither he went, to heaven, to his Father’s house. This is a promise of going to heaven when Jesus comes. Again: Hebrews 12:22: But ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. But ye are come unto: not that this has come to you. This city Abraham looked for. Hebrews 11:10, 16; 13:14; 10:34: Ye have in heaven a better and enduring *substance*. 1 Peter 1:4: To an inheritance *reserved in heaven* for you. This is proof without going to the book of the Revelation. But let us turn and read a few quotations there. Revelation 4:1-2, 5-6; 15:2: Sea of glass before the throne, and the saints on the sea, and the throne in heaven. Revelation 19:1: And after these things (the seven last plagues) I heard a great voice of *much people in heaven*. How could the voices of many people be heard in heaven, unless they went there, after the seven last plagues? Compare verse 14: And his indignation towards his enemies. Here we have the destruction of all the ungodly in the seven last plagues. Revelation 16; 19:15: Christ shall smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; same as Psalms 2:9: Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces.

Tuesday: Missionaries and Worship Leaders – Read Isaiah 66:15-20. This brings to view scenes at the end of the 1000 years. Compare verses 15-16 with Isaiah 66:22-24. Verse 18: I will gather all nations and tongues, and they shall come and see my glory. Verse 19: And I will set a sign (Christ, Luke 2:34) among them. Matthew 25:31-32, 46: When the Son of man shall come in his *glory*, and all the holy angels with him, then he shall sit upon the throne of his glory. And before him shall be *gathered all nations*. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment. This must be at the end of the one thousand years, as at this time the wicked receive their everlasting punishment. Revelation 20:5, 7-9, 11, 14: The rest of the dead live again when the thousand years are expired, and then Satan goes out to deceive the nations that are raised, and they then are gathered together to the battle against the saints, around the beloved city, and fire comes down from God out of heaven and devours them. And at this same time the great white throne appears (the same as in Matthew 25:31) and Christ who sits upon it. Then all the wicked die the second death. Verse 19: I will send those that escape of them, etc. These are the saints, as may be seen by verse 22. So shall your seed and your name remain verse 24. And they shall go forth and look upon the carcasses, or dead bodies. These are the wicked, resurrected dead who have been gathered and destroyed. “Unto the nations that have not seen the glory of Christ, and they shall declare his glory among the Gentiles [heathens].” These are the nations gathered to be consumed by fire. Verse 20: They shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the Lord out of all nations to my holy mountain Jerusalem. Saints will worship in Jerusalem.

Wednesday: Community of Faith – Isaiah 66:21: And I will also take of them for priests, etc. Revelation 1:6: And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father. Compare also with Revelation 5:1: And hast made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the new earth. Then every creature living will praise God. This is after 1000 years.

Thursday: So Shall Your Seed and Your Name Remain – Isaiah 66:22-24 bring to view scenes after the 1000 years. For as the new heaven and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me saith the Lord. This is at the end of the thousand years, when the new Jerusalem comes down from heaven to the new earth, as the capital of the kingdom of God.