

The Book of Isaiah  
*Chapters 63-66*

**Introduction:** Today, we move to the final section of our study—Chapters 63-66

Look at them through six short sections.

Remember two areas of focus:

1. Righteousness is expected of God's people.
2. Cannot be attained without intervention of the servant (Messiah).

Dilemma (reoccurring)

*Their feet run to evil, And they make haste to shed innocent blood; Their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity; Wasting and destruction are in their paths. 8 The way of peace they have not known, And there is no justice in their ways; They have made themselves crooked paths; Whoever takes that way shall not know peace. 9 Therefore justice is far from us, Nor does righteousness overtake us; We look for light, but there is darkness! For brightness, but we walk in blackness! 10 We grope for the wall like the blind, And we grope as if we had no eyes; We stumble at noonday as at twilight; We are as dead men in desolate places. 11 We all growl like bears, And moan sadly like doves; We look for justice, but there is none; For salvation, but it is far from us. 12 For our transgressions are multiplied before You, And our sins testify against us; For our transgressions are with us, And as for our iniquities, we know them: 13 In transgressing and lying against the Lord, And departing from our God, Speaking oppression and revolt, Conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood. 14 Justice is turned back, And righteousness stands afar off; For truth is fallen in the street, And equity cannot enter. 15 So truth fails. And he who departs from evil makes himself a prey. Isaiah 59:7-15a NKJV*

## Answer

*Then the Lord saw it, and it displeased Him That there was no justice. 16 He saw that there was no man, And wondered that there was no intercessor; Therefore His own arm brought salvation for Him; And His own righteousness, it sustained Him. 17 For He put on righteousness as a breastplate, And a helmet of salvation on His head; He put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, And was clad with zeal as a cloak. 18 According to their deeds, accordingly He will repay, Fury to His adversaries, Recompense to His enemies; The coastlands He will fully repay. 19 So shall they fear The name of the Lord from the west, And His glory from the rising of the sun; When the enemy comes in like a flood, The Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him. 20 "The Redeemer will come to Zion, And to those who turn from transgression in Jacob, "Says the Lord. 21 "As for Me," says the Lord, "this is My covenant with them: My Spirit who is upon you, and My words which I have put in your mouth, shall not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your descendants, nor from the mouth of your descendants' descendants," says the Lord, "from this time and forevermore." 60 Arise, shine; For your light has come! And the glory of the Lord is risen upon you. 2 For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, And deep darkness the people; But the Lord will arise over you, And His glory will be seen upon you. 3 The Gentiles shall come to your light, And kings to the brightness of your rising. Isaiah 59:15b-60:3 NKJV*

Again now in the six sections the themes are repeated

### I. Humanity's righteousness comes only through divine intervention that punishes sin. (63:1-6)

- A. God will defeat every enemy, including the most dreadful sin, through His warrior—Messiah
- B. Certainly a picture of defeating the enemies of Israel—but greater yet—sin.
- C. Comes from Edom (1) which represents defiant humanity (Edom) where the battle is won

New Testament counterpart: Revelation 6:15-17; 14:17-20; 19:15

- Tend to recoil
- We don't fully understand the holiness of God that is absolute
- He must ultimately judge all that reject Him

- D. Righteousness can only come through divine activity that includes judgment

NOTE: Isaiah 63:5, 6—Christ alone

E. Christ did this on the cross

*For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness. Romans 1:18 NKJV*

- All who reject Him will experience wrath
- Must let Him destroy sin in our lives now

**II. Humanity's righteousness is only possible because of the mercy and lovingkindness of God. (63:7-14)**

A. Underserved grace of God

1. For Israel
2. The Church
3. For us

B. Apostasy

1. Israel
2. Church

C. God's willingness to restore the truly repentant (see v. 13, 14)—a picture of Red Sea and Jordan—delivered despite of their sin

TRUTH: If we wake up there is no end to what He can do for us.

**III. Humanity's petition for divine righteousness. (63:15-64:12)**

NOTE: Despite the rebellion of the people of God, His unending mercy has been declared. This reality serves as a basis for prayer.

Four Components

A. The dilemma (63:15-19)

NOTE: The prophet intercedes on behalf of the people

1. God is distant (15)
2. It seems wrong because He is their Father (16)
3. People wander with hardened hearts (17)

- a. Is this God's fault?
  - b. God is not the one who has left.
  - c. He had made a way for a softened heart—He needs our will.
4. God's people have lost the temple, the holy city

NOTE: When in despair we often maximize the bad and minimize the good. That is the case here. Had the temple a long time.

B. The cry (64:1-5)

1. Leave your isolation in the heavens and come to the aid of your people (1)
2. To make your name known to the nations (2)
3. Not a request based in fantasy (3, 4)
4. Conditions to which God responds (4b, 5)

C. The acknowledgment (64:6, 7)

1. Unclean
2. Even their good deeds are filthy rags
3. Blown away from you by our sin like winds blow leaves

Conundrum: We have turned away and must return but you have turned away from us.

D. The cry intensified (64:8-12)

QUESTION:

1. Is this a straw man argument? Isaiah asking God to remember them?
2. Calvinism—God just had to consult His cosmic blueprint to see who He turns to.
3. Arminianism—God is wringing His hands wondering who will turn.
4. Process Theology—Open Theism—God doesn't know what we will do. This is their way of leaving room for free will. Not God of Scripture.
5. God cannot be confirmed to human reasoning.
6. Hold tension of free will and divine sovereignty.
7. We set patterns by our choices that will not be broken unless God intervenes.
8. He will not intervene unless we repent.

#### IV. Divine response to humanity's cry.(65:1-16)

##### A. The problem rests in the people, not in God (1)

Human Claim: 64:7 “you have hid your faces from us.”

1. Constantly revealing Himself
2. The problem was them

NOTE: Speaking of Gentiles

*But Isaiah is very bold and says: "I was found by those who did not seek Me; I was made manifest to those who did not ask for Me." 21 But to Israel he says: "All day long I have stretched out My hands To a disobedient and contrary people." Romans 10:20-21 NKJV*

##### B. Israel's problem (2-7)

1. Obstinate and rebellious (2)
2. Walk in a “not good way” (2)
3. Walk according to their ways (2)

NOTE: Human condition today

4. Devised worship practices to manipulate God (3-5)

NOTE: Canaanite practices

5. Ritualism without a changed heart
6. God WILL ACT—but

##### C. There are those who seek His ways (8-11)

\*For those who sought Him

- Will
- Heart
- Plan
- Word
- Not His blessings

##### D. It's not birthright, not behavior, but His promises will be kept (12-16)

V. **Humanity's righteousness found in Christ will be rewarded.** (65:17-25)

A. Context of ancient world before

1. Believed visible would only a dim reflection of invisible world of gods.
2. That is where all important took place.
3. Humanity had no choice—determined by the gods

B. Truth—there is a real world and humans do have real choices to make that have cosmic consequences.

C. This is a real world and choices have to have consequences

1. This is not all there is to reality
2. All effects of our choices are not expressed in this life
3. Justice not entirely served here
4. All evil not punished here
5. All good is not recognized here

D. But not an accommodation to pagan ritual

1. Not real heaven and real earth to come
2. New heaven and new earth

E. Human choices have consequences and shape reality not cosmic reality shapes human choices.

1. A slain lamb is on the throne in heaven because we sinned
2. We were not doomed to sin because there needed to be a slain lamb on the throne in heaven

F. We must not think because New Heavens and Earth are coming it doesn't matter what we do. It's the other way around.

READ: 2 Peter 3

VI. **Final words of Isaiah** (66)

A. Final reminder of what God seeks after (66:1-6)

1. God must be exalted
2. Humanity must be contrite

B. Blessing and abundance to come to the righteous (66:7-14)

C. Hope and Judgment (66:15-24)

— Grisly way to end

— Promises of God are many

*For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us. 2 Corinthians 1:20-21 NKJV*

*"For as the new heavens and the new earth Which I will make shall remain before Me," says the Lord, "So shall your descendants and your name remain. Isaiah 66:22 NKJV*

— But whether we participate or not is still up to us

D. We have a choice

Sunday School chorus

One door and one way and yet its sides are two. I'm on the inside, on which side are you?

### Conclusion:

God of Life

*In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple. 2 Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. 3 And one cried to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory!" 4 And the posts of the door were shaken by the voice of him who cried out, and the house was filled with smoke. 5 So I said: "Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, The Lord of hosts." 6 Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a live coal which he had taken with the tongs from the altar. 7 And he touched my mouth with it, and said: "Behold, this has touched your lips; Your iniquity is taken away, And your sin purged." Isaiah 6:1-7 NKJV*

*"For I know their works and their thoughts. It shall be that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come and see My glory. Isaiah 66:18 NKJV*