

Lesson 44 Isaiah 65:17-66:17 New Heavens and New Earth

Introduction

- ¹⁷ “For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth;
And the former things will not be remembered or come to mind.
¹⁸ “But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create;

Wow! Imagine that – evil, brokenness, calamity, injustice swept away in the recreation of a New Earth with New Heavens above. All of our sin and weakness; all of our guilt and shame remembered no more nor even lurking in our mind. The people of God set free for gladness and joy in a new creation.

I commented in a previous lesson that the climax of the Book of the Conqueror comes in the middle, but reading this I am not so sure. Does the climax come in the middle when the Conqueror dresses himself to bring righteousness and salvation, the righteousness of the wedding and the salvation of vengeance, establishing the promised, glorious Zion? Is that the climax? Or does the climax come now in the last two chapters with the proclamation of a New Heaven and a New Earth and a sign established among the nations? Well, the beauty of a chiasmic structure is that we do not have to decide. Chiasm can give emphasis to the beginning, to the middle, and to the end all at the same time.

Oswalt understands this declaration in 65:17, “For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth,” to connect all the way back to the first verse of the Book of the Conqueror in 56:1. ¹ “Preserve justice and do righteousness for my salvation is about to come and my righteousness to be revealed.” God’s righteousness is going to be revealed in the Gospel of Jesus Christ: a revelation that comes in stages. First, Jesus comes as the Suffering Servant and enables our union with Him. That is a manifestation of God’s saving righteousness that enables new creation in the believer. The Book of Revelation later speaks of a thousand-year reign. Maybe this passage speaks to that reign. That is the beginning of a new kind of kingdom on Earth. But the fulfillment of God’s righteous promises cannot come to be until this present order of creation itself is redeemed through a re-creation of heavens and Earth.

So we are a people looking ahead to the culmination of God’s promises, but we do not sit and do nothing while we wait. We are invited to participate in the unfolding reality of God’s Kingdom, from stage to stage. The beginning of the Book of the Conqueror exhorts us to “Preserve justice and do righteousness...” now because of what will be. Preserve justice and do righteousness,

- ¹⁷ “For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth;
And the former things will not be remembered or come to mind.
¹⁸ “But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create;

We want our actions in the present to be a confirmation of a participation in what will be. The unfolding of God’s kingdom involves some complexity. The watcher’s lamentation over the destruction of God’s people raises the question, “Who really are God’s people? Who is going to be glad and rejoice forever?” Are the people of Israel God’s chosen Kingdom or not? The answer, “Yes and no.” That’s the answer Isaiah gives, and that’s what we see in Paul’s development of this very question in Romans 9-11. Who are God’s people? Paul is going to draw on the potter metaphor in Isaiah 64,8 to argue the justice of God’s wrath against the Jews and God’s mercy towards Gentiles. That’s in Romans 9. In Romans 10, Paul picks up God’s response to the watcher in Isaiah 65:2, “I have spread out my hands all day long to a rebellious people.” God has not refused Israel. Israel has refused God. Does that mean Israel is now totally out of the picture? No. Paul’s argument in Romans 11 follows the two stages of Isaiah’s thought. First, Israel is never completely rejected. There is a remnant of Jews who believe and believing are included among God’s people. Second, Israel as an entity, maybe as a majority, will be included back in after the time of the Gentiles has come to an

¹ J. N. Oswalt. *NICOT: The Book of Isaiah, Chs 40-66*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1998) 655.

end. Those two ideas are consistent in Isaiah. Not all Israel is saved, the remnant is saved. And Israel will exist as a distinct entity at the end of things and be included together with Gentiles as God's people.

Israel has been chosen out for a special role in salvation history. That does not mean Israel and God's Kingdom are equivalent. There is a close connection under the Old Covenant between the spiritual people of God and the geo-political nation of Israel. Even then the two are not the same. Israel will be destroyed and exiled. Many Jews will be regarded as enemies to God. And yet, a remnant has always been and always will be. These are God's people in the spiritual sense, God's Kingdom in a spiritual sense. This kind of kingdom becomes even more prevalent under the New Covenant when identification with any one geopolitical nation is completely removed and the locus of what it means to be the people of God becomes spiritual faith in Jesus Christ. The people of God are those who have believed in Jesus.

So in Isaiah's time there is some complexity between ethnic Israel, geopolitical Israel, and spiritual Israel. As we're coming into the climactic end of Isaiah, we can see these four truths.

First, the rebellious children of Israel will be treated as enemies of God, separated from Him.

Second, those who remain true to God will continue to be included in covenant relationship with Him.

Third, Gentiles will also be included into covenant relationship with Yahweh.

Fourth, Israel will play an important role in the culmination of God's work when He recreates Heavens and Earth.

These intertwined truths are organized by Isaiah into a chiastic pattern in his last two chapters. The whole Book of the Conqueror has been chiastic. It is also helpful to recognize this chiasm within that chiasm, because recognizing the pattern helps us to understand Isaiah's move from remnant to rebellious and back again, kind of, multiple times.

In our last lesson, I went with Oswalt's structure of prayer and response, so that's more just recognizing the linear connection between the watcher's lament and God's response to that lament. So we just covered response as 65:1-16.

Motyer is the one who recognizes the more complex chiastic structure.² According to his view, God's response covers almost all of chapters 65 and 66 in a nine-part chiasm that highlights the tension between remnant and rebellious, God's blessing and God's judgment.

The response section in our last lesson just took us half of that chiasm. I'm going to explain to you now the parallel pairs Motyer has identified, and going through the pairs will do two things for us. It will provide a review of the response material from our last lesson while at the same time giving us a forecast of the parallel second half of that response, that we're going to cover in this lesson.

² J. A. Motyer. *The Prophecy of Isaiah* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996) 522-23.

- A The Lord's call to those who had not previously sought or known him (65:1)
- B The Lord's requital on those who have rebelled and followed cults (2-7)
 - C A preserved remnant, his servants, who will inherit his land (8-10)
 - D Those who forsake the Lord and follow cults are destined for slaughter because he called and they did not answer but chose what did not please him (11-12)
 - E Joys for the Lord's servants in the new creation. The new Jerusalem and its people (13-25)
 - D' Those who have chosen their own way and their improper worship. They are under judgment because the Lord called and they did not answer but chose what did not please him (66:1-4)
- C' The glorious future of those who tremble at the Lord's word, the miracle children of Zion, the Lord's servants (5-14)
- B' Judgment on those who follow cults (15-17)
- A' The Lord's call to those who have not previously heard (18-21)

God's longer response to the watcher's lament begins and ends with an invitation from God to a people who do not know Him. In A, 65:1, that invitation was to a rebellious Israel. In A' 66:18-21, the invitation is going to be to Gentile peoples in far off countries.

In B and B', 65:2-7 and 66:15-17, God declares judgment on those who embrace paganism. Both passages mention sacred gardens and eating swine's flesh. C and C', 65:8-10 and 66:5-14, give attention to the remnant. The faithful are described in both sections as servants. D and D', 65:11-12 and 66:1-4, repeats the judgment on those who turn to false religion, emphasizing their refusal to answer when God called. These specific words in D are repeated in D', "I spoke, but they did not listen and they did evil in my sight and chose that in which I did not delight." Finally, the center section E describes the joy God's servants will experience in the new creation He is going to make.

Since we are starting already halfway through, the joy of that center point E is where we begin in this lesson. From there we move to judgment, acceptance, and back again to judgment. If we were doing the whole chiasm, the pattern would be judgment – acceptance; judgment – joy; judgment - acceptance - judgment.

All that back and forth from those rejected to those accepted makes much better sense when we understand that these two chapters are organized according to the parallelism of a chiasitic structure. And Isaiah's use of this kind of structure maintains the tension present in the question, "Who really are the people of God? To whom do the promises of righteousness and salvation apply? Is it all of Israel?" No. It's a remnant.

So having come half way through, we start with the center of the chiasitic response to the lament and then we're going to move back out. I am going to address E, then D', then C', then B', and I'm going to leave A' for next lesson, which is also our final lesson for Isaiah. We start this lesson in the promise of the middle of the chiasm. This is E, "Joy in the New Creation," Isaiah 65:17-25.

E Joy in the New Creation (65:17-25)

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| <p>17 "For behold, I create new heavens
And the former things will not be remembered</p> <p>18 "But be glad and rejoice forever
For behold, I create Jerusalem for rejoicing</p> <p>19 "I will also rejoice in Jerusalem
And there will no longer be heard in her</p> <p>20 "No longer will there be in it an infant who lives
but a few days,
For the youth will die at the age of one hundred</p> | <p>and a new earth;
or come to mind.</p> <p>in what I create;
And her people for gladness.</p> <p>and be glad in My people;
The voice of weeping and the sound of crying.</p> <p>Or an old man who does not live out
his days;
And the [sinner]³ who does not reach the age of
one hundred</p> |
| Will be thought accused. | |
| <p>21 "They will build houses and inhabit them;
22 "They will not build and another inhabit,
For as the lifetime of a tree, so will be the days
of My people,</p> <p>23 "They will not labor in vain,
For they are the offspring of those blessed by the LORD,</p> <p>24 "It will also come to pass that before they call,
I will answer;</p> <p>25 "The wolf and the lamb will graze together,
They will do no evil or harm</p> | <p>They will also plant vineyards and eat their fruit.
They will not plant and another eat;
And My chosen ones will wear out the work
of their hands.
Or bear children for calamity;
And their descendants with them.
and while they are still speaking, I will hear.</p> <p>and the lion will eat straw like the ox;
and dust will be the serpent's food.
in all My holy mountain," says the LORD.</p> |

³ NASB has "and the one who does not..." but includes a note that "the one" is literally "one who misses the mark." It is better to either include that literal phrase or to use "sinner" which is the translation of the phrase.

²⁰ “No longer will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, Or an old man who does not live out his days;

Those two versets tell us of something that will not be. The next line is the greater problem.

For the youth will die at the age of one hundred And the [sinner] who does not reach the age of one hundred
Will be thought accursed.

The question is whether this is a real experience of the New Heavens and New Earth, whatever that is, or is this a hypothetical. If it is a hypothetical point we might translate the first verset this way, “If one dies at the age of one hundred he will be considered a youth.” The next verset intensifies the hypothetical, “And the one who does not even reach the age of one hundred (question mark)?” What will be thought of him? The third and final verset answers, “[He] will be thought accursed.”

As a hypothetical, the emphasis of the verse would not be that there is certainly going to be death, but would be: how odd, how out of place would death be in the New Heavens and the New Earth? How strange and unexplainable if anyone should live to only one hundred or should die before reaching one hundred. If someone were to die at such a young age, they would certainly be thought accursed. That’s a reference to the curse that came at the fall of Adam and Eve. To die at any point, even after a long life, reveals the presence of corruption. The curse has not yet been undone if somebody could die, even if they die at a hundred. But will that ever happen? Can it happen if the Heavens and Earth have truly been remade?

If we read this as a hypothetical of the new creation, then no, it cannot actually happen. It’s emphasizing the wrongness of it. Were it to happen, we would conclude the curse of sin is still present. There is reason to mourn. But we have been told there never again will be mourning. I recognize this is problematic. Certain passages have problems. And we have to choose, one way or the other, this sounds more than just Israel coming back after the exile, but then it somehow sounds less than the New Heavens and New Earth. And so we’re struggling with the poetry to decide which one to go with. Isaiah 25:6-8 gives support outside of this passage for taking verse 21 as a hypothetical. In this previous vision of the New Jerusalem death is completely removed. So this is 25:6-8,

⁶ And the LORD of hosts will prepare a lavish banquet for all peoples on this mountain; a banquet of aged wine, choice pieces with marrow, *and* refined, aged wine. ⁷ And on this mountain He will swallow up the covering which is over all peoples, even the veil which is stretched over all nations. ⁸ He will swallow up death for all time, and the Lord GOD will wipe tears away from all faces, and He will remove the reproach of His people from all the earth; for the LORD has spoken.

Jumping way ahead to Revelation, Revelation’s climatic declaration of recreation brings together this passage in Isaiah 25 and our present passage in Isaiah 65. Listen to the language in Revelation 21:1-4.

¹ Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer *any* sea. ² And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, ⁴ and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be *any* death; there will no longer be *any* mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.”

A New Heaven and New Earth, no more death, no more mourning, every tear wiped away. That’s the language of Isaiah. I take the context around verse 21 along with this previous passage of Isaiah 25 together with the future passage of Revelation 21 as solid ground for interpreting that one problem verse about death as a hypothetical emphasis that is, really, pointing out the strangeness of curse in the New Heavens and New Earth. In reality, it won’t be there.

If that is correct, there is no compelling reason to take verses 22-24 as the rebuilding of Jerusalem after exile in Babylon. The rest of the passage celebrates a new society, a new experience of well-being in this new creation.

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| <p>²¹ “They will build houses and inhabit them;
²² “They will not build and another inhabit,
For as the lifetime of a tree, so will be the days
of My people,
²³ “They will not labor in vain,
For they are the offspring of those blessed by the LORD,</p> | <p>They will also plant vineyards and eat their fruit.
They will not plant and another eat;
And My chosen ones will wear out the work
of their hands.
Or bear children for calamity;
And their descendants with them.</p> |
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If this is the glorious Zion described in 60-62, the effect is the opposite of hyperbole. Instead of an expansive description of present reality, this is a prosaic description of eternal reality. The language paints a picture of shalom, or well-being, in terms that connect with the hearts and souls of the present audience. Imagine building and planting without any fear of raiders or strong armies coming and stealing that away. There are olive trees in Israel two and three thousand years old. Imagine death so far out of your mind as a healthy, fruitful, long-lived tree that is practically eternal. There are stone streets in the Promised Land worn by Roman era ox-carts. So imagine the sense of stability communicated by the phrase, “My chosen ones will wear out the work of their hands.” They will be the ones in this land when these solid, stone works are finally worn out. In the uncertainty of the Middle East where even the empires of Assyria and Babylon eventually fall, smaller nations like Israel and Judah faced an ever present threat of invasion and destruction. The peace and stability God provides removes that mental and emotional worry. You will not labor in vain. Your children will not experience calamity.

Will there be offspring and descendants in the Heavenly Kingdom? I don’t know. Here the sense is of longevity, legacy, blessing on those you love. Its not easy to know which details of far future poetic prophecy are literal descriptions, and which details paint a picture of that experience by using terms of our present existence. This passage removes vulnerability, it removes fear; it gives purpose, and hope, and stability.

Who experiences this wonderfully stable, and fruitful, and peaceful life? The chosen ones. Well, who are the chosen one? Israel would embrace that title for herself. And in a sense, that is right. The ethnic people, the Jews, are chosen. They are chosen for a special role in the history of salvation. But they are not all chosen for salvation. Some, the potter has made for noble purpose and some for ignoble. Only the remnant is chosen for peace in the New Heavens and New Earth. We move now from the center of the chiasmic response to the beginning of the second half. D’ affirms again the need to differentiate between the faithful remnant and those who are rebellious, those who turn their backs on God. There will be judgment on those who ignore His voice. This is 66:1-4.

D’ Judgement on those who did not answer when God called (66:1-4)

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| <p>¹ Thus says the LORD,
“Heaven is My throne
Where then is a house you could build for Me?
² “For My hand made all these things,

“But to this one I will look, to him who is humble
³ “But he who kills an ox is like one who slays a man;
He who offers a grain offering is like one who offers
swine’s blood;
As they have chosen their own ways,
⁴ So I will choose their punishments
Because I called, but no one answered;
And they did evil in My sight</p> | <p>and the earth is My footstool.
And where is a place that I may rest?
Thus all these things came into being,”
declares the LORD.
and contrite of spirit, who trembles at My word.
He who sacrifices a lamb is like the one who
breaks a dog’s neck;
He who burns incense is like the one who blesses
an idol.
And their soul delights in their abominations,
And will bring on them what they dread.
I spoke, but they did not listen.
And chose that in which I did not delight.”</p> |
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Following the declaration of recreation, God reminds us that His existence dwarfs the physical world. The reminder particularly targets the ancient Near Eastern tendency to see God as a localized deity tied to the Temple in Jerusalem. God has made Himself imminent to a specific people. The watcher remembered God as the One who put His Holy Spirit in the midst of them. God broke into space and time to make Himself known in experience. The Jewish tendency was to then identify God according to His localized presence among them, in their Temple in their city, in Jerusalem.

Isaiah's vision in chapter 6 has already countered the temptation to overemphasize God's imminence by reminding us of His transcendence. He is holy, holy, holy, the whole Earth is full of His glory. That's the emphasis we're getting here in 61:1-2a.

- ¹ Thus says the LORD,
"Heaven is My throne and the earth is My footstool.
Where then is a house you could build for Me? And where is a place that I may rest?
² "For My hand made all these things, Thus all these things came into being,"
declares the LORD.

God is not specifically tied to one part of His physical creation. Nor is He specifically tied to the whole of creation. He is separate from and greater than the physical universe. Still, it would be another mistake to assume that He is so transcendent that He cannot be bothered with human affairs, that He doesn't see us. He does see us. And in verse 2b He tells us what kind of person He looks to with approval.

"But to this one I will look, to him who is humble and contrite of spirit, who trembles at My word. I love this line. This is the one God blesses. Not the one who is rich in righteousness, but the one who is poor in spirit. God knows His chosen ones cannot live up to His standard of holiness. No one can keep covenant with Him. We all fail. That's a guarantee.

So, God made a way that we might be accepted, even though we sin. The Suffering Servant dies to pay the penalty of our sin. We no longer live under a standard of perfect holiness. So, if God does not expect us to live up to the standard of His holiness, what does God expect of us? He expects humility and a contrite spirit. He expects us to preserve justice and do righteousness. He expects us to tremble at His word. That word, "tremble," leaps out to me. I do not think of it as a shaking deer frozen by the beams of a car's headlights. The word, "tremble," is connected to the fear of the Lord. To tremble at God's word is to recognize the seriousness of God, the seriousness of human life, the seriousness of our sin, the seriousness of good and evil. To tremble at His word is to be attentive to these realities because our lives are at stake; the well-being of our loved ones is at stake; goodness, and justice, and holiness are at stake.

Trembling is the opposite of apathy. To say, "I will live how I want. God forgives. That's His job.", is to show that you have no real experience of God. God reveals Himself to those who take His word seriously and soberly, who tremble, who humbly bow down, who come with a contrite spirit. The sinful human heart understands grace as freedom to sin, because the sinful human heart has never really seen God or even really understood themselves. The repentant human heart understands grace as freedom from sin, freedom from corruption into the goodness that is God.

The majority in Isaiah's Judah make light of God's law. Unfortunately, that can be said of a large swath of the Christian church as well. Many go through the motions of religious ritual without any serious intention of pursuing the vision of righteousness God communicates to us through His Word. These are the ones Isaiah calls out in verse 3. They sacrifice according to Biblical requirement, but they do not "preserve justice and do righteousness" in their communities. God sees through their ritual obedience to the reality of who they are morally.

- ³ "But he who kills an ox is like one who slays a man; He who sacrifices a lamb is like the one who breaks a dog's neck;
He who offers a grain offering is like one who offers swine's blood; He who burns incense is like the one who blesses an idol.
As they have chosen their own ways, And their soul delights in their abominations,

It was God's idea to sacrifice an ox, to sacrifice a lamb, to offer grain, to burn incense. That's all good ritual, or potentially good ritual. But what twists it up is the very last line, "they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delights in their abominations." So all these ritual that have potential goodness are detestable. They are like slaying a man, or breaking a dog's neck, or offering swine's blood. Blessing an idol. The lack of moral vision or obedience ruins the ritual.

Seeing past their ritual through to the heart, God gives this verdict in verse 4.

4	So I will choose their punishments Because I called, but no one answered; And they did evil in My sight	And will bring on them what they dread. I spoke, but they did not listen. And chose that in which I did not delight."
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This is a sobering image. Here are people who are actively going to Temple, actively going to church, actively going through the motions. They would say, "Yeah, we are doing exactly what you want us to do, God!" And God says, "You're not even listening to me! You are completely ignoring me as you go to church." The watcher had lamented God's judgment of His chosen people and accused God of remaining silent, failing to bring His wayward people back. God answered that charge in the first half of this chiasmic structure. Here we get the answer again. Human beings bear responsibility for their own choices, regardless of how God's sovereignty may or may not come into play. God called. They did not answer. God spoke. They did not listen. What did they do? They did evil in God's sight. They chose that in which God does not delight. They did not tremble at His words. They will tremble at the dreadful consequences of their own rebellion.

God sees. In verse 2 He looked to the humble and contrite. In verse 4 He looks to the evil of those who actively choose that in which He does not delight.

This section ends with those God has seen and condemned. We turn back in the next section to those God has seen and accepted. This is C', the glorious future of the Lord's servants, Isaiah 66:5-14.

C' The glorious future of the Lord's servants (66:5-14)

5	Hear the word of the LORD, "Your brothers who hate you have said, 'Let the LORD be glorified,	you who tremble at His word: who exclude you for My name's sake, that we may see your joy.'
		But they will be put to shame.
6	"A voice of uproar from the city, The voice of the LORD	a voice from the temple, who is rendering recompense to His enemies.
7	"Before she travailed, she brought forth; she gave birth to a boy.	Before her pain came,
8	"Who has heard such a thing? Can a land be born in one day? As soon as Zion travailed,	Who has seen such things? Can a nation be brought forth all at once? she also brought forth her sons.
9	"Shall I bring to the point of birth and not give delivery?" "Or shall I who gives delivery shut the womb?"	says the LORD.
10	"Be joyful with Jerusalem Be exceedingly glad with her,	says your God. and rejoice for her, all you who love her; all you who mourn over her,
11	That you may nurse and be satisfied That you may suck and be delighted	with her comforting breasts, with her bountiful bosom."
12	For thus says the LORD, "Behold, I extend to her And like an overflowing stream, And you will be nursed, you will be carried on the hip	peace like a river, the glory of the nations; and dandled on the knees.
13	"As one whom his mother comforts, And you will be comforted in Jerusalem."	so I will comfort you;

14 Then you will see this, and your heart will be glad, And your bones will flourish like the new grass;
And the hand of the LORD will be made known to His servants, But He will be indignant toward His enemies.

The first line addresses this group of people who respond to God’s word with holy reverence. This is His word for them.

5 Hear the word of the LORD, you who tremble at His word:

God knows they have been mocked by those who do not take His word seriously. The sarcastic words of the mockers are going to mean something like this, “If God is real, let Him act the way He promised. Then we can see you be happy. But we all know nothing is going to happen.” This is Isaiah’s short, poetic way of expressing that.

“Your brothers who hate you have said, who exclude you for My name’s sake,
‘Let the LORD be glorified, that we may see your joy.’

God says of these scoffers, “They will be put to shame.” Then He speaks with a voice designed to cause trembling, just like when He spoke to Israel on Mount Sinai, though this time He speaks from His Temple.

6 “A voice of uproar from the city, a voice from the temple,
The voice of the LORD who is rendering recompense to His enemies.

The voice from the Temple responds to the voice of uproar in the city. What does that voice say? The first line is not really meant to make sense.

7 “Before she travailed, she brought forth; Before her pain came,
she gave birth to a boy.

That is not how birth happens. Not first the birth and then the birth pains. No. It’s the other way around. So, applying the birth metaphor to Zion, what order of events should we expect?

8 “Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things?
Can a land be born in one day? Can a nation be brought forth all at once?
As soon as Zion travailed, she also brought forth her sons.

9 “Shall I bring to the point of birth and says the LORD.
not give delivery?”
“Or shall I who gives delivery shut the womb?” says your God.

So again, God responds to the lamentation of the watcher. You lose faith in the mess of the present. You experience pain and think all is lost. The words of the mocker chip away your faith in the promise. I told you there would be judgment and pain before the new Zion comes. The pain is a sign to you that there will be birth. As a mother encourages herself during that pain of birth with a vision of the new life that is coming, do the same! Don’t give up hope. Encourage yourself with the pain of tribulation, knowing that through it I am going to bring about the gladness of a new creation. So then it’s really in 10-14 that we get this hopeful, joyful word to the remnant,

10 “Be joyful with Jerusalem and rejoice for her, all you who love her;
Be exceedingly glad with her, all you who mourn over her.

And then we get this image of Jerusalem as mother who is nursing us, the babies,

11 That you may nurse and be satisfied with her comforting breasts,
That you may suck and be delighted with her bountiful bosom.”

12 For thus says the LORD,
“Behold, I extend to her peace like a river,
And like an overflowing stream, the glory of the nations;
And you will be nursed, you will be carried on the hip and dandled on the knees.

13 “As one whom his mother comforts, so I will comfort you;
And you will be comforted in Jerusalem.”

