

ISAIAH, PART 2 (COMFORT FOR HIS PEOPLE)
PROGRAM 44 (#911159)
WEEK 9 (#911332) (Guest Teacher David Arthur)
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The following is an actual transcript of the PRECEPTS FOR LIFE Broadcast. For the purpose of filling transcript requests quickly, they have received only light editing. If you have questions concerning the material covered in this broadcast, Kay has published a number of books explaining the Scripture in depth. These books may be ordered by contacting the telephone number or address printed above.

SERIES: Isaiah, Part 2 (Comfort For His People)
TITLE: Program 44 – A New Heaven And Earth
(Guest Teacher David Arthur)

THURSDAY

INTRO

Kay: Do you know what Precepts for Life is all about and Precept Ministries International? It's three D's. It's discover truth for yourself, go deeper and disciple others. Today you're going to hear from David Arthur, Precept Ministries Vice President of Teaching and Training, a disciple of the inductive study method and an advocate of it. You're gonna be so blessed as you listen to his lesson. Thank you for going deeper with us.

OPEN

David: Is this all there is to life? Is this earth the only earth that we're gonna get? What if I could show you from Scripture and from prophecy that God has a plan to bring us a new earth? A new earth in which we can dwell; and if I can show that to you, let me ask you: Would it make a difference in the way you see reality? Would it make a difference in your relationship to this world? Join us on "Precepts for Life."

PART ONE

David: Welcome to “Precepts for Life.” We’re studying the book of Isaiah, and we’re understanding who God is and who we are in relationship to Him. We’re also getting a glimpse of this prophecy of what is yet to happen in our future. If this study excites you, let me encourage you to go to preceptsforlife.com, and you can download a free study guide that goes along with every episode of this show. Now let me also encourage you—get some friends together, or perhaps, approach somebody at your church staff and ask them, “Could we do a Bible study here in church and use these products?” I want you to know it makes a difference when you study the Scripture in the inductive method. You begin to engage God for yourself. It’s not quick and easy, but it will pay off if you stick with it. So please join us on preceptsforlife.com. Now we’re looking at Isaiah chapter 65 and we’re picking up in verse 17. And in—described here is why God is creating a **“...new heavens and a new earth...” (Isaiah 65:17)** I remember when I was a child, there was a couple of times that I was told to do something, and you know, I just didn’t want to do it. And so I would have a follow-up question to my parents, and it would go something like this: “Why? Why do you want me to do that?” Or “Why do you want me to clean my room?” Or “Why do not want me to cross the street at this point?” Or “Why do you want me to go to bed at this time?” Do you remember sometimes when you would ask your parents that question and they wouldn’t tell you? Or they would give you that great answer: “Because I said so!” Well we have here in Isaiah 65, verse 17, the answer to why God is creating a new heavens and a new earth. Aren’t you interested? Let’s look at verse 17. God says this: **“For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former things will not be remembered or come to mind.” (Isaiah 65:17)** Now verse 18 tells us why: **“But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; for behold...,”** and anything that follows the “for” is usually a causal answer. It usually tells us why, and it says: **“...[for behold] I create Jerusalem for**

rejoicing and her people for gladness.” (Isaiah 65:18) This helps me. I oftentimes wonder, you know: Is God’s new heaven and a new earth a Plan B? Is there— somehow, the Almighty, the Creator of heavens and earth has to hit the restart button because something has gone wrong, or something has gone outside of His control or of His dominion or His power? Absolutely not! My Friend, any theology that tells you that God has to have a Plan B is a theology that is not of the true God. A true God in and of His definition of who He is, must be in control of everything. And honestly, do you really want to follow a God who is biting His divine fingernails, wondering what His people are gonna do next? Wondering what the future holds? There’s no hope in that kind of God. There’s no way to really, fully trust that kind of God. But here we have a God that tells us why He’s creating a “new heavens and a new earth.” Look what He says. “I create it for rejoicing and for gladness.” (See Isaiah 65:18) This Jerusalem and these people that He creates, He says, will replace **“...the former things [and] will not be remembered or come to mind.” (Isaiah 65:17)** We saw that at the end of verse 17. Now what He’s doing here is, He says, “Listen, it’s not a Plan B, but it’s a new chapter in the history of God’s creation.” I love this imagery. God is not saying: “Listen, I’m gonna polish it up, I’m gonna clean it up a bit for you so it’s not quite as dirty or it’s not quite as bad.” He says, “I’m gonna make it new; fresh. I’m gonna start over with that.” Well let’s keep reading. Look at verse 19. He said, **“I will also rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in My people; and there will no longer be heard in her the voice of weeping and the sound of crying.” (Isaiah 65:19)** Now these are great words for a people who are in captivity. These are great words for a people who are under, eventually, the power of Babylon. You see in 586 B.C., shortly after this prophecy was mentioned, Judah is taken into Babylon and they are ripped out of the Promised Land and placed in Babylon in exile because of their disobedience to God. And so He says here, [“There will come a time when there will be no weeping, there’ll no more crying, and

sounds of you will be nothing but joy and gladness.”] (PARAPHRASE, Isaiah 65:19) Look what he says in verse 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; for the youth will die at the age of one hundred and the one who does not reach the age of one hundred will be thought accursed.”** (Isaiah 65:20) Now what he’s doing here is, he’s describing life in this realm. Now there is a controversy. It’s not a huge one, but there is a bit of controversy around the interpretation of this text. Some would say that this text is simply being poetical. That he’s simply saying, “It’s not that people actually die in the new heavens and new earth,” but they wanted you to see the expanse and the scope of life and just how grand and incredible it is. And if that’s the case, and he’s using a term we use called anthropomorphism. And anthropomorphism is, when God takes language that man understands and He uses that language to teach His people. It’s like this: If you want to talk to your child, this is what you do, right? You approach your child, you drop down to their eye level, right? You get down to where they are standing, to where they are and you don’t use big words they don’t understand. You get real simple and you hold their dear little face in your hands and you talk to them in a way they can understand. Now that’s what God’s doing when He talks this way, if that is the interpretation, He is using language that we understand. He’s saying, “Listen this is going to be so incredible. The joy and the gladness is gonna be off the charts. Men’s lives will just go and on. There’ll be no more sadness. There’ll be no more infants dying in your arms,” which would have been normal for those who were in exile and those who under the judgment and wrath of God. “I’ve removed that judgment and wrath and I’ve brought to you, restoration.” Or another interpretation would say that what Isaiah’s doing here is, he’s combining a millennial period, as described in Revelation 20, verses 1-5, and some other places and he’s bringing that millennial period and he’s weaving it together with the new heavens and the new earth. Now we would say that because in

the millennial period, we understand that men will die, that it's not heaven yet. It's the time before the new heavens and the new earth. So why is there confusion? Well let me show you. Go with me to Revelation chapter 20, verses 1 - 5. Now Revelation describes for us the end times which is yet future for us, and so I want you to see in Revelation chapter 20, verse 1-5.

Here we see the millennium described. He says, **"Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years."**

(Revelation 20:1-2) The "thousand years," is where we get the term "millennium" from. And then it says this, **"And he threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he would not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time."** **(Revelation 20:3)**

Now John tells us in Revelation 21, verse 1, which follows Revelation 20, obviously. Look at the time phrase mentioned at the beginning of verse 1.

"Then..." "Then" tells us it follows what preceded. **"[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."** **(Revelation 21:1)** And now he describes this new heaven and this new earth, okay? So let's look at it. Drop down to verse 4; 21, verse 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."**

(Revelation 21:4) I love verse 5: **"And He who sits on the throne said, 'Behold, I am making all things new.' And He said, 'Write, for these words are faithful and true.'" (Revelation 21:5)** So you see the reason for a bit of confusion. If we just stick with Revelation 20 and 21, it would seem that the millennium precedes the new heavens and the new earth, and the new heavens and the new earth are described in a place where there is no death. That makes us ask a question about Isaiah and we look back at Isaiah

65, we'd have to ask this question: You know, if they're dying here, is that imagery language or is he combining the two? As typical with Isaiah, is he wrapping together into one episode? Either way, My Friend, it doesn't change the truth of this: that He is coming back and when He comes, He will bring with Him a new heaven and a new earth. (See Isaiah 65:17) What's it like? He tells us that it is a place where there is no more sadness, a place that is filled with rejoicing. (See Isaiah 65:18) There'll be no weeping, no crying there. (See Isaiah 65:19) And death will be odd; death will be strange. (See Isaiah 65:20) So we have here before us a teaching about the new heavens and the new earth, and we're told why He's creating them. It's not a Plan B, My Friend. It's not as if God has failed and has to start over, or try another option. But in His sovereignty and in His power and in His goodness, He is creating it, He says, for joy and for gladness. For the people that He is coming back to rescue, He is bringing with Him a new heaven and a new earth that we might be with Him.

PART TWO

David: Welcome back. We're studying Isaiah and we're looking at this One who will come, who will bring a new heaven and a new earth for us, His people. Isn't this exciting? Let me just encourage you, you can join us in this study by going to preceptsforlife.com and downloading a free study guide. Let me also just encourage you, talk with your pastor or the staff at your church and see if you can put together a small group to study this together. It will change the way you read the Bible. Now we are in Isaiah chapter 65, and we're noting what it will be like in these new heavens and this new earth. Look what he says in verse 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; for the youth will die at the age of one hundred and the one who does not reach the age of one hundred will be thought accursed."** (Isaiah 65:20) Now verse 21 is going to be a reversal of things. It's gonna be the

exact opposite of the current experience of Judah as they read this prophecy. Verse 21: **“They will build houses and inhabit them; they will also plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They will not build and another inhabit, they will not plant and another eat; for as the lifetime of a tree, so will be the days of My people, and My chosen ones will wear out the work of their hands.”** (Isaiah 65:21-22) Now what he’s describing here in verses 21 and 22 is not a familiar experience with the people of God. One of the best ways to illustrate it is from the book of Judges. In chapter 6 we read about Gideon. And Gideon is just a typical Joe, I mean, he’s nothing special. There he is threshing the wheat. Now threshing the wheat is when you would take a pitchfork type of tool and take the wheat and throw it up into the air and then as the wind would blow by the bad stuff would blow away and the good stuff would fall back down. Typically you would do this in a place where wind was very strong. So you would do it up on a hillside or somewhere like that. But when we read Judges 6 we find out that Gideon is doing it down in a winepress. He’s down behind kind of these walls and he’s, in a sense, hiding as he threshes this wheat. (See Judges 6:11) Well now why’s he doing that? Because every year at the time of harvest the enemies of Israel, at this time known as the Midianites, would come down out of the hills and into their land, and just pillage and take and steal. It got so bad that the people of Israel began to live up in the hills in caves, like animals trying to hide from predators. (See Judges 6:2-5) But he says, in this “new heavens and this new earth” described here, He says, [“You’ll no longer plant, you’ll no longer build and someone will come along and consume and take it from you. This’ll be a place in which you will eat from what you plant. You will build houses and you will actually get to live in them.”] (PARAPHRASE, Isaiah 65:21-22) That’s a reversal of the situation of the people of God. Look at verse 23: **“They will not labor in vain, or bear children for calamity; for they are the offspring of those blessed by the LORD, and their descendants with them.”** (Isaiah 65:23) There was a situation in the

history of Judah and the history of Israel especially, when they were going into exile, that they simply didn't want to have children. They simply didn't want to bear children into the horrible circumstances that were there. But here He says, "I'm gonna reverse that. I'm gonna flip that around so that [you will no longer bear children for calamity. Your offspring will actually be called 'blessed by the LORD.']" (PARAPHRASE, Isaiah 65:23) Verse 24: **"It will also come to pass that before they call, I will answer, and while they are still speaking, I will hear." (Isaiah 65:24)** I love this imagery here. Verse 24 tells me that God is connected to His people, that God is not a God, who has this long to-do list; He has this this long line of people waiting to talk to Him and He's just too busy for His people. But he says, "God is like this: God is on the edge of His throne seat and He knows what you're gonna say before you've even said it." There's a description there of not just an intimacy, but an awareness; an intentionality of God wanting to know His people. That His ears are bent towards His children, and He says to His children, ["Before you call, this is how it will be: Before you call I will answer."] Isn't that great? ["Before you even ask your question, I will answer."] (PARAPHRASE, Isaiah 65:24) Then he says in verse 25: **"The wolf and the lamb will graze together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox; and dust will be [my] serpent's food. [And] they will do no evil or harm in all My holy mountain,' says the LORD."** (Isaiah 65:25) Now this is great. I want to take you to Genesis chapter 3, and I want to show you something amazing. I love this! In Genesis chapter 3 we read of the time when man fell into sin. When man ate from the tree and man was cursed, and so along with man being cursed, so was nature and everything in the world. And in this listing of curses we find the serpent getting what's coming due to him. You remember in Genesis 3 in the garden it was the serpent that tempted Eve to eat of the tree. Look what he says in verse 14: **"The LORD...said to the serpent, 'Because you have done this, cursed are you more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the**

field; on your belly you will go, and dust you will eat all the days of your life.’” (Genesis 3:14) Did you read that in chapter 65? Look again, verse 25: **“...and dust will be the serpent’s food....” (Isaiah 65:25)** Now with this comes this great imagery. Now I’m gonna draw on the left hand side of the board, a tree. That’s that tree in Genesis. It’s the tree in the garden of Eden. On the right hand side of the board I’m gonna draw another tree, and it’s also the tree from the garden of Eden. We see this tree on the left hand side in the beginning, in Genesis. We see this tree on the right hand side in Revelation. And what we have, this is fascinating, what we have in between is a journey that’s going from left to right, as time would go, as chronology would take us. It’s going from left to right, and what we have is a journey back to Eden. Now remember, Eden is God’s initial creation. Every thing was perfect. There was absolutely no sin; that God walked in communion with His people. It says [in the cool of the day He would walk with His people.] (PARAPHRASE, Genesis 3:8) There was absolutely nothing wrong. It was exactly as God had designed it, and what we have in the big scheme of things, in the big picture, is life with God is going back to Eden. It’s a restoration. And in that restoration, “a reversal”. This is great. In the reversal, what we have is this teaching: God is, in His new heavens and His new earth, is fixing things. He’s reversing things. He’s taking them back to the way He designed them to be. In a sense, My Friend, our journey with God is a journey back to Eden. It’s a journey of back to the way He designed us to be before sin and death entered into the world. Didn’t you pick that up as we read through some of the descriptions of the new heavens and the new earth? Of some of the descriptions here of these end times brought together? He says there’ll be no more death. It’s just like He says in Revelation, **“...I am making all things new....” (Revelation 21:5)** Is this all there is to life? Absolutely not, My Friend; for He is coming back and He is bringing a new heavens and a new earth for you.