

Negotiating with God, Isaiah 65, Pt.1

I have spread out My hands all day long to a rebellious people, who walk in the way which is not good, following their own thoughts, a people who continually provoke Me to My face.

Isaiah 65:2-3

The ancient man approached God (or even the gods) as the accused person approaches his judge. For the modern man the roles are reversed. He is the judge: God is in the dock. He is quite a kindly judge: if God should have a reasonable defence (English) for being the god who permits war, poverty and disease, he is quite ready to listen to it. The trial may even end in God's acquittal. But the important thing is that Man is on the Bench and God in the Dock.

C.S. Lewis, God in the Dock.

Who is really listening to God?

- Does God define, by virtue of the written record of his interaction with creation (the Bible), the patterns by which we live? _____
- Or, do we dictate what we "think" our lives should be, and then call on God to make it so? _____
- Do we listen to God, or have we made up our mind about what God has said or will say? _____
- Are we willing to listen to God, even when he goes against our will? _____

The Text

1. V.1-7: The pathogenic nature of the human condition.
 - V.1: Rejecting the voice of God because he was not what they wanted: _____.
 - V.2: *Following their own thoughts*, thoughts of their own superiority: _____.

- V.3-5: "Self-empowerment" by way of magic, mysticism, incantation, necromancy: _____.
 - V. 6-7: The penalty measured into their own bosom (see also Romans 1:27): _____.
2. V.8-12: God therefore divided humanity.
 - V.8-10: Some will be known as God's "servants:" _____.
 - V.11-12: But those who reject God shall be destined for the sword: _____.
 - The "gods" of "Gad" and "Meni," or to us "Fortune" and "Destiny:" _____.
 - God has spoken (like it or not) and they have rejected: _____.

[3. and 4. Next week]

Here is how this breaks down in the modern world.

- The language of today, whether "science," "secular humanism," "tolerance," "ecumenism," or "fundamentalist separatism," has either determined that God has not spoken (there is no God) or that God has spoken in ways unique to their concepts. _____.
- Yet the fact is that God has spoken, like it or not, and all have heard, despite all of humanity's efforts to avoid hearing. _____.
- The big problem for us in this matter is to determine whether God has spoken what we claim he has spoken.

Three big "Duhs!" of modern evangelicalism

1. Where do we gain the knowledge of what God has said? _____.
2. What practice would make this knowledge most possible? _____.
3. What, then, is the problem? _____.

I passed by the field of a lazy man, and by the vineyard of a stupid person, and saw them overgrown with thorns, the ground covered with nettle, and the stone wall broken down. Upon reflection I received instruction. "A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest, and poverty (of spirit) will come upon you like a thief, and want like an armed warrior. Proverbs 24:30-34