

# Shalom AZ Ministries

In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption



## Seeking the LORD vs Forsaking Him is Really a No-Brainer

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### Devotion and Discussion Questions

**Key Texts (TLV):** **Is 65:11-16**; *Is. 65:1-15*; *Is. 55:6-7*; *Is. 57:7-10, 15*; *Deut. 30:15-20*; *Jer. 18:7-8*; *Ezek. 33:11*; *Gen. 17:5-6*

Isaiah 65 opens with a stunning response from the LORD. The people cry out asking where God has been, questioning His silence and wondering if He has restrained His compassion. Yet the LORD answers by saying that He had been revealing Himself all along. *"I let Myself be sought by those not asking... I let Myself be found by those not seeking Me."* He had stretched out His hands continually, calling to a stubborn people who preferred their own ways over His.

At the heart of this passage is a contrast between two kinds of people: those who seek the LORD and those who forsake Him. One group chooses trust, surrender, and dependence upon God. The other pursues control, self-direction, and false security. The LORD lays both paths side by side with clarity. One leads to life, joy, satisfaction, and restoration. The other leads to emptiness, ruin, and shame. The choice really is a no-brainer, yet humanity continually struggles to trust the One whose ways are higher than our own.

### 1. FORSAKING THE LORD BEGINS WITH TRUSTING OUR OWN WAYS

Isaiah describes the people as those *"who forsake ADONAI... who forget My holy mountain... who prepare a table for Fortune, who fill cups of mixed wine for Fate."* (*Is. 65:11*). The issue was not merely idolatry in a ceremonial sense. The deeper problem was the desire to control tomorrow apart from God. Rather than waiting on the LORD and trusting His promises, they pursued shortcuts, false securities, and whatever appeared to offer power over the future. They would climb any mountain except the one where they might truly encounter the Holy One and surrender to Him.

The same temptation still exists today. Humanity remains obsessed with controlling outcomes, predicting tomorrow, and securing peace through earthly means. We often look for reassurance in systems, trends, possessions, or our own calculations rather than resting in the faithfulness of God. Yet the LORD continually points us back to His proven character and calls us to trust Him. *"Seek ADONAI while He may be found... let the wicked forsake his way."* (*Is. 55:6-7*). Real peace is not found in controlling life, but in surrendering to the One who already holds it.

### 2. IGNORING THE VOICE OF GOD ALWAYS LEADS TO EMPTINESS

The LORD says, *"I called, but you did not answer. I spoke, but you did not hear."* (*Is. 65:12*). This is one of the saddest themes in Scripture. God was not absent. He was speaking, calling, warning, and inviting, yet the people refused to listen because they wanted their own way. The Hebrew idea of hearing is not merely about sound entering the ears; it is about responding in obedience. The people heard the voice of God but would not *shema*. They continually pushed aside His prompting in pursuit of their own desires.

Because of this refusal, the very things they pursued became the source of their ruin. They sought destiny apart from God, yet found themselves destined for destruction. They pursued

fulfillment but inherited emptiness. The LORD's warning is not cruel; it is compassionate. Again and again He places life and death before His people and pleads with them to choose life. *"I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. Therefore choose life."* (Deut. 30:19). God does not delight in destruction. He desires repentance, restoration, and life for His people.

### **3. THOSE WHO SEEK THE LORD WILL FIND TRUE JOY AND RESTORATION**

Beginning in verse 13, the LORD contrasts the destiny of His servants with those who forsake Him. *"Behold, My servants will eat... My servants will drink... My servants will rejoice."* While those who reject Him experience shame and emptiness, His servants experience satisfaction, joy, and peace. The repeated word *"behold"* is an invitation to stop and pay attention. God is still offering another opportunity to turn, repent, and seek Him.

The beautiful promise throughout Isaiah is that God restores those who seek Him. Whether someone is like fertile Sharon or barren Achor, the LORD is able to redeem and transform. He gives His servants a new name, a new future, and a new identity. The former troubles are forgotten because they are hidden from His sight. The focus becomes not the failures of the past, but the faithfulness of the *"God of truth"* — literally, the God of *Amen*, the utterly dependable One. Those who walk in His ways discover that His promises truly are life, wholeness, peace, and joy.

### **CONCLUSION**

Isaiah 65 lays the two paths plainly before us. One path is driven by self-will, anxiety, pride, and the pursuit of control. The other path is marked by surrender, trust, obedience, and seeking the LORD. One ends in ruin and emptiness. The other ends in joy, restoration, and life with God. The LORD's appeal throughout this passage is deeply relational. He is not merely demanding obedience; He is calling His people back to Himself.

God continues to stretch out His hands and call to people who have wandered into their own ways. He still says, *"Hineni! Hineni!"* — "Look at Me! Here I am!" The question is whether we will keep pursuing our own path or finally trust the One whose ways lead to life. The LORD is faithful, dependable, and worthy of our surrender. Seeking Him rather than forsaking Him truly is a no-brainer. Perhaps you recognize areas in your own life where you have been striving to control outcomes instead of trusting the LORD. Maybe you have been exhausted by chasing security, answers, or fulfillment apart from Him. The good news is that God is still calling. His hands are still stretched out. His desire is not your destruction, but your restoration. Today is an opportunity to return to Him. Trust His voice, trust His timing, and trust His ways. He is the God of truth, the God of faithfulness, and He abundantly pardons those who return to Him.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. What do you think it means practically to "seek the LORD" according to Is. 65?
2. Why do you think people are often tempted to pursue control and security apart from God?
3. In what ways can modern believers be tempted to trust in "fortune" or "fate" rather than in God's faithfulness?
4. Is there an area of your life right now where you sense the LORD calling you to surrender your own plans or desires to Him?
5. How does the promise that God gives His servants a "new name" encourage you personally in your walk with Him?

**CLOSING PRAYER:**

*Avinu Malkhenu*, Our Father, Our King, thank You that You continue to call us even when we wander into our own ways. Thank You that You are not distant or silent, but faithful, compassionate, and patient. Forgive us for the times we have trusted ourselves more than we have trusted You. Forgive us for running after control, security, and answers apart from Your presence.

Teach us to seek You wholeheartedly. Open our eyes to see Your goodness and unclog our ears so that we may truly hear Your voice. Help us to choose life by walking in Your ways and trusting in Your faithfulness. Thank You that You are the God of truth, the God of Amen, whose promises never fail. May our lives reflect Your goodness and bring glory to Your Name

*B'Shem Yeshua*, In the name of Yeshua, amen.