

Who is God?

studies in Isaiah

**Study series as posted at the website
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**A Voice in the Wilderness
P.O.Box 9531
Spokane, WA 99209 USA**

www.a-voice.org

The unconventional punctuation styles you will see are related to the way these studies were originally intended for the e-mail audience, using plain text to keep file sizes smaller for bulk mailing; creatively 'formatting' with punctuation, for various kinds of emphases, in the absence of formatting the actual type. You may find occasional misspellings, and the more rare cases of a Scripture reference going to a wrong passage; those will be 'typos', not intentional. With this type of POD (Print On Demand) publishing, it seems simplest, and the most prudent use of time, to not completely go through and revamp everything, but to just leave things as they are. Please accept this book, warts and all; but rather, please pay attention to, and receive God's Truth presented herein.

Who is God?

Contents:

05	-Introduction
08	-High & Lifted Up
09	-Righteous Judge
10	-Set up the Generations - Chose Israel
11	-No Other Gods - History Proves It
12	-Delivered Israel
13	-First and Last
14	-Created the Earth - Orders Earthly Kingdoms - Chose Israel
17	-Comparison to Idols
19	-Downfall of the Queen of Heaven
22	-The Nature of Prophecy
24	-Dealings with Israel
26	-Messiah
28	-Invitation to Salvation
30	-Response to the Invitation
31	-Holy Spirit for Israel
32	-Review
33	-Conclusion

Addendum:

35	You are gods?
36	Worm does not die?

"Who is God?"

God of Abraham, Isaac & Israel

"And Elijah came to all the people, and said, How long will you falter between two opinions? If Jehovah is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him...you call on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of Jehovah; and the god who answers by fire, He is God." (1Ki18:21,24)

When the prophets of Baal have spent the better part of the day dancing around, cutting themselves, then at the time of the "evening sacrifice" Elijah builds an altar to God, gathers the people around, and prays...

"Jehovah, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that You are God in Israel and I am Your servant, and that I have done all these things at Your Word. Hear me, O Jehovah, hear me, that this people may know that You are Jehovah God, and that You have turned their hearts back to You again." (1Ki18:36-37)

Recently we considered in "To the Unknown God" how paganism knows there is the Most High. In spite of the deities they worship, their hearts and consciences know there is a God above all other gods, the One who created the universe, and sustains life. (Ac17:28) He has made Himself known through creation. (Rom1:20)

But did God merely set creation in motion, and then adopt a "hands off" policy, to force man to fend for himself, and "grope" in darkness, without some guideposts along the way? Or does God periodically 'challenge' man to face facts, and 'prove' Himself to man? In the case of Israel, even though they knew His wonders, they rebelled; and so God comes and challenges... Let's decide once-for-all exactly 'who' is God.

God says essentially: Let Me prove Myself to you.

And this is what God does in the book of Isaiah: "Let all the nations be gathered together, and let the people be assembled. Who among them can declare this and cause us to hear former things? Let them bring out their witnesses, that they may be justified; or let them hear, and say, It is true." (Is43:9)

The days in which we are living are climactic to the summation of human history. In a recent e-mail to subscribers (not posted at the website) we considered how the current "war on terrorism" is actually a war between Allah vs Jehovah. The followers of Allah exist in every corner of the world, and desire to take over the earth. Their primary enemy is Israel. America, due to it's perceived label as being a "christian" nation is also their enemy. The followers of Allah are in a life-or-death struggle against Jehovah, or anything that looks like Him.

There is also a so-called "christian" theology that has emerged with an actual name attached to it. Actually, the theology, itself, is nothing new. Seminaries have been teaching it for years...and theologians have been proclaiming and debating it; even if not with a label, the concepts have been there and believed amongst the unregenerate. OPEN THEISM:

- 1) That God does not know the future;
- 2) that God sometimes makes mistakes;
- 3) that God often 'adjusts' His 'will' based on how man reacts to His commands, because
- 4) He doesn't know, for sure, just how man is going to respond to Him.

As we shall see in this series, this 'doctrine' goes contrary to the VERY CORE of God's essence!

And as world events unfold, the same challenge Elijah gave, is given to the world today. When John the Emmerger was preparing the way for Jesus, he was labeled the "...the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.." (Lk1:17) As Elijah said to the followers of Baal, the spirit-of-Elijah says to the followers of Allah today, and to the apostate "church": "How long will you falter between two opinions?" If Allah is god, prove it. If humanism, evolution and/or self-deism are true, prove it.

In the mean time, God has set out in Isaiah a complete set of 'courtroom' type arguments for His own existence; and He challenges, "bring your witnesses" and argue your case. Or if not, hear My case. And He sets out His case with Israel, "You are My witnesses, says Jehovah, and my servant whom I have chosen; that you may know and believe Me, and understand that I am He. Before Me no God was formed, nor shall there be after Me." (Is43:10)

Once God is finished presenting His arguments, two things will have been established:

- 1) The Most High is Ruler over all the earth, and is above all other dominions. (Dan4:17) "Therefore know this day, and consider it in your heart, that Jehovah Himself is God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath; there is no other." (Deut4:39)

And...

- 2) God is all-knowing. He not only knows all things; past, present and future; He "declares" it. It is a certainty: "...declaring the end from the beginning, and from antiquity things which are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure.." (Is46:10)

So, let us consider some of God's Arguments. These will not be in any particular order, except as one would come to them while reading through Isaiah. As a result, some points will repeat. This study will not necessarily be detailed, nor all-inclusive. For a complete picture, it is recommended that you read the entire book of Isaiah. The following items will be merely some gleanings.

GOD IS... High and lifted up (Is6:1)

God is "high and lifted up". Even when satan rebelled, he knew God's position; he lusted to be "like the Most High". (Is14:14) But notice that he could not replace God. He knows God is -most- high. The best he could hope for was to be "like" Him. Satan's demons know God's position and "shudder". (Jac2:19) When Isaiah, the one about to be called to be a prophet (vs8), sees God's grandeur, he bewails, "Woe is me! for I am undone!" (vs5) In other words, I've had it! I'm done for! Why? Because "I am a man of unclean lips...for my eyes have seen the King, Jehovah of Hosts." There is a difference between God and man. Man tries to claim to "be as God" (Gen3:5); but, "The Mighty God is not a man..." (Nu23:19)

Righteous Judge (Is11:3-4)

"He shall not judge according to the sight of His eyes, nor decide by the hearing of His ears. But with righteousness He shall judge the poor, and shall decide with equity for the meek of the earth." Now, while this speaks specifically of Christ's earthly kingdom rule of the Millennium, this is God's character. When God judges, He does not do like man does, where prosecution and defense present their cases, and then the judge and jury listen to 'he said - she said', and they try to figure out the evidence as 'slanted' before the court. But Jesus is the One who is "...living and powerfully active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature that is not revealed in His presence, but all things are naked and laid bare to the eyes of Him to whom we must give answer." (Heb4:12-13) Where earthly human courts present "cases", God knows WHAT -REALLY- HAPPENED, and WHY... and judges accordingly.

Set up the Generations, Chose Israel (Is41:4,8-9)

As Paul reviews, "And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell everywhere on the face of the earth, and has determined their pre-appointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings..." (Ac17:26) Where did all the nations and ethnic diversities originate? Where did the races come from? Who formed them? "Who has planned and done it, calling forth the generations from the beginning? I, Jehovah, am the First and the Last. I am He." And from all these nations He chose out Israel: "But you, Israel, are My servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham, My friend; whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called you and set you apart." When we read earlier how Israel is God's "witness" (43:10), not only was Israel to proclaim God to the world, but Israel is God's "witness" in His court-of-law... to testify before the world-court as to God's existence. We'll see this more as we progress.

No other Gods - History proves it (Is41:21-26,42:8)

Remember the 'courtroom'? "Present your case, says Jehovah; approach to argue your defense, says the King of Jacob. Let them approach, and confess to us what shall happen; let them disclose the former things, what they are, that we may determine a finding and know the final outcome; or proclaim to us things to come." (41:21-22) And God does like Elijah did to the prophets of Baal; He taunts. You say you are gods? Well prove it. "Make known the things to come after this, so that we may know that you are gods." He further taunts, "Yes, do good, or do evil (DO SOMETHING!), so that we may anxiously watch it together." (vs23)

There is this TV program that is on during my lunch time, "Crossing Over". I watch little bits of it rarely once in awhile. The thing I continue to marvel that people are so blind to, is that the man who claims to be communicating with the spirits of the dead DOES NOT KNOW. The demons feed him little gleanings of information, but then he gets the people talking, to -tell- 'him' more specifics. If it was of God, he would KNOW the SPECIFICS. All the people can do is "anxiously watch" to see if they can find out anything.

The Most High "proclaims", because He exists. The other so-called gods don't. He says, "I am Jehovah (the Existing One); that is My name; and My glory I will not give to another...behold, the former things have come to pass, and new things I declare; before they spring forth, I proclaim them to you." (42:8-9) Why does the Bible contain so much prophecy? In order to prove God's existence. When history shows how His past declarations have come to pass, we can also know that what is yet future will also happen. The Most High has -declared- it. Thus, fulfilled prophecy is proof that God exists.

See Also Addendum: You 'are' gods?

Delivered Israel (Is43:10-12)

Remember the 'courtroom'? Here is another argument for God's 'case'. "You (Israel) are My witnesses, says Jehovah." You want to know about the existence of God? Look at Israel. God declares: "Before Me no God was formed, nor shall there be after Me. I, even I, am Jehovah; and there is no one to save besides Me." That's the declaration, and here is the evidence of the proof: "I have declared and have saved, and I have shown, when there was no strange god among you; therefore you are My witnesses, says Jehovah, that I am God". When God did all His mighty works for Israel, they were not into idolatry. It was not Chemosh, Baal, Ashtaroth, Tammuz, etc who rescued Israel from their troubles. All the nations who worshiped those gods brutalized Israel. Only the Most High rescued Israel out of their hands, time and time again. Thus, the word of this God who saved Israel is also that, He is the 'only' God. There weren't any others before Him, and none will follow.

First and Last (Is44:6)

"Thus says Jehovah, the King of Israel, and His Redeemer Jehovah of Hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and besides Me there is no God." (vs6)

Before Jesus touches John who has fallen down "as dead" at the appearance of the glorified Jesus, Jesus proclaims, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last", and as He touches John He says, "Do not be terrified, I am the First and the Last". (Rev1:11,17)

Notice the words here in Isaiah. 'Jehovah', the King -AND- His Redeemer 'Jehovah'. Both the Father and Son are called "Jehovah", the Existing One. And the One speaking, Jehovah-King calls Himself "First and Last"; the label ascribed to Jesus, the One who "redeemed" us with His own blood. (Rev5:9) Perhaps any who have doubted before can now better understand Jesus' claim, "I and the Father are One" (Jn10:30) A statement the Jews understood well, as they picked up stones to stone Jesus: He was claiming to -be- "God".

How can God declare the "end from the beginning"? (46:10) Because He is the "First", the Originator of all things; and He is the "Last", the Completer of what He originates.

As He continues the courtroom debate: What other gods can proclaim "as I do"? (vs7) He challenges the other gods to show their expertise: to found the ancient people, to declare the things that are happening, and shall come. As if to say: I CHALLENGE YOU "...let them declare it to them.." God basically says: Nobody else does what I do. I'm the only One.

With all the other gods there is "fear". There is always appeasement against their wrathful whims. But God says, "Fear not, nor be afraid; have I not told you and declared it since then? Thus, you (Israel) are My witnesses..." (vs8) And then God waxes 'cute' again. When Russia sent the first man into space, the cosmonaut looked around and said something like, "I don't see God up here." Of course, being atheistic, they were taunting any notions of a "Christian" God. But God does the very same thing. He says, "Is there a God besides Me? Yea, there is no other rock. I have not known any." (vs8b) Is there some other god besides Me? Hey, I've been looking around, and don't see any! I've not met them!

Created the Earth – Orders Earthly Kingdoms – Chose Israel (Is45)

One of the things Nebuchadnezzar learned when God humbled him and turned him into a beast for seven years, was that "...the Most High rules in the kingdom of men and gives it to whomever He will." (Dan4:17) When Cyrus ruled, he makes an edict, "Thus says Cyrus king of Persia: Jehovah, the God of Heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and He has commanded me to build Him a house at Jerusalem which is in Judah." (Ez1:2)

God has done many things. He created the earth "to be inhabited" (45:18) Thus far, man has not found life in any other place in the universe. For all of science fiction that is fun to watch with its Vulcans, Klingons, Duridians, etc...that is all make-believe. It is not real. When the earth was first dropped into orbit around the sun, it was "without form and void" (Gen1:2) just like all the other planets man has found out there. But then, the Genesis account describes how God took earth and put "life" on it. The balance of earth's ecosystem is the only one of its kind. Slight variances in things like distance from the sun, speed of revolution, chemical attributes, the nature of gravity, etc...would make the present system of life on earth impossible. And man was designed and created to live on 'this' earth which God made for the purpose. Man cannot live outside of earth's immediate environment. With technology he has managed to attain to a few hundred miles above the earth in orbit. But that is as far as he will ever get...because God made -earth- for man; not the Moon, Mars, or any other place.

And out of earth's population He also chose a specific family of people. Israel. It was not Israel's greatness or righteousness for which reason God chose them. He speaks to Cyrus and tells Cyrus that He is the "God of Israel" (vs3) Now as we progress through this chapter the lines become a little blurred as to who God is talking to in every case; Cyrus or Israel.

But notice that Israel is God's "elect". Is it Cyrus whom God has "entitled"? And for what purpose might that be? In order for Cyrus to issue a decree that frees Israel from captivity, to go re-build the temple in Jerusalem. Cyrus ruled the world's super-power of the day. Earlier, God said of Nebuchadnezzar, who took Israel into captivity, that he was God's "servant" (Jer25:9) for the purpose of disciplining Israel. God orders the course of global politics to work on behalf of His 'elect', Israel. And even as this is being prepared/written, is it possible that we are seeing a shift in American politics for the purpose of supporting Israel properly? What other things might yet happen to

make the US more inclined to God's will for Israel? We wait and see. But while man thinks that he (man) is in charge of his own destiny, it is actually God who rules...even over unbelievers; "...though you have not known Me." (vs4b) They are "ordained by God" (Rom13:1)

Or is it Israel that God "entitled" by calling them His "elect"? There are plenty of other places that speak of Israel being God's own special people. This verse, in its context, could equally be speaking of Israel or Cyrus.

But God's works in creation and ordering the world is for one purpose; "...that they may know from the rising of the sun, to its setting, that there is none besides Me. I am Jehovah, and there is no other." (vs6) And how does God reveal Himself to the world?

He formed "light" and "darkness". (vs7) He makes it rain. (vs8) And he uses the illustration of how rain nourishes the ground, so that vegetation can grow, in terms of how He wishes for "righteousness" to flourish on the earth. As Jesus said about Eternal Life being like "water springing up". (Jn4:14) So, as God makes life flourish on earth, who is man to rebel against God and say, I don't like what You have made. God made it; thus, how dare we condemn Him for His creation! (vs9)

Today man would have Israel give up the land God gave them, because to the followers of Allah, Israel has no "right to exist" as a people. Well, this is what God says to them: "Do you ask Me of things to come? Do you give command to Me about My sons, and about the worked of My hands?" (vs11) Would man try to tell God how to deal with Israel? Would they seek to annihilate His 'elect'? Just a reminder: "I have made the earth, and created man on it; I, with My hands, have stretched out the heavens; and all their host have I ordained." (vs 12) And man, with his most powerful telescopes has yet to fathom the furthest extent of the universe...so, they would think to do wrong to God's 'elect'?

The followers of Allah wish to annihilate Israel. Even segments of those falsely calling themselves the "church" proclaim that Israel is "done for". But this God, who proves Himself with the created universe, and the ordaining of the world's kingdoms (even ordering Cyrus vs13), also proclaims, "But Israel shall be saved in Jehovah with an everlasting salvation. You shall not be ashamed nor humiliated to everlasting eternity." (vs17)

So, in God's dealings with Israel, and His orderings of world empires on Israel's behalf... what is the whole purpose? Why does God do all this? It is something that has been known ever since the beginning, "...from antiquity.." that "...there is no other God besides Me; a just God and a Savior; there is no one besides Me." (vs21)

Now, is God a terribly "proud" God, just looking for self-aggrandizement? No. He has gone to all these lengths to say this:

"Turn to Me, and be saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other." (vs22) This is God's desire. Contrary to the false doctrines of the Reformation, God did not purpose for any to perish, but that "all should come to repentance". (2Pet3:9) God certainly chose Israel to be His "elect". But it was not His purpose to save -only-Israel; but His invitation is to "all" the "ends of the earth". When He sent His Son to die, it was so that "-everyone- believing into Him" might not perish, but receive salvation. (Jn3:16)

Now, whether man receives God's salvation or not, will not change one thing. Just as He stretched out the heavens, and orders the world kingdoms and rulers for His purposes, in the end eventually "every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear." (vs23, Php2:10) Everyone will confess that salvation comes through Jesus Christ. They will confess that "Only in Jehovah do I have righteousness and strength." Some will be able to claim this "righteousness" for themselves, because they did "turn to" Jehovah.

But just because a person knows that salvation comes from God, does not mean they will be saved. The demons "believe" that fact, but also "shudder". (Jac2:19) Because why? "And they shall be ashamed, all who are angry with Him." (vs24b) Those who rebel against God saying, God didn't make me...I am here by "chance" (evolution). Oh, God wouldn't condemn anybody to everlasting "torture" in Hell...I don't believe in that kind of God. They do not "love Jehovah their God". (De6:5) The opposite of love is hate. Those who hate God will "be ashamed".

But God's work for Israel... God is going to give them a new heart (Jer31:31-34, Ez36:26) They will be "justified, and shall glory". (vs25)

Comparison to Idols (Is46)

"To whom will you compare Me, and make Me equal; and compare Me, that we may be alike?" (vs5)

Idols are heavy and a burden. In Isaiah's day they used beasts of burden to carry them. (vs1) When a people are taken captive, even their idols "[go] into captivity". (vs2) They take precious metals, melt them down, cast them, chisel and pound on them to make them into shapes. They must be carried. When it is set down, it cannot move on its own. If one bows to it, kisses it, and prays to it, it cannot answer. (vs6-7)

God always implored Israel to "Remember". "Remember the former things from a long time ago; for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and no one else is like Me." (vs9) What had God done for Israel? He had formed them into a nation, delivered them out of Egypt with signs and wonders, gave them a land, and made them into a nation.

After describing the idol, how does God describe Himself? Idols cannot answer when prayed to; but God -DECLARES- the "end from the beginning". Remember? His is the "first" and "last". Things which He proclaimed "from antiquity" which are not yet done, He proclaims, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure". (vs10) And 'how' will He fulfill His word? Even to using "a bird of prey from the east, the man who executes my counsel from a far country". (vs11) And God used Nebuchadnezzar, His "servant" (Jer43:10), from a "far country", a "distant land" (2Kg20:14) God declared it, and history has shown how it came to pass.

God, being the "first" and "last" is unique. Three things God continually repeats in Isaiah: 1) He is God, and there is no other, 2) His calling card is His declaring the past, present and future, and 3) His choosing and care for Israel. God proclaims, "I am God, and no one else is like Me" (vs9) and then gives his proof (remember, we are in that courtroom, and God is arguing His case), "declaring the end from the beginning" (vs10), and then gives the foretelling of Israel's captivity... which history and later Scripture proved out.

God "declaring". That is an interesting word. God is not like the man on "Crossing Over", or like the practitioners of charismania, who claim to proclaim things, but then also scratch their heads, fishing from their hearers further details. He -DECLARES- a matter. When God came to visit Abraham to tell him he was having a son, and Sarah laughs, and God asks why she laughed, and she denies it, God says, "No, but you did laugh." (Gen18:15) God -knows-. When Daniel is standing before Nebuchadnezzar, interpreting his dream; all the magicians and fortunetellers were doing like Crossing-Over and charismania..."tell us the dream, and we will interpret it" (Dan2:4) Give us at least a 'hint'... some

'clues'. Then, we will spin some ideas around, and come up with something to satisfy you. But Nebuchadnezzar wanted -proof- of authenticity. "Therefore, tell me the dream, then I shall know that you have the ability to explain the interpretation to me." (Dan2:9) But not so with Daniel, who received the matter from God. And when he finished telling the king the 1) dream -and- its 2) interpretation; he closes by saying, "And the dream is certain, and the interpretation of it is sure." (Dan2:45b) O, king, you wanted authentication. Hopefully this has proved to you that, "He who reveals secrets makes known to you what shall come to pass." (Dan2:29) He tells the king the dream and does not ask, "Is that it? Was I close?" But rather, "THIS IS THE DREAM. Now we will tell the interpretation of it.." (vs36) And when God's power is shown through His servant Daniel, what is the result to the king? He, the king, prostrates himself and proclaims, "Your God truly [is] a God of gods and a Lord of kings, and a Revealer of secrets, since you could reveal this secret." (Dan2:47)

That's it. One of the reasons God does all that He does, is to -prove- Himself to mankind. Even down to the 'timing' of Israel's redemption out of Egypt, in recounting the matter Moses says, "...the -appointed- time that you came out of Egypt." (De16:6b)

God is different from all others. Man cannot fathom it. "He has made everything beautiful in its time; also He has set eternity in their hearts, so that no man can find out the work that God has made from the beginning to the end." (Ecc3:11)

Downfall of the Queen of Heaven (Is47)

"Come down and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon; sit on the ground. There is no throne for you, O daughter of the Chaldeans. For you shall no more be called tender and delicate...you shall no more be called the Queen of Kingdoms...Now therefore hear this, O voluptuous one, who lives securely; who says in her heart, I am, and there is no one else besides me; I shall not sit as a widow, nor shall I know the loss of children. But these two things shall come to you in a moment in one day: The loss of children, and widowhood. They shall come upon you in their fullness for the multitude of your sorceries, and for the great power of your enchantments." (vs1,5,8-9)

Please read this entire chapter for yourselves. But here, in this one chapter we see the downfall of that 'woman'. In Revelation "Babylon" is spoken of. In chs17-18 is recorded the future of its downfall. There are things within those chapters that make us look at the church of Rome. There are also things that make us wonder about the UN, and world commerce, and New York City as being the location where these things are centered. There are some self-proclaimed prophets who suggest that one reason Saddam needs to be gotten rid of is because he has been re-building the old Babylon at its original location. All these details of all those things will come to light as those prophecies are fulfilled.

However, this chapter 47 of Isaiah narrows down very specifically who/what one of the aspects of those prophecies is all about. And it focuses our attention squarely on that woman, "Jezebel". (Rev2:20) Throughout history, in various world-centers, she has been known by various names. After Babel she began to be known as Isis in Egypt. During the days of Israel and her judges and kings, she was known as Ashtaroth (Jug2:13) and Queen of Heaven. (Jer7:18) As the world powers became centered in Greece and Rome, she was called Aphrodite, Libertas, Artemis. And when the Roman empire took on the label "christian", she took on the name "Maria".

Under Roman domain she has been made to be more "pure" seeming, being called the "virgin", and endowed with -perpetual- virginity. While she has been given Jesus' attributes as "advocate" before God, and is not typically thought of in sensual ways, her predecessors were. The so-called "Mary" is portrayed to be a 'holy' advocate. But in her prior mutations, she was a goddess of fertility. When a particularly attractive woman is being especially appreciated, and drooled over by male admirers, one expression the thusly-captivated male might say is, "She's a -goddess-!" As "Christians" who know God's Laws on morality, we understand the concepts of purity and fidelity; and that is part of God's holiness. God's Law required punishment for whoredom, lewdness, lasciviousness. But the pagan goddesses were creatures of lust, allure

and enticement. Prior to the so-called "Mary", many are the depictions of uncovered legs and bared breasts.

The above Scripture quotes are taken from the VW-Edition. The term "voluptuous" is actually what the text says. The goddess of fertility, supposedly responsible for fruitful crops, and endowments to the fruit of the womb; having many children.

Notice God's judgment upon her in vs2. Uncover the veil...a symbol of modesty. Strip off the skirt, bare the thigh. That which she was used to doing for allure, now is forced upon her in judgment. Much like when some women are raped. (Now please, ladies, don't go ballistic on me here! Read this in context.) Yes, many rapists are depraved and would rape anything that would give them pleasure, or boost their power/ego. But how many are the cases where a woman is raped, and she complains about it; but what was her normal behavioral trend? She was used to getting herself up to 'allure' the male, gain the whistles and admiring looks. For what? To be seen in a sexual way, to be seen to be an object of desire to a man, in the bed. And so, a man seeing her 'invitations', "accepts". Only, now, on her own personal whim she decides she doesn't -want- it. Well, sorry lady...as some say about such situations, "You asked for it!" And some do not have much sympathy for such a woman who is abused. She was "out there", exposing herself, smiling and batting her eyelashes in language that men understand to say, "Come and take me." So, a man came and 'took' her. So now she sits there, crying, "I got raped!!" That -terrible- maaan!! It doesn't matter to her that he did what she invited him to do. How about so-called "date-rape"? The girl spends all evening enticing and alluring her male companion; but when the evening ends up going "all-the-way", she complains that she was "raped"! She was spending all evening turning the switches "on", and then has the nerve to complain that he didn't turn it "off". She got exactly what she was after! Or the hussy who was making-the-rounds at the tavern to all the men, sitting on laps, giving out kisses, wiggling various parts of her body suggestively, flirtingly...and then the men collectively gang-rape her. Oh, those "terrible men", right? Well, yes. But also, she spent all evening "asking for it"...so they gave it to her.

Well...you see...regarding the Queen of Heaven...she is going to get exactly what she was enticing others to do. "Render to her just as she rendered to you, and repay her double according to her works; in the cup which she has mixed, mix double for her." (Rev18:6) "Your nakedness shall be uncovered, yea, your shame shall be seen; I will take vengeance and I will not meet you as a man." (Is47:3)

Now how do we know this is speaking of the same one who is now called "Mary"? Rome has another name for "Mary". In their prayers they also call her "Queen of Heaven".

Notice what she says about herself...

She says, "I shall be queen forever" (vs7) And also "who says in her heart, I am, and there is no one else besides me.." (vs8) Are these not God's attributes, which she claims for herself! God -is- Jehovah, the existing One. Satan aspired to be "like the Most High". (Is14:14) But this Queen says, "I am". Is that not how Jesus identified Himself, "before Abraham came to be, I AM". (Jn8:58) That is God's 'memorial' name, "I AM THAT I AM" (Ex3:14) This Queen has sought to totally usurp the Most High, and not only be equal to Him, but to -REPLACE- Him totally. Since God is Someone "else" compared to her, and she claims there is "no one else", she is proclaiming that God does not exist. And, in practice, is this not what the church of Rome has done? They have given Mary Christ's advocacy attributes. They name the name of "Jesus", but they -worship- "Mary", not Christ! The current pope has been quoted saying that Mary has his highest adoration. She is highest on his list. Above Jesus, above the Father...well, the pope is called "father". Not to mention everything else it says in the passage about her occult and demonic connections; that also fits Rome. Whatever the pope proclaims usurps the Scriptures, God's Word.

But notice her downfall. "Therefore evil shall come upon you, and you shall not know its origin. And disaster shall fall upon you, and you shall not be able to cover it over. And desolation shall come upon you suddenly, which you shall not be informed of." (vs11) Notice that Babylon's fall is "in one hour" her "judgment has come". (Rev18:10,17,19) And notice that it is given to the "beast" to destroy her. "And the ten horns which you saw on the beast, these will hate the harlot, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and consume her with fire. For God has put it into their hearts to fulfill His purpose, to be of one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled." (Rev17:16-17) Ah yes...remember above, how God is in control of world powers and kingdoms to His own will and purposes.

Perhaps the current war-drums will address the followers of Allah? But then, Babylon/Rome/Mary/Queen of Heaven will also come crashing down.

And notice who else will receive understanding at her downfall. ".and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the inner thoughts and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works." (Rev2:23)

The Nature of Prophecy (Is48:1-8)

"I even declared it to you from the beginning. Before it happened I proclaimed it to you, lest you should say, My idol has done them, and my graven image and my molten image has commanded them." (vs5)

Satan lusted to be "like the Most High". (Is14:14) What is one of the primary activities of satanism and the occult? Fortunetelling. When you go to various fairs, where there is a collection of stands selling little trinkets, jewelry, and other things, what else is usually there? Little booths with palm readers, tarot card readers... fortunetellers. What is their claim? To tell you things about yourself you don't already know, tell you things about people close to you or family members (calling up the dead), or to predict the future. Due to their satanic 'powers' sometimes they are right. But quite often they are also NOT right. God told Israel that the way they could tell a false prophet was when the predictions did not come to pass. (De18:22) The predictions of the likes of Nostradamus are claimed to be 70%. A few years ago when the Toronto Revivals were making a big splash, and one of their leaders was interviewed on a national network news TV program, he claimed 70% accuracy of their prophecies. The way democratic societies function, anything over 50% "wins". For some things a 60-67% margin is required. Thus, to the natural mind 70% seems "overwhelming". To -man-! But not to God! 70% might have been 'right', but 30% WAS NOT. 30% DID NOT COME TO PASS. They are not of God. (De18:22)

Those who are not of God spend inordinate amounts of time trying to impress people with their prophetic abilities to "predict", so that they can say, "Behold, I knew them." (vs7) They claim to have visions and revelations: "the Lord -revealed- to me...!"

Remember, God is the "First and the Last". He says, "I have declared the former things from the beginning..." and then "I acted suddenly, and they came to pass."

Who is prophecy for? Is it a real "spiritual" thing to know prophecy? If a person has -the- "gift" to foretell things, are they somehow "closer" to God's wisdom? Notice who God prophesies for...

"..because I knew that you are obstinate, and your neck is an iron sinew and your brow bronze."

A person who is in a continual walk with God, praying "without ceasing" (1Th5:17), does -not- 'need' prophecy. He is in continual fellowship, and so, like Ezekiel's vision of the cherubim and wheels (Ez10:16-17), when the cherubim went, the wheels (with the spirits) went together; so, too, we who know the Lord and are indwelt by His Holy Spirit (Rom8:9)... wherever God works, the Believer is with Him, because "we have the mind

of Christ". (1Cor2:16) Certainly, prophecy helps confirm God's word to the Believer; but Abraham "believed God" and was accounted as "righteous" (Gen15:6), when he has only God's promises...not their fulfillment.

Thus, prophecy is -primarily- not for the faithful, but for unbelievers, the "obstinate" and rebels, for God to -prove- Himself to them...to differentiate Himself from satan's idols.

[Note: in 1Cor14:22 the word "prophesying" refers to "preaching or teaching", not -FORE-telling or predicting the future.]

Dealings with Israel (Is48--)

Now, let's take some brief looks at some passing comments. For fuller insight, please read the entire passages; this isn't intended to cover every detail nor to be in-depth. Just some little 'spot' observations.

(48:9-11) God's dealings with Israel are so that God's name not be defiled. Even though they rebelled, He doesn't "cut them off", for His -own- praise. God does not give His glory to others.

(48:12) God is the first and last.

(48:13) God is the creator of the universe.

(48:16) The Trinity. There are many who think the doctrine of the "Trinity" is a 'catholic' doctrine. They don't think it exists in the Bible. Others realize it exists in the N.T. (Mt28:19, Lk3:22) But most scholarly Jews do not acknowledge it, feeling it contradicts God's statement, "Jehovah is One" (Deut6:4)

Notice that in this chapter -Jesus- is speaking. Jesus the "Word" (Jn1:1) "My hand..laid the foundations" (vs13) and speaking of "Jehovah" (vs14) in the third-person. And notice in vs16, "I was there; and now the Lord Jehovah, and His Spirit, has sent Me"; agreeing with how when Jesus was immersed, the Holy Spirit descended on Him visibly like a dove, and the Father's voice from Heaven spoke to Him. (Lk3:22)

(48:20) Israel's redemption proclaimed. It is not only Paul's declaration in Rom11:26, but Isaiah said it first. (Is30:15, 45:17) God loves Israel, and notice His yearning after them, "Oh that you had paid attention to My commandments!" (vs18)

(49:2) Commissioning of Christ, whose mouth is "like a sharp sword". See how Heb4:12-13 is talking about Jesus Christ? not necessarily the 'Bible'?

(49:5) When Jesus was born in human form, He was sent to Israel, in order "to bring Jacob back to Him". He "came unto His own, and His own did not receive Him." (Jn1:11) And yet, even though Israel rejected, Christ was still "glorious in the eyes of Jehovah".

(49:6) Thus, when Israel rejected Him, Jesus was also "for a light to the nations". "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those believing into His name.." (Jn1:12) After all, God so love "the world". (Jn3:16) When the Jews rejected the Holy Spirit, Paul proclaims, "..the salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will hear it!" (Ac28:28)

(49:13-17) God does not forget Israel. Like a nursing mother cares for

her newborn, so God cares for Israel. And even if a mother did abandon her young (which some do), "yet I will not forget you" (vs15)

Just the other day one of my customers came to pick up their order, and I noticed all the writing on their hand, and up their wrist. Instead of carrying a piece of paper with scribbled notes, they had written things on their hand, with pen/ink; so we joked about it a little. But, one's hand does not get 'lost'. A little piece of paper can slip away, and fall to the ground, be lost, and the things written forgotten. But a hand is attached. God says, "I have engraved you on the palms of My hands". (vs16) Israel is -always- in God's mind, even when they are suffering the consequences of their disobedience. And God promises that those afflicting Israel "shall go out from you". (vs17b) And notice that God hasn't used 'ink' that can wash off. He "engraved" them.

(49:18-23) A picture of Israel's return to the land. (vs18-20) As they return in droves. (vs21) And the nations of the world shall bring Israel back to their land. (vs22) This will include world rulers; kings as 'fathers', and queens as 'wet nurses'. (vs23) And this care for Israel will be with great respect for Israel as they "bow down to you, with faces to the earth, and lick up the dust of your feet." Those who had done Israel wrong, now caring for her tenderly. There has already been a gruesome picture of this after the WW2 Holocaust, as the document film footage showed German -officers- being forced to physically carry the dead corpses of Jews to the burial pits. But in the end, the rulers will also be caringly bringing Israel back.

Messiah (Is50-55)

The Father gives the Son the Word, and He was not "rebellious" (50:5). As having "come in the flesh" (1Jn4:3), having partaken of "flesh and blood" (Heb2:14), and as flesh, learning "obedience" (Heb5:7-8), he -could- have chosen to rebel. After all, satan was given liberty to have a go at Him, to tempt Him. (Mt4:1) But what Jesus spoke and taught, He spoke what was given from the Father. (Jn8:28, 15:15) While we know that Jesus "gave" His life, this authority was given from the Father. (Jn10:18) All the works Jesus did were from the Father. (Jn10:32) And His coming rule with the "rod of iron" is also from the Father. (Rev2:27, Ps110:1)

As Jesus was a physical human representation of the Father, the "image of His essence" (Heb1:3), everything Jesus said and did was to show humanity the Father. Thus, as Jesus "gave" (50:6) Himself to those who whipped and abused Him, that was in reverse imagery in actuality 'God' they crucified.

(51:15-16) When God parted the Red Sea for Israel to pass over, it is important for all to know exactly just 'who' did it. "Jehovah of Hosts is His name". It is this same who declares to Zion, "You are My people". Many of the world scoff at "Zionism". When they do so, they are scoffing at "Jehovah of Hosts". The "hosts" of the armies of Heaven, the armies through which He will redeem His elect, Israel, as He crushes the world powers. The followers of Allah yell out, "Allah Akbar" when they attack God. When God overthrows them, His name is, "Jehovah of Hosts!"

(52:6-15) Right now Israel does not know their God. They have not nationally acknowledged their Messiah. But when God has overthrown the nations, and Messiah is physically reigning, "My people shall know My name" (vs6) And from those many nations "kings shall shut their mouths at Him" (vs15) And this One who rules they will recognize. Israel will "mourn for Him" (Zec12:10), and the kings of the nations will have to be silent at Him, because they taunted "...prophesy! Who struck You?" (Mt26:68) as they disfigured His appearance "more than any man". And so, as He was disfigured, 'now' He will "be exalted and extolled and be very high." (vs13-14)

(ch53) Jesus is portrayed as the slaughtered lamb. (vs7) He "gave" His soul as a "sin-offering" (vs10) At all the various annual feasts in Israel, they would always offer a multitude of various sorts of animal sacrifices. But in amongst all the different offerings, of which some were done, animals by the hundreds, there was always, for each occasion, the "one goat as a sin offering" (Num28-29) He was the "Lamb, without blemish and without spot" (1Pt1:19), "slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev13:8)

Jesus said He came to "fulfill" the Law. (Mt5:17) What He was fulfilling was the Father's requirement in order to "justify many" as He "shall bear their iniquities". (vs11)

Invitation to Salvation (Is55)

So, was it enough that Messiah should die, bearing all our iniquities, and giving His soul? Many of the world's religious denominations speak of Jesus' crucifixion. In fact, many of them have statues, icons and depictions of Jesus hanging on the cross, with the crown of thorns, and blood 'still' coming out of His body. Many proclaim that Jesus is "still bleeding" for mankind. And as some proclaim Jesus 'body' in their communions, in some demonic cases, the element actually turns into "blood" for them. One person who e-mailed recently, deriding VW's stance against charismania and tongues, claimed that the true church today began in 1917, and that part of their experiences of spirit-filling include visions and "blood". But NO! Jesus is -not- "still" bleeding. He died "once for all". (Heb7:27) When He had completed His work He pronounced with a loud voice from the cross, "It has been finished!" (Jn19:30)

But they leave out something. The "invitation". Jesus invited, "Come unto Me, all who are weary and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest". (Mt11:28) The invitation is, "Ho..." A word which suggests, "Hey you over there! all busy rushing around with your concerns and labors... Let me have your attention, please!" "Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters.." (vs1) What are the waters? Jesus offered the woman of Samaria waters "springing up to eternal life" (Jn4:14), as He spoke, His voice was "as the sound of many waters" (Rev1:15)

"..come to the waters.." (Jesus Christ) and "without price" come acquire food and drink for (spiritual) sustenance. Salvation is the "gift of God. Not of works.." (Eph2:8-9)

Yes, "Extend your ear, and come to Me; hear, and your soul shall live.." (vs3) See this word "extend"? It's like a person facing the one speaking, giving full attention, and cocking the head to "extend" the -good- ear to hear with all best clarity, so as not to miss anything.

The invitation is to "Seek Jehovah while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near." (vs6) Because, "..everyone who shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.." (Ac2:21) Not just some elect few. Salvation is -available- to "all". God does not desire, He "did not purpose" for any to perish, but that "-ALL- should come to repentance." (2Pt3:9)

But you see, there's the rub. "Repentance". People like the part about "seek and you shall find, knock and it shall be opened to you" (Mt7:7); but they don't much care for the part that is included in God's invitation, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to Jehovah." (vs7) Today's doctrine of

graeesss proclaims God's "mercy on him" and "abundant pardon" - without- "repentance" or subsequent changed life.

Yes, come to the "free" waters and drink, and partake of the "Bread of Life" (Jn6:35,48) ...BUT DON'T BE A FOOL! You must "FORSAKE" the - SIN! It is not enough to simply say, "I believe, I believe! Hallelujah, I'm on my way to Heaven because I got 'aboard' the 'gospel train'." The demons also "believe and shudder". (Jac2:19) "..God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap eternal life." (Gal6:7-8) "He who covers his sins shall not prosper; but he who confesses and forsakes them shall have mercy." (Pr28:13)

Response to the Invitation (Is57--)

God "inhabits eternity" (57:15) Science speaks of a space-time continuum. Science fiction speaks of space and time "folding" around itself, creating vortices. As humans we think in terms of a -place- "where" we live. But remember we have already noted that God is the "First and Last". He inhabits "time". And seeing as how He is "eternal", His dwelling is "timeless".

Those who have confessed and forsaken their sin in repentance, other terms also apply: "humble" and "contrite". That is what repentance is. Humility and contrition. Those who are of such a heart, their dwelling is with God. Their habitation is "eternal" with Him. (vs15)

God's anger against sin will not remain forever, nor will He contend forever. His invitation is to come to Him "while He is near" (55:6) A time will come when He pronounces, "...the time is at hand. He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still." (Rev22:11)

While the righteous will inhabit Eternity with God, the wicked "are like the troubled sea, which cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, says my God, to the wicked." (57:20-21) You see, another picture of Salvation is "rest"; entering into His rest. (Heb4:1) But the wicked "...have no rest day or night.." (Rev14:11)

And so, while the righteous are in His presence, once that "time" has been reached, God will 'satisfy' His anger, put the wicked into the Lake of Fire (Rev20:14-15), where "...their worm does not die, nor is their fire quenched; and they shall be an abhorrence to all flesh." (Is66:24)

See Also Addendum: Worm Does Not Die?

Holy Spirit for Israel (Is59:21)

In the O.T. the Holy Spirit apparently did not reside within each person of Israel, but would "come upon" (Jug3:10) or "rushed upon" (Jug14:6,19) special people for special service. If Israel had not rejected Christ, and the subsequent coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, they could -be- today's "Church". But they rejected. (Ac7:51) And so, the aspect of the indwelling Holy Spirit has been a predominantly 'Gentile' -Church-characteristic.

So now, as we see how God is to restore Israel to favor, how is He going to accomplish that? "...this is My covenant with them, says Jehovah; My Spirit that is upon you, and My Words which I have put in your mouth, shall not depart out of your mouth, nor out of the mouth of your seed...from now on and forever." (59:21)

Where they had been looking at God's Law as merely -physical- things which they 'did', they, too, will experience what has been the Church's characteristic: they, too, will be indwelt by God's Holy Spirit.

"Behold, the days are coming, says Jehovah, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah, not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them, says Jehovah. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, says Jehovah, I will put My Law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. And they shall no more teach each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for they shall all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says Jehovah. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more." (Jer31:31-34) "I will also give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh." (Ez36:26)

Review (Is63:12-14)

God brought Israel out of Egypt, led them through the Red Sea by the hand of Moses "...to make for Himself an everlasting name.." (vs12) He made a nation out of them and led them "to make for [Himself] a glorious name" (vs14) He did all this for Israel with "no foreign gods" (De32:12) God pronounces, "...I, even I, am He, and there is no God besides Me; I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal; nor is there any who can deliver out of My hand. For I raise My hand to the heavens, and say, As I live forever.." (De32:39) Israel and the world is to understand "that Jehovah Himself is God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath; there is no other." (De4:39)

Conclusion *(Is66)*

"Thus says Jehovah, Heaven is My throne, and earth My footstool. Where, then, is the house that you would build for Me? And where is the place of My rest?" (vs1)

Israel today is yet in unbelief. Those in Israel who are 'closest' to a concept of Jehovah, seem to have it in their minds that, the thing which is keeping their nation from God's blessing is that they are not busy re-building the next temple in Jerusalem. That in the "G-dly time" they need to be about the task of leveling the mosques that are in the way, laying the cornerstone, building the temple, and resuming the sacrifices.

But notice this chapter 66 comes at the 'end' of Isaiah, just as we are in the end times. As we know from Jeremiah, in the Messianic kingdom there will not be the ark: "And it shall come to pass, when you have multiplied and increased in the land in those days, says Jehovah, that they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of Jehovah! Nor shall it come to mind; nor shall they remember it; nor shall they seek it; nor shall it be made anymore." (Jer3:16) It almost sounds like God is saying here: Why are you concerned about a physical temple? As we noted above, God does not so much inhabit a "place", but is "eternal". How does man go about to suppose he can make a "place" in which to confine the Most High? As Solomon prayed, "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the Heaven of heavens cannot contain You. How much less this house which I have built!" (1Kg8:27)

No, God does not wish for a human-built temple. He has already said that Messiah will build it. (Zec6:12) So, why should man be usurping what God has said He will do?

No, rather... "But to this one will I have regard: To the lowly and contrite of spirit, and the one who trembles at My Word" (vs2)

A time of global judgment is yet coming. And those who survive will go throughout the world to "declare [God's] glory among the nations" (66:19b) And Israel will be brought back to its land, "on horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and on mules, and on camels...and I will also take some of them for priests and for Levites, says Jehovah" (vs20-21) Many wonder how the Levitical "line" will be ascertained to fill the priesthood. They will come from those who return. God will do it.

And as we have observed at other times how some major changes will happen to the earth, by the time the major earthquake levels all the mountains flat, and 'possibly' the earth is flung into a different orbit farther away from the sun (Job9:6, Is13:13, Zec14:6-7), here he speaks of the "new heavens and the new earth, which I will make". This

certainly speaks of this present earth which will have gone through the catastrophes, being "healed" (Ez47:8-9), because there will be a moon for there to be "new moon" celebrations. (vs23) This is not the new heavens and earth (Rev21:1) where there is "no sun" (Rev22:5) after these heaven and earth have been burned in the "fire". (2Pt3:7) But God is going to "fix" this earth for Messiah's peaceful rule, where the lion eats straw like the ox, etc. (Is11:7, 65:25)

God has always been known as the "...the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." (Ex3:6) The sons of Ishmael today equate the Most High as Allah. But He is not the god of Ishmael. Israel today is yet in unbelief, and is not yet totally free of world repression. And not all of Israel are yet back in the Land God gave to Abraham and his seed. (Gen12:7) But after God has finished making Himself fully known to the world, Israel will return:

"You shall also suck the milk of the nations, and suckle the breast of kings; and you shall know that I, Jehovah, am your Savior and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob." (Is60:16)

Amen!

Addendum:

You 'are' gods? © 2003

READER QUESTION:

what does Psalm 82:6 mean when it says : I have said, Ye are gods; all of you are children of the most High.? The way it reads I thought it is God speaking about men. The closest I can come is that some men are kings. But that is not true for most of us.

VW ANSWER:

Well, actually, the entire Psalm 82 is against false gods. It opens by proclaiming that God judges amongst the "gods" (vs1) It speaks against idolatry...and the hypocrisy of idolatry, compared to "pure religion" (Jac1:27) of helping the poor and needy. (vs3-4)

And vs6 has actually been slightly mis-translated in other versions. The word "are" is not actually in the text. It should actually be more like, "I have said, You gods, all of you are sons of the Most High." It is actually addressing all these false 'gods' that are worshipped, telling them that they are no better than men. As men die and are judged, so are they. (vs7) Any of the beings that are worshipped in idolatry (demons...fallen angels) were created by God...thus, they are also called "sons of God". (Gen6:2, Job1:6) The 'gods' are not ultimate... God, the Most High, is.

Worm does not Die? ©2003

READER QUESTION:

In your, Response to the Invitation (Is57), I have a question? It says, and so, while the righteous are in His Presence, once that time has been reached, God will satisfy "His anger", put the wicked into the Lake of Fire. (Rev.20:14-15) Where their worm does not die, nor is their fire quenched; and they shall be an abhorrence to all flesh (Is66:24)

I don't understand what it means when it says, "where their worm does not die? can you explain this to me?"

VW ANSWER:

I expect there's tons of theories on this. I've even heard one that has observed certain worm/serpent-like creatures that congregate around under-sea volcanic lava flows near the bottom of the oceans, suggesting that these creatures are actually dead 'humans', who are now in their 'hell' of these lava flows.

I really do believe the answer is simple. I believe it is a figurative word for "body". As Jesus was dying on the cross, David prophetically proclaims of Him, "I am a worm, and no man.." (Ps22:6) As Job was in misery, he proclaims about himself "my flesh is clothed with worms.." (Job7:5) In speaking of man's depravity, Job proclaims, "..man, who is a maggot, and the son of man, who is a worm!" (Job25:6) In death, "worms" are mentioned repeatedly: "They lie down together in the dust, and worms cover them." (Job21:26) And again: "..the worm shall feed sweetly on him.." (Job24:20) Of those dead in Sheol it says, "The maggot is spread under you, and the worms cover you." (Is14:11) If there's no worms there, there's no body that they are feeding on.

Thus, if 'their' worm (notice the possessive case) does not die, then it follows that the bodies the worms are feeding on, are also not going away. They do not go into 'oblivion' and "cease to exist". There is always an existence. And in the case of the unbeliever, that existence is in the fire that is not quenched. And just as a maggot-infested body is repulsive to others who see the body, so will unbelievers be to those enjoying Eternal Life.