

The Vision of a New Creation.

(Isaiah 65: vs 17-25)

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In this passage which we have read (Isaiah 65:17-25) the prophet Isaiah makes known (announces) to the people of Israel ^{in a very graphic description} the vision of the Lord which ~~he~~ ^{he} had ~~received~~ ^{been} revealed to him about the new creation: "The Lord says: I am making a new earth and new heavens". This vision forms an intrinsic, fundamental part of Christian belief and it is constantly repeated and described in the New Testament (2 Cor. 5, 2 Peter 3 and Revel. 21). Especially in times of great conflict, uncertainty and doubt this vision is given to the nation as a promise, a sign of encouragement, of hope, of life.

In a small way we in South Africa are also experiencing a similar situation where we realise how strongly we need such a vision. After all that our people have had to suffer and endure under apartheid over the last 40 years and in the light of what is currently happening in S.A. (and what we hope and pray will happen in the next 2 months) we not only understand and share this vision of Isaiah but our hearts are saying: Yes! and our lips are saying: Amen! to what Isaiah has said (es-

especially in verses 19, 21 and 25). Why do (2
we feel like that? Because what Isaiah is
presenting is a vision of new life, of a nation
reborn, of a community in a process of trans-
formation in a country seeking peace, righteous-
ness & justice for all.

But having said this, I have to utter a
word of caution. We have to be careful not
to be carried away by a vision, by the dream
of a new and better future on earth or in
heaven which is built on false hope or false
expectations. Politicians are tempted to
present false hopes and ~~make~~ ^{give} all kinds of
promises - especially if they want to get
into power. Profets and relig. leaders must
be very careful not to fall into such a
trap. If we think of our own country
I believe I am right when I am saying
that the vast majority of our people
(black and white) (however they may
|| differ politically) want:

- the wisher in our country to end
(especially the way it is affecting
our youth)

- a new government to be chosen
- creating of jobs for all our people
- better education for all our children
- proper housing for the millions of homeless people
- social abuses (abuse of women & children, corruption, bribery) to be attended to.

They all see this as part of the vision of ~~the~~ establishing a new creation ~~for~~ our country.

We know very well that no new government, even if it wishes to do so, can fulfill or meet even half of these expectations. We also should know that if we refer to ~~social~~ social problems like alcoholism, drug abuse, abuse of women & children, antisocial attitudes like racial prejudice, intolerance, violence no government can resolve these problems. Can change the hearts of the people. Because such a change must come from within & from above. This is

where churches, religious bodies, human rights ⁴
organisations, civic associations, women's
and youth organisations & groups ~~should~~ ^{can}
play a very meaningful role. This is
where we, the ordinary people, all of
us (men, women, youth) have a very
important task to fulfill. We must
not wait for this new creation to
fall out of heaven like manna in the
days of the Israelites trekking to Canaan.
God creates & renews but we have
to co-operate with God, ask for
his guidance, live according to
his will for all his people.