

Paper 195 – Theology

DEATH IN NEW HEAVEN: A HISTORICAL–GRAMMATICAL INQUIRY

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ABSTRACT

The book of Isaiah is one of the largest prophetic books in the Old Testament. One of the most confusing texts in this prophetic book is found in 65:20. It reads, “No more shall an infant from there live but a few days, nor an old man who has not fulfilled his days; for the child shall die one hundred years old, but the sinner being one hundred years old shall be accursed.” There are four main interpretations of this text which includes the following: (1). The prophecy pertains to Isaiah’s near future which is the restoration of Judah; (2) The prophecy refers to Isaiah’s distant future, which is the restoration of God’s church or God’s people; (3) The prophecy alludes to the restoration of God’s people in the millennium; and (4) The prophecy speaks of the final restoration during or after the millennium. It appears that the proponents of the three main interpretations of Isaiah 65:20 fails to consider the historical and literary context of this important prophecy. What is evident from this study is that longevity of life promise in this prophecy is primarily for the people of Judah in the eighth century. Therefore, its fulfillment would take place within the time, place, and circumstances of the prophetic writers. Nevertheless, it is not actualized according to the original intention because of the sinful condition of the people.

Keywords: Restoration of Judah, restoration, millennium, Isaiah, prophecy

