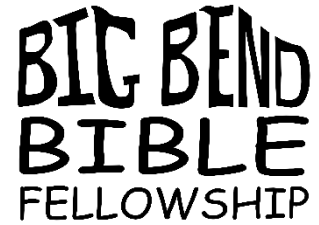


The Lord Will Repay

Isaiah 66:1-17

By Scott Huckaby

2/4/2024



Isaiah 66:1-6 – Responding to God’s Greatness (NIV)

This is what the Lord says: “Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. Where is the house you will build for me? Where will my resting place be? ² Has not my hand made all these things, and so they came into being?” declares the Lord. “These are the ones I look on with favor: those who are humble and contrite in spirit, and who tremble at my word. ³ But whoever sacrifices a bull is like one who kills a person, and whoever offers a lamb is like one who breaks a dog’s neck; whoever makes a grain offering is like one who presents pig’s blood, and whoever burns memorial incense is like one who worships an idol. They have chosen their own ways, and they delight in their abominations; ⁴ so I also will choose harsh treatment for them and will bring on them what they dread. For when I called, no one answered, when I spoke, no one listened. They did evil in my sight and chose what displeases me.” ⁵ Hear the word of the Lord, you who tremble at his word: “Your own people who hate you, and exclude you because of my name, have said, ‘Let the Lord be glorified, that we may see your joy!’ Yet they will be put to shame. ⁶ Hear that uproar from the city, hear that noise from the temple! It is the sound of the Lord repaying his enemies all they deserve.

v1 – What does it mean, “*heaven is My throne, and earth is My footstool*”?

Here, the LORD puts things back into proper perspective. We can never understand much of anything until we understand that the Lord GOD is enthroned in heaven, and that the earth is under His command — indeed, the earth is His footstool.

- Stephen quoted Isaiah 66:1-2 in Acts 7:49-50, agreeing with Isaiah about the greatness of God.

What is the point of the rhetorical question, “*where is the house that you will build Me?*”

We may want to serve God — but serve Him our way. We may want to build God something, but what can we build that is worthy of God? Instead, what God really wants from us is a poor and a contrite spirit, and to tremble at His Word (v2).

What does it mean to have a contrite spirit?

Contrite is literally ‘lamed’ or disabled, here used with spiritual significance: one who is aware of the damage wrought by sin, of personal inability to stand upright before God.

What does it mean to tremble at God’s Word?

As we are awed by God, we should be awed by His revelation to mankind. As the *fear of God is the beginning of wisdom* (Proverbs 9:10), the respect for God’s Word is the instrument God often uses to impart wisdom to us.

v3 – What was the problem with their sacrifices?

These sacrifices were done as empty religious ritualism. While God’s people thought they were pleasing God, they were instead adding to their sin.

v4 – What judgment would God impose when His people persisted in their own ways over God’s ways?

This is the same as choosing rebellion against Him. Since the Israelites persisted in their rebellion despite His continual warnings, God will judge them by bringing about what they most feared.

- NKJV: sending a delusion among them.
- This is reminiscent of what God will do during the Great Tribulation per 2 Thessalonians 2:11: *God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie*. When we reject God and seek our own delusion, He may send one to us.

What strong delusion is common among those who reject God today?

Most godless people believe that the world was created out of nothing or by chance.

- What could be more delusional than to believe that something can come from nothing? Or believe that chance actually has some kind of “power”? Yet for those who insist on believing it, God will give them over to this delusion.

How can we keep from being given over to a delusion?

By answering the LORD when He calls, by hearing Him when He speaks. It’s really that simple.

v5 – What is God saying to those who are faithful to Him?

Those with a shallow, empty religion will mock those of genuine faith... they will hate you, exclude you, and use spiritual-sounding words but will eventually be put to shame.

v6 – When will those with empty religion be put to shame?

When the Lord returns, if not before... they shall be ashamed when they hear the voice of the LORD, who fully repays His enemies!

Isaiah 66:7-17 – The LORD comes with fire (NIV)

⁷ “Before she goes into labor, she gives birth; before the pains come upon her, she delivers a son. ⁸ Who has ever heard of such things? Who has ever seen things like this? Can a country be born in a day or a nation be brought forth in a moment? Yet no sooner is Zion in labor than she gives birth to her children. ⁹ Do I bring to the moment of birth and not give delivery?” says the Lord. “Do I close up the womb when I bring to delivery?” says your God. ¹⁰ “Rejoice with Jerusalem and be glad for her, all you who love her; rejoice greatly with her, all you who mourn over her. ¹¹ For you will nurse and be satisfied at her comforting breasts; you will drink deeply and delight in her overflowing abundance.” ¹² For this is what the Lord says: “I will extend peace to her like a river, and the wealth of nations like a flooding stream; you will nurse and be carried on her arm and dandled on her knees. ¹³ As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you; and you will be comforted over Jerusalem.” ¹⁴ When you see this, your heart will rejoice and you will flourish like grass; the hand of the Lord will be made known to his servants, but his fury will be shown to his foes. ¹⁵ See, the Lord is coming with fire, and his chariots are like a whirlwind; he will bring down his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. ¹⁶ For with fire and with his sword the Lord will execute judgment on all people, and many will be those slain by the Lord. ¹⁷ “Those who consecrate and purify themselves to go into the gardens, following one who is among those who eat the flesh of pigs, rats and other unclean things—they will meet their end together with the one they follow,” declares the Lord.

v7 – When did Israel deliver a Son without birth pangs?

The Messiah Jesus was born of Israel before Israel had to experience the birth pangs of Jacob’s Trouble, the Tribulation.

v8 – When was Israel brought forth in a moment?

May 14, 1948... Britain, unable to find a practical solution in the face of increasing Jewish immigration stirring up belligerence among the Arabs in the area, referred the problem to the United Nations, which in November 1947 voted to partition Palestine. By May 14, 1948, the Jews had secured full control of their U.N.-allocated share of Palestine. On May 14, Britain withdrew with the expiration of its mandate, and the State of Israel was proclaimed.

- On May 14, 1948, in Tel Aviv, Jewish Agency Chairman David Ben-Gurion proclaimed the State of Israel, establishing the first Jewish state in 2,000 years.

What are the children Israel gives birth to when she does experience birth pangs?

This have to be the 144,000 Jewish followers of Christ that are active during the Tribulation, Revelation 7.

v9 – What “delivery” is God speaking of here?

The spiritual awakening of Israel. All Israel will be saved during the 2nd half of the Tribulation following the Abomination of Desolation.

Daniel 12:1 – *And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone who is found written in the book.*

We know all Israel will be saved because of Romans 11:26 and:

Joel 2:28 – *And it shall come to pass afterward That I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh*

v10-11 – Who should be glad for Jerusalem?

Those who love God’s people; certainly, the church who has been nourished by God’s Word through His Jewish scribes.

v12 – When will the peace of Jerusalem be like a river?

When the Messiah returns in glory and triumph, the peace of Jerusalem will be like a gentle, powerful river that is never disturbed. But not Jerusalem alone: *the wealth of nations like a flooding stream.*

v13 – What will God’s comfort of Jerusalem be like?

Like a mother comforting her child... No one can comfort like a mother, and God will bring that kind of comfort to His people.

v14 – How will people react to seeing the comfort of God?

It will cause all who see it to rejoice, be healthy and grow (spiritually) like grass.

How will people react to seeing the *hand of the Lord*?

When the Messiah returns in glory and triumph, for some it will be a great blessing — and for others it is be nothing but judgment. Indeed, the LORD will judge all flesh; and the slain of the LORD shall be many (v16).

v15-16 – What will the return of the Lord be like?

Like a destructive fire...

Revelation 19:11-12 – Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns.

All who are gathered against Him at Armageddon will die...

Revelation 19:15 – Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

v17 – Who are those who purify themselves but eat unclean things?

When the Messiah returns in glory and triumph, He will see through those who practice empty religion. They “shall be consumed together,” says the LORD.

What are the unclean things people with empty religion consume?

What Paul called doctrines of demons... false religions that turn people away from our Creator-God and Savior Jesus Christ.

Who will meet their end together?

Both the teachers of false religion and their followers will meet the same fate, their destruction.

Why do the followers of false doctrine meet the same fate as the teachers of error?

We are all called to discern truth from error... those in a relationship with Christ have the presence of the Holy Spirit to help with this...

1 Corinthians 2:14 – the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned

Often, the followers are the ones encouraging the teaching of false doctrine especially at the end of the Church Age...

2 Timothy 4:3-4 – For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.

What applications come to mind from this passage?

- God is in control... things aren't falling apart, they are falling into place (Jan Markell).
- Rebellion against God causes your worst fears to become manifest.
- Empty religion holds no water with God; we all need a genuine relationship with Him.
- Israel is fulfilling Bible prophecy... they are not just a sign of the times; they reveal we're living in the time of the signs.
- There is no comfort like God's comfort to His people; for those in rebellion, not so much!