

**CALVARY PANDAN
BIBLE-PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

DHW BIBLE CLASS

LESSON 66

ISAIAH

CHAPTER 66

Theme: "The Worshippers that God Seeks!"

THEME VERSES

Isaiah 66:1-2 (KJV) "Thus saith the LORD, The heaven *is* my throne, and the earth *is* my footstool: where *is* the house that ye build unto me? and where *is* the place of my rest? **2** For all those *things* hath mine hand made, and all those *things* have been, saith the LORD: but to this *man* will I look, *even to him that is* poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word."

INTRODUCTION

There are Christian worshippers of God everywhere in these days. The term "worship" has become such a general term that anyone seems to worship God anyway he likes and God is supposed to accept that worship as long as the worshipper is sincere! This belief is false. The God who created this world out of nothing is the same God who has never changed, not even the slightest. His standard of holiness has been constant. That standard of holiness means that all who worship

Him must worship Him based on His standard. If the standard is not met, then that worship no matter how sincere would be sincerely wrong, hence rejected by God. The desire of man to please God is found in all mankind. Some deny it by fooling themselves into thinking that there is no God when in fact they had just deluded themselves. Their notion of denying the existence is in itself clear evidence that God exist because God has declared only a fool would say that there is no God. These fools have fulfilled God's prophecy which is evidence that God exist.

Therefore the worship of God is in all of us. The problem is we want to worship Him on a lower standard set by us but not by God. This was true in Israel's days as well. The Israelites worship God on their terms. They follow the external form of worship prescribed to them in the Bible but their lives do not reflect an obedience to the Word of God. This dual schizophrenic way of life is absolutely rejected by God, not only then but more so now. The ecumenical movement is not looming before us but is already upon us. The confusion in worship in Christendom today is frighteningly familiar to the days of Israel, before her judgement.

Behold the worship of the Roman Catholics and Greek Orthodox churches with their pomp, superstitions and idolatrous form of worship? Has God not been made into the image of man like the days of Israel when Israel worshipped in front of the golden calves and the Baalim of the

Canaanites? The Charismatics worship with their contemporary Christian music importing from the world the form of worship but denying the power thereof. There is so much carnality in Charismatic worship that one has no choice but to conclude that these worshipers could not possibly be born again for the God that they worship is no where found in the Bible? But the worst of all has to be the neo-evangelicals with their hypocritical facade of religiosity preaching in self confessed sound churches when in reality they are nothing but citadels of Satan. They talk about the Bible but their lives are void of holiness and filled with sin like lying, deception, and cheating and all forms of cunning device schemed by them within and without the church that these churches are nothing but snares to trap the unsuspecting and undiscerning!

May God help us to open our eyes that we may truly worship Him in spirit and in truth according to Holy Scriptures as we conclude our study of the Book of Isaiah!

OUTLINE

1. In Sincerity and always in Truth! (vv.1-4);
2. Encouraging the Faithful (vv. 5-14);
3. Punishing the Faithless (vv. 15-24).

COMMENTARY

In Sincerity and always in Truth — 66:1-4

Where is the best place on earth to worship God? In Old Testament times, God had chosen the city of Jerusalem to place His Temple for worship. However, Israel had not appreciated this honour given to them for they worship God in idolatry, sin and carnality. God has to put the record straight for them and for us as well. The heaven is God's throne! The earth is His footstool! This revelation immediately put into perspective what worship is all about. God is so transcendent in heaven that who can actually worship Him! The entire earth that puny man exists in is His footstool, a term that means a stool where God rests His feet! Where is the House that Israel built for the LORD! Where is the place of God's rest! These are rhetorical questions that must prick our hearts and conscience when we worship.

Who is man that God would be mindful of man and yet God did mind man. All the things that man used to build God's Temple, they belonged to Him. He made them all so what could man give to God that actually belongs to man in the first place? Absolutely nothing! However, to a man, who humbles himself before God and who is poor and humble in spirit and tremble at God's Word, God says He will look. He will receive him and his worship. But the hypocrites God will reject! This is how God describe those who worship Him in form but not in life! **Isaiah 66:3-4** (KJV) "He that killeth an ox *is as if* he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, *as if* he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, *as if he offered* swine's blood;

he that burneth incense, *as if* he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations. **4** I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear: but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose *that* in which I delighted not."

The obedience to God's holy and perfect Word is the key to acceptable worship in the sight of God. He sees our hearts and well as our actions! The two are irrevocably linked together and can never be separated. The life of the worshipper that is lived in obedience to God's holy and perfect Word is the foundation for acceptable worship. Those who follow the form only but their life is disobedient to the Word of God are fooling themselves. Their worship is an abomination to God.

Encouraging the Faithful — 66:5-14

Discouragement is one of the most effective tools of Satan to thwart the testimonies of God's people as they serve the LORD on this earth. While many in Israel turn away from following God, there were some who remained faithful. However, they need a word of encouragement to strengthen their resolve that they might continue to trust in the LORD. The best source of strength is the perfect Word of God. Therefore the Bible says, "Hear the word of the LORD, ye that tremble at his word." This is what is most needed today in our churches. People today do not tremble at God's

Word anymore. We tremble at the words of men rather than the Word of God to our hurt and shame. This has to change.

Hold on to the truth in God's Word and never let go of them. No matter what man might say or do, do not turn away from God's Word. To turn away from God's Word is the same as turning away from God. The enemies will mock and taunt. But the LORD will appear to the joy of all believers. The enemies of God will be put to shame. They will not prevail regardless of what they might do. They will receive their just recompense from the LORD for the evil they do. None will ever escape. The people of God need not retaliate for vengeance is the LORD's. He will surely punish.

Using the analogy of birth, the LORD assures Israel that God's Word is true. The LORD can be trusted. Will the LORD who brings about the child's birth not ensure that the child will surely be born into this world healthy and strong? The LORD will not shut the womb and let the baby die inside. Jerusalem will be strong and one day, it will become the citadel of truth and righteousness once more. It is not so today because of the faithless and idolatry of many disobedient ones but all that will change. God will keep His word. Rejoice with Jerusalem and be glad with her. All those who love Jerusalem, the city of God rejoice and be glad. Like a baby drinking the mother's milk after birth and be greatly satisfied, those who love Jerusalem will surely be contented and satisfied at the Jerusalem.

It will be filled with God's people. The Gentiles will be there as well like a flowing stream. They will keep on coming as more and more of God's people from all nations flood into Jerusalem. Jerusalem will be loved by them and will always have a special place in their hearts because of Christ! When Jerusalem is restored to her glory as God has always intended her to be, all would be well in the world. The reason is that Jerusalem is the capital city of God. When the capital city of God is spiritually healthy and many find comfort and solace and strength from within her, it means that the LORD is reigning on the earth. All of God's people have a warmth toward Jerusalem that comes only from God. It cannot be explained.

When this happens, all of God's people will rejoice. Their bones would flourish like a herb which means that they would be strengthened in the inner man. The people of God would experience the presence of the LORD's protection. The enemies of God would be dealt with by God at the same time.

Punishing the Faithless — 66:15-24

To the enemies of God, God says He will come to them with fire and with His chariots i.e. armies. He comes like a whirlwind i.e. very swiftly. There will be no time for anyone to escape. He will display His anger toward His enemies and will rebuke them with the flames of His fire. Many of them will die. He will plead with them using fire and sword which means there is no repentance. Today God pleads with all men through the blood of Christ so that

they might turn from their sins and pride and return back to the LORD. But the day of judgement will not be such a day where sinners will be converted and be given any time to repent. Only judgement awaits them. The hypocrites are described by God in this manner. **Isaiah 66:17** (KJV) "They that sanctify themselves, and purify themselves in the gardens behind one *tree* in the midst, eating swine's flesh, and the abomination, and the mouse, shall be consumed together, saith the LORD."

To those who remain faithful and true to the LORD, they will be sent forth to all the Gentile nations and declare to them the Name of the LORD. Tarshish is a place in the Mediterranean Sea, which could possibly refer to ships. Pul and Lud refers to Lybia and Lydia respectively. Tubal and Javah refers to Italy and Greece respectively. These are Gentile nations that will be given the gospel and will turn to Christ. They will be declared the glory of the LORD.

Many of them will be converted and be brought to Jerusalem via all modes of transportation. This is the best kind of offerings that the LORD like to see. The coming of the Gentiles into Jerusalem as believers is likened to the children of Israel bringing an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the LORD. What a wonderful description of salvation. They will become like priests and Levites where they could pray and bring offerings to the LORD and be accepted by Him.

Just as the LORD made the New Heaven and New Earth and they

remain in the presence of the LORD so will all Israel and her seed remain, all the faithful ones. Do not be discouraged by what Israel sees today. Hold on to your faith and see into the future through the eyes of the LORD as revealed in Holy Scriptures. All will come before the LORD and worship Him frequently and without end. On the other hand, the faithless and enemies of God will be punished. They will die and sent to hell and suffer pain and torment for eternity. Amen.

2. Should we use Contemporary Christian Music in our worship with the synthesiser, electric guitar, drums, and loud music, etc.? Please explain with biblical evidence.

DAILY READINGS & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Daily Readings

MONDAY: Isaiah 66:1-4

TUESDAY: Isaiah 66:5-14

WEDNESDAY: Isaiah 66:15-24

THURSDAY: Isaiah 66:1-24

FRIDAY: Isaiah 66:1-24

3. Do you eat swine meat? If so then how can your worship be acceptable to God? In what way is a believer's worship not acceptable to God?

Discussion Questions

1. What is the biblical basis for our order of worship every Lord's Day? Can you explain the biblical basis for the order of worship?

4. Can the manner of worship in a church be used as a yardstick to measure the presence of genuine believers in that church? Please elaborate.

5. Are you easily discouraged? What can discourage you the most in your walk with and service to the LORD? What is the best way to overcome discouragement? Please support with Scriptures.

6. Do you envy the enemies of God who seemed to get away with their sins and prosper at the same time? Will you endeavour before the LORD to hold on to the very end and not turn away from Christ? How would you do it?

7. What lessons have you learnt from this chapter about God's Word and about yourself?