

Isaiah 66

Is. 66:1 Thus says the Lord, "Heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool. Where then is a house you could build for Me? And where is a place that I may rest?"

In Isaiah 66:1-6, we find confirmation that the Tribulation temple will not be sanctioned by God. King Solomon's temple and the temple built by Zerubbabel (which came to be known as Herod's temple) met with His approval. We can conclude this because God's glory entered Solomon's temple (2Chronicles 5:11-14), and Zerubbabel's temple was built through the encouragement of Jehovah's prophets, Haggai and Zechariah. There is no doubt that Jehovah will approve the Millennial temple. After all, He is its builder (Ezekiel 37:26-28), and His glory will reside there as well (Ezekiel 43:1-5).

Based on the preceding input, it is easy to understand why Isaiah 66:1 is a negative statement directed toward the building of the Tribulation temple. And why will the unbelieving Jews desire to build this temple? For the purpose of reestablishing the sacrificial system observed under the Mosaic Law, a system that is totally outdated and incapable of bringing a worshipper into a right standing with God (read Hebrews 10:1-18).

According to 2Thessalonians 2:4, the Antichrist will sit in this *temple* halfway through the Tribulation *displaying himself as being God*. This means that it must be built sometime previous to the middle of the Tribulation.

Is. 66:2 "For My hand made all these things, Thus all these things came into being," declares the Lord. "But to this one I will look, To him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at My word."

After confirming that the Jews, who desire to build the Tribulation temple will not receive His approval (Isaiah 66:1), Jehovah describes the type of individual who will (Isaiah 66:2). He states

that it is one *who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at His word*. It takes tremendous humility to submit to God's authority; for, in order to do so, individuals must realize that they are totally incapable of working themselves into a right standing with God. They understand well that it is only through Jesus' death, burial, resurrection, and ascension that one can be made right with the Father. It is interesting too that humility brings about a desire to know intimately the all-powerful One through the letter He so graciously penned for man. In fact, the humbled believer finds himself passionate for that which God has recorded in His word (Psalm 119:89, 97, 99, 105, 140, 160; 2Timothy 3:15-17).

Is. 66:3 ¶ " But he who kills an ox is like one who slays a man; He who sacrifices a lamb is like the one who breaks a dog's neck; He who offers a grain offering is like one who offers swine's blood; He who burns incense is like the one who blesses an idol. As they have chosen their own ways, And their soul delights in their abominations,

This verse confirms that Jehovah will not accept any sacrifice offered in the Tribulation temple. Why should He when those offering such things *have chosen their own ways* to try to gain a righteous standing before Him. Not only this, but *their soul delights in their abominations*, meaning that their rebellious hearts drive them to respond as such.

Is. 66:4 So I will choose their punishments, And I will bring on them what they dread. Because I called, but no one answered; I spoke, but they did not listen. And they did evil in My sight, And chose that in which I did not delight."

As a result of Israel's rebellion in building the Tribulation temple, God *will choose their punishments, punishments* that will coincide with *what they dread*. (In other words, God many times brings upon the disobedient that which they *fear* and *dread*--a read Job 3:25). He will do so because they will have disregarded His counsel (*they did not listen*) and done *evil* by choosing *that in which He did not delight*—by building the Tribulation temple against His will.

This verse (along with the last two phrases of verse 3) confirms the free will of man; for it teaches that mankind has been given the freedom to choose that in which God does *not delight*. In other words, man has been given the freedom to either obey or disobey. However, if man can choose that in which God *did not delight*, yet God programmed him to respond as such (as some have incorrectly concluded), what does this make God out to be? He most definitely would not be a God of *love* (1John 4:8, 16); for He would end up judging the man who had no option but to disobey.

Is. 66:5 Hear the word of the Lord, you who tremble at His word: "Your brothers who hate you, who exclude you for My name's sake, Have said, 'Let the Lord be glorified, that we may see your joy.' But they will be put to shame.

The remnant (the redeemed portion of Israel that trembles *at God's word*) will refuse to participate in any activity associated with the Tribulation temple. This will cause them to be hated by the nonremnant, yet it is the nonremnant that *will be put to shame*.

Is. 66:6 "A voice of uproar from the city, a voice from the temple, The voice of the Lord who is rendering recompense to His enemies.

God's *voice* will bring *recompense* (judgment) against the nonremnant that persecutes the remnant during the Tribulation.

Is. 66:7 ¶ "Before she travailed, she brought forth; Before her pain came, she gave birth to a boy.

In Isaiah 66:7-9, we find a description of the rebirth (spiritual regeneration) of Israel that will take place at the end of the Tribulation. The speed with which this will occur is addressed in Isaiah 66:7, for it will be *Before she travailed* and *Before her pain came* that *she* will give birth. This rebirth (spiritual regeneration) is also addressed in verses such as Jeremiah 31:31-34 and Romans 11:26.

Is. 66:8 "Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Can a land be born in one day? Can a nation be brought forth all at once? As soon as Zion travailed, she also brought forth her sons.

In Isaiah 66:8, we find two questions relating to the spiritual regeneration of Israel at the end of the Tribulation. The first: "*Can a land be born in one day?*" The second: "*Can a nation be brought forth all at once?*" Both Hosea 6:2 and Zechariah 3:9 agree that Israel's spiritual regeneration at the end of the Tribulation will occur *in one day*. (**Stage 5 of The Campaign of Armageddon**—Isaiah 13:3—as well as the notes associated to Isaiah 63:15 add pertinent information to what is discussed here.)

Is. 66:9 "Shall I bring to the point of birth, and not give delivery?" says the Lord. "Or shall I who gives delivery shut the womb?" says your God.

Jehovah promises to bring about the spiritual rebirth (spiritual regeneration) of the remnant of the Jewish nation at the end of the Tribulation. Obviously, He will finish what He has started, meaning that He will not *bring to the point of birth, and not give delivery*.

Is. 66:10 "Be joyful with Jerusalem and rejoice for her, all you who love her; Be exceedingly glad with her, all you who mourn over her,

All of the redeemed, both Jews and Gentiles alike, will take much delight in Millennial Jerusalem.

Is. 66:11 That you may nurse and be satisfied with her comforting breasts, That you may suck and be delighted with her bountiful bosom."

Again we see that all who love Millennial Jerusalem will be comforted by *her*.

Is. 66:12 For thus says the Lord, "Behold, I extend peace to her like a river, And the glory of the nations like an overflowing stream; And you shall be nursed, you shall be carried on the hip and fondled on the knees.

The *peace* that will exist within Millennial Jerusalem will be *like a river*. Also, *the glory of the nations* will be *like an overflowing stream*; for the Gentiles will bring their wealth to the city (Isaiah 60:5, 11, and 16 also address this same subject). From the last statement of Isaiah 66:12, it is obvious that the Gentiles will be more than delighted to carry the Jews back to Jerusalem to enjoy the benefits of the Kingdom (for more input, read the notes associated with Isaiah 14:1-2).

Is. 66:13 "As one whom his mother comforts, so I will comfort you; And you shall be comforted in Jerusalem."

Jehovah will *comfort* the Jews during the Millennium by means of glorified Jerusalem.

Is. 66:14 Then you shall see this, and your heart shall be glad, And your bones shall flourish like the new grass; And the hand of the Lord shall be made known to His servants, But He shall be indignant toward His enemies.

The Jews, once they observe the degree to which Millennial Jerusalem has been blessed and the nation of Israel has been comforted, will not only possess *glad* hearts, but *bones* that *flourish* as well. Therefore, not only will the Jews thrive physically as a result of God's protection and provision (read the notes associated with Isaiah 58:11), but they will also possess *glad* hearts (inward blessings of the soul and spirit) due to the lasting effect of their spiritual regeneration at the end of the Tribulation. At the same time, Jehovah will *be indignant toward His enemies* from not only among the Jews, but from the Gentiles as well, a fact that will become obvious throughout the second half of the Tribulation, culminating with the Second Coming.

Is. 66:15 For behold, the Lord will come in fire And His chariots like the whirlwind, To render His anger with fury, And His rebuke with flames of fire.

In Isaiah 66:15-17, we discover that God will judge the Gentiles who involve themselves in idolatry during the Tribulation. This judgment will occur at the Second Coming; for many Gentiles will worship *the abomination of desolation* (Matthew 24:15), an *image* (idol) made by man (Revelation 13:14) but energized by the false prophet (Revelation 13:15) during the last half of the Tribulation. For more input relating to the counterfeit trinity of the last half of the Tribulation (Satan, the counterfeit Father, the Antichrist, the counterfeit Son, and the false prophet, the counterfeit Holy Spirit), read the notes associated with Isaiah 14:9.

Therefore, according to Isaiah 66:15, *the Lord* will display much *anger* and *fury* against the idolatrous Gentiles who are alive at the Second Coming. Read the notes associated with Isaiah 42:17 for additional input.

Note: According to Zechariah 13:1-6, a small segment of Jews will be involved in idolatry toward the end of the Tribulation. However, Zechariah 13:2 confirms that the events associated with the Second Coming will rectify this problem.

Is. 66:16 For the Lord will execute judgment by fire And by His sword on all flesh, And those slain by the Lord will be many.

This verse ties in well with the previous verse, for many Gentiles will be *slain* at the Second Coming as a result of their involvement in idolatrous activities during the Tribulation.

Is. 66:17 "Those who sanctify and purify themselves to go to the gardens, Following one in the center, Who eat swine's flesh, detestable things, and mice, Shall come to an end altogether," declares the Lord.

The idolatrous activities among the Gentiles (such as are mentioned here) will come to an end when Jesus returns at the Second Coming.

Is. 66:18 "For I know their works and their thoughts; the time is coming to gather all nations and tongues. And they shall come and see My glory.

All nations and tongues (all believing Gentiles) alive after the Second Coming will be gathered to enjoy God's *glory* during the Millennium. This fact is also addressed in Isaiah 60:3. Keep in mind, however, that according to Joel 3:1-3 and Matthew 25:31-46, there will be unbelieving

Gentiles who are judged during the seventy-five day interval between the end of the Tribulation and the beginning of the Millennium, a span of time addressed by Daniel 12:11-12. Therefore, there will be unbelieving Gentiles who remain on the earth for a short season after the Second Coming.

Is. 66:19 "And I will set a sign among them and will send survivors from them to the nations: Tarshish, Put, Lud, Meshech, Rosh, Tubal, and Javan, to the distant coastlands that have neither heard My fame nor seen My glory. And they will declare My glory among the nations.

The first phrase of Isaiah 66:19 in the NASB is rendered as follows in the American Standard Version:

And I will set a sign among them, and I will send such as escape of them unto the nations.

Obviously, the word “*survivors*” in the NASB is interpreted “*such as escape*” in the ASV, both of which make reference to the believing remnant at the end of the Tribulation. For confirmation, read the notes associated with Isaiah 4:2, 10:20, and 37:31. Also read Joel 2:32 and Obadiah 17. Therefore, the *survivors* addressed in Isaiah 66:19 will be the spiritually redeemed Jews who survive the Tribulation. (Note: Some view the word “*survivors*” as being Gentiles who will be sent out to evangelize other Gentiles. The better fit is that they be Jews.)

Not only will this remnant of Jews (the *survivors*, those who *escape*) be allowed to enjoy all the benefits of the Millennium, but they will also evangelize the Gentile nations, some of which are listed here. It is a commonly held view that Spain, Europe, and Africa housed areas known as *Tarshish*. Consequently, there was more than one *Tarshish* (read the notes associated with Isaiah 23:1, 6, 60:9), but as to which *Tarshish* these Jewish evangelists will be sent is uncertain. *Put* (Pul), also mentioned in Genesis 10:6, is probably modern day Somaliland, located in eastern Africa. *Lud* is Lydia, a nation that is presently hostile toward the Jews. *Meshech*, *Rosh* is rendered “*who draw the bow*” in the ASV, KJV, RSV, and other versions as well. However, *Meshech* and *Rosh*, along with *Tubal*, are mentioned together in Ezekiel 38:2-3 as well as Ezekiel 39:1, and in both cases point to geographical locations within Russia. *Javan* is considered to be Greece. It is hard to imagine the joy that these Jewish evangelists will experience as they *declare God’s glory among the nations*.

Is. 66:20 "Then they shall bring all your brethren from all the nations as a grain offering to the Lord, on horses, in chariots, in litters, on mules, and on camels, to My holy mountain Jerusalem," says the Lord, "just as the sons of Israel bring their grain offering in a clean vessel to the house of the Lord.

The “*they*” of this verse points to the Gentiles who will bring the *brethren*, the spiritually regenerated Jews, to the Millennial temple *from all the nations*. The notes associated with Isaiah 14:1-2 add much flavor to what is addressed here. Don’t overlook the fact that the Gentiles will present the Jews *as a grain offering* (not as a sacrifice) at the Millennial temple.

Is. 66:21 "I will also take some of them for priests and for Levites," says the Lord.

According to Ezekiel 44:15-31, *the sons of Zadok* (of the tribe of Levi) will serve as *priests* during the Millennium. However, based on Isaiah 66:21, there will be Gentiles who serve as *priests* as well. This was not allowed under the Mosaic Law, again confirming that the Mosaic Law will not be in effect during the Millennium (the notes associated with Isaiah 51:4, 56:2, 6,

65:25, and 66:1 tie in well here).

Is. 66:22 "For just as the new heavens and the new earth Which I make will endure before Me," declares the Lord, "So your offspring and your name will endure.

This verse confirms, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that *just as the new heavens and the new earth* of the Millennium will *endure before* the Lord, so will Israel's *offspring and...name...endure* as well. Therefore, nothing can cause Israel to be driven out of the land or cease to exist during the Millennium. We also know from New Testament Scripture that the Jews will be present throughout the Eternal Order (read Hebrews 11:8-10, 12:22-24, and Revelation 21); for a distinction will be made between *the nations* (the Gentiles—Revelation 21:24 and 26) and the Jews throughout eternity. Another point of interest is that the *twelve gates* of New Jerusalem will be named after *the twelve tribes of...Israel* (Revelation 21:12), meaning that the memory of *the twelve tribes* will be at the forefront of the minds of all who inhabit the Eternal Order.

Is. 66:23 "And it shall be from new moon to new moon And from sabbath to sabbath, All mankind will come to bow down before Me," says the Lord.

Not only will the Jews worship Jehovah during the Millennium, but *All mankind* (the redeemed Gentiles) will worship Him as well. In Zechariah 14:16-19, we also find that the Gentiles will be required to observe *the Feast of Booths* (the Feast of Tabernacles) in Jerusalem during the Millennium. This mandate for worship will be welcomed by the Gentiles; for they will possess abundant love for the God of the Jews (read the notes associated with Isaiah 14:1-2 and Isaiah 60:3 for more input). Also read Psalm 86:9 and Revelation 15:4.

Is. 66:24 "Then they shall go forth and look On the corpses of the men Who have transgressed against Me. For their worm shall not die, And their fire shall not be quenched; And they shall be an abhorrence to all mankind."

In Isaiah 66:24, we find the expression: "*their worm shall not die, And their fire shall not be quenched.*" In Mark 9:44, 46, and 48 we find basically the same expression, which in each case points to hell. In Isaiah 66:24, however, the expression points to the dead bodies left upon the earth (left unburied) after The Campaign of Armageddon (for additional input, read **Stages 6** and **7** of **The Campaign of Armageddon** in the notes associated with Isaiah 13:3). Evidently, these bodies will be taken to Babylon or Edom, or both; for these two locations will burn throughout the Millennium. For additional input relating to God's judgment on Babylon and Edom, read the notes associated with verses such as Isaiah 13:3, 14:23, 21:12, and 34:9. Revelation 18 gives input relating to this subject as well.

Conclusion

This brings to a close our study of the book of Isaiah. My prayer from the outset has been that the Father, through the Person and power of the Holy Spirit, might reveal the heart of His Son through this uncompromising prophet of God. I trust that your life has forever been changed, leaving you with a passion to pursue Him above all else during our brief stay on earth. We have proven, beyond doubt, that the Scriptures, when examined solely to know the Author rather than just the words on the page, confirm Jesus' declaration of John 5:39:

“You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is these that bear witness of Me;

The Scriptures, regardless of what anyone might write or declare to the contrary, truly do *bear witness* of Jesus. This is a fact carved in the annals of eternity. To Him be the glory!

Shalom