

# Isaiah Chapter 66

by Stephen Kaung

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*God desires to dwell among His own people, and He looks for a spirit that is afflicted and contrite, which will lead to the church being brought into maturity and the bridegroom coming to claim his bride.*

**Duration:** 39:55

**Scripture:** Isaiah 1:22-24, Isaiah 66:1-2, Isaiah 66:5, Isaiah 66:7-9, Matthew 6:33, Revelation 21:1-2, Revelation 21:5

**Topics:** "Isaiah"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the book of Isaiah and its message of redemption. He emphasizes that despite God's love for the children of Israel, they rebelled against Him. The preacher explains that God is working towards His purpose of raising up a company of overcomers who have a contrite spirit and tremble at His word. Through their travail, the church will mature and become the bride of Christ. The sermon concludes with the assurance that God will fulfill His purpose and bring about a new heaven and earth, despite the failures of man.

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## Transcript

Will you please turn to the last chapter of the book of Isaiah, Isaiah chapter sixty-six. Isaiah, the sixty-six chapter. The first chapter, the second chapter.

Isaiah chapter sixty-six, verses one and two. Thus said Jehovah, the heavens are my throne, and the earth is my footstool. What is the house that ye will build unto me, and what is the place of my rest? Even all these things hath my hand made, and all these things have been, said Jehovah.

But to this man will I look, to the afflicted and contrite in spirit, and who trembleth at my word. Verse five, the fifth chapter. Hear the word of Jehovah, ye that tremble at his word.

Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let Jehovah be glorified, and let us see your joy, but they shall be ashamed. Seven through nine, the seventh chapter, the eighth chapter, the ninth chapter. Before she prevailed, she brought forth.

Before her pain came, she was delivered of a man-child. Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? Can a land be made to bring forth in one day? Shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion prevailed, she brought forth her sons. Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth, said Jehovah? I who cause to bring forth, shall I shut the womb, said thy God.

Verses twenty-two, twenty-three, and twenty-four. Verse two, verse three, verse four. For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make shall remain before me, said Jehovah, so shall your seed and your name remain, and it shall come to pass from new moon to new moon, and from sabbath to sabbath, all flesh shall come to worship before me, said Jehovah.

And they shall go forth and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me. For their womb shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched, and they shall be an abhorrence unto all. We have been taking out some of the passages in the book of Isaiah and meditating on them.

We find that Isaiah was one who knew the salvation of the Lord in such a marvelous way that when we read the book of Isaiah, it was almost like reading the New Testament. Isaiah is a prophet, and a prophet is one who knows the mind of God. And in his prophecy, he reveals to us what is in the mind of God.

Isaiah shows us not only Christ, our Redeemer, he also imparts to us the spirit of redemption. And when we come to this last chapter, it is like the summing up, the consummation of all the prophecies that he has prophesied before. You remember that in the first chapter of the book of Isaiah, how God calls upon the old heaven and the old earth to hear and to bear witness to the fact that in spite of all God's love, the children of Israel rebelled against Him.

You remember in the first chapter it is said, The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib. Israel does not know, my people have no intelligence. God loved His people very much, and yet they rebelled against God.

And God called upon the heaven and earth to bear witness to this. But when you come to the last chapter of the book of Isaiah, you find God has made all things new. There is a new heaven and a new earth, and the Beloved of the Lord dwells in it.

Man may fail, but God never. And whatever He has purposed for His people, in spite of themselves, He will accomplish to His glory. And that certainly shall give us great comfort.

Now in this last chapter, we would like to point out just a few things. Number one, what is the eternal purpose of God concerning His people? What does really God desire in His people? No doubt you will find in the Bible, God desires to dwell among His own people. God wants to find His rest in His own.

And this theme runs through the whole Bible. In the very beginning after God created Adam, God put man in the garden of Eden. And God came and fellowshiped with man.

When the children of Israel were in Egypt as slaves, God raised up Moses to deliver the children of Israel out of Egypt. In order that they might have a tabernacle. And with that tabernacle, God was able to dwell among His redeemed people.

And after the children of Israel entered into the Promised Land, God chose David and Solomon to build Him a temple in which His name was placed. So you find that God's purpose with His people has been and is still to dwell among His people. Yet, does God really want a temple? Does God really look for a house built with stone? It is true that God called Moses to build Him a tabernacle.

It is true that God chose David and Solomon to build Him a temple. And how the children of Israel look upon this temple, they consider it as everything to them, and they should. Their view of the temple is such that it is almost an obsession to them.

It becomes a deception to them. It even becomes a superstition to them. They put so much emphasis on the temple, they thought that as long as they had the temple, as long as they had the sacrifices going on, as long as they had the priesthood, everything was fine, everything was alright.

They put their trust in the temple, in their services. And they thought what God would desire more than a house? What could God ask more than these sacrifices? And as long as they had the temple, they had these sacrifices, God should be happy with them, God should bless them, and God should be with them. It became an obsession, a deception, a superstition.

But does God really want an earthly temple, a physical house? The heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Him. God is greater than the universe that He created. And if the heaven and the heavens of heavens cannot contain Him, how will a little house, even built with precious stones and gold, how will that accommodate Him? And here you'll find in the last chapter of the book of Isaiah, God said, The heavens are my throne and the earth is my footstool.

The heaven is where He reigns. The earth is where He carries out His will, His authority. In a sense you'll find the heaven and the earth is His office, His court.

That's where He exercises His authority. That's where He carries out His will. It is His office.

The whole universe is His office. But neither the heaven nor the earth is His home, is His rest, is that which He is really after. God is not looking for a physical house.

In the Old Testament time it is just a shadow, it is just a type. Even with the children of Israel, God is not looking for just a physical temple. God is looking for a people whose spirit agrees with the meaning of that temple.

And when that spirit is absent, even the temple is nothing. So here you'll find God speaks through the prophet Isaiah, The heavens are my throne and the earth is my footstool. What is the house that ye will build unto me? And what is the place of my rest? Do you think that just by building a great temple that is enough for me? Do you think that this is the place of my rest? What God is really looking for is, To this man will I look, to the afflicted and contrite in spirit and who trembleth at my word.

Dear brothers and sisters, what is God's house? Where is God's rest? Not in the physical, but in the spiritual. Not with temples made of stones, but with living stones. A man with an afflicted and contrite spirit.

God will build his home with that kind of spirit. Wherever God can find an afflicted and contrite spirit, God will use that as material to build his house. And it is only with that spirit that God can find his rest.

And this is the eternal purpose of God. Brothers and sisters, we are the redeemed of the Lord. Thank God for his redemption.

But what is our spirit? What is the condition of our spirit? What is the attitude of our spirit? Do we exhibit a contrite and afflicted spirit before the Lord? Or do we have a proud and arrogant spirit? Are we self-righteous? Or do we humble ourselves before the Lord? What kind of spirit do we have? God cannot build his house with a proud and arrogant spirit. The Bible says God despised, rejects the proud. But he gives grace to the humble.

What is the afflicted and contrite spirit? A spirit that is afflicted. Now, what does it mean by that? It simply means a spirit that can be touched by God and by his Word. A spirit that is meek and lowly.

A spirit that is humble. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of the heavens. This is the foundation stone of the building of God's house.

The poor in spirit. Not in the sense that there is nothing spiritually. But in the sense that in spite of all that God may have given to us, our spirit is yet so poor.

That is to say, we are not contented, self-satisfied. We do not consider ourselves as has arrived. But instead, because of the greatness of his grace, we humble ourselves even lower.

We confess that we know nothing. We have nothing. We are nothing.

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of the heavens. How often we find among Christians a proud, self-righteous, arrogant spirit. With the little grace that they know.

They think they know everything. With the little mercy that they have received, they think they have arrived. But brothers and sisters, it is to the man with an afflicted and contrived spirit that God will look.

Why afflicted? It simply means when the word of God comes to that person, it reaches him. It doesn't just go from one ear in and one ear out. But the word of God reaches him.

He trembles at God's word. He is wounded, afflicted, bruised, smitten by God's word. His conscience is sensitive.

His heart is open to that kind of spirit. And because he is afflicted, he is contrived. He repents before God.

Do you think that we do not need to repent? Sometimes we think that only the unbelievers need to repent. Repent and believe on the Lord Jesus. That's true.

But in the Bible you'll find how often the word comes to us that we need to repent. How we need to repent again and again before God. When His word smits us, we need to repent before Him with a contrived spirit.

You remember, David, in Psalm 51, verse 17, the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit. God does not look for a sacrifice of lamb or bullet. God is looking for the sacrifice of a broken spirit.

A person that does not stand arrogant before God, but a person that bows down, broken down before God. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit. A broken and a contrived heart thou will not despise.

This is the material for the building of God's house. Remember the story of Joseph. He was a perfect man.

He was righteous above all others during his generation. And yet, somehow, in his spirit, there was a self-righteous spirit. The spirit of the Pharisee.

And because of that, God allowed Satan to attack him. Because of that, his spirit was afflicted to the extent that one day he cried out, I have heard thee in the past, but now I see thee. I abhor myself in repenting ash and dust.

Brothers and sisters, that is an afflicted and contrived spirit. And when that spirit is present, the presence of the Lord is manifest. This is where God will rest.

As long as we are proud of ourselves, as long as we are arrogant, God cannot rest. But when God finds a spirit that is afflicted, broken and contrived, even God comes into rest. Not to say that you come into rest.

Dear brothers and sisters, when we are arrogant, self-righteous, proud, do we have rest? We don't. We become restless. But when we are afflicted by the Lord, and we are humbled before the Lord, and when we really yield ourselves completely at His feet, we come into rest.

Wonderful thing. Marvelous experience. We come into rest.

And in that rest, God too comes into rest. And dear brothers and sisters, this is what God is looking for. This is His house.

This is His rest. This is the material that He will build His home in which He will dwell forever. Number two.

What will happen to those with an afflicted and contrived spirit who tremble at the Word of God? Now, do we tremble at the Word of God? When we hear the Word of God, are we able to maintain our integrity? When we hear the Word of God, are we able to stand erect with our heads up? Or when we hear the Word of God, we tremble. Why? Because His Word smites us. His Word finds us out.

But what will happen to those who tremble at God's Word? What will happen to those who have an afflicted and contrived spirit? We just say that God will use this as material for the building of His house. But what will happen to these people? We may think, now surely they will be greatly blessed by God. Surely they will manifest great joy.

Surely the whole world will admire them. Surely those who are the Lord will look up to them and try to imitate them. But not so.

What will happen to those who tremble at God's Word? Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for My name's sake, said that Jehovah be glorified and let us see your joy. In other words, those who have the Spirit of the Lamb will not only be persecuted by the world, but even by their own brethren. How strange it is.

Instead of being admired, instead of looked up to, your brethren will hate you. They will cast you out. They will ridicule you and say, let Jehovah be glorified.

You say you want to glorify the Lord. Where is the glory? In what respect have you glorified Him? You say you want to please the Lord. Where is your joy? You will be misunderstood.

You will be ridiculed, mocked at. You will be persecuted and even cast out. And that will be your treatment.

A slave cannot be higher than his master. Our Lord, our Master. How He was persecuted by the world, cast out by the world.

How He was hated even by His brethren in the flesh. Do you think we who follow the Lamb, whithersoever He goes, that we will fare better? We will receive the same treatment. Oh, brothers and sisters, do nothing because you love the Lord.

Because you tremble at His Word. Because you allow His Word to do its perfect work in your life. Because you have a contrived spirit.

And therefore, you will be honored, respected. Instead, you will be trod upon. You will be despised.

You will be misunderstood. You will be cast out. For the name of the Lord.

For blessed are they who are persecuted. For my name's sake, saith the Lord. With such treatment, is it all in vain? Not so.

Before He prevailed, He brought forth. Before Her pain came, She was delivered of a man-child. Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Can a Lamb be made to bring forth in one day? Shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion prevailed, She brought forth Her Son.

Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth, saith Jehovah? I who cause to bring forth, shall I shed the womb? Said Zion. This is the travail of Zion. Zion, in the Scripture, always stands for the overcomers.

As Jerusalem stands for the whole Church. This is the travail of Zion. Zion has to travail.

In order to bring forth a man-child. If there is no travel, there can be no birth. And spiritually, this is also true.

It is through the travail of the soul of our Lord Jesus, that the Church is born. It is through the travail of the overcomers, that the Church is brought into maturity. Brothers and sisters, all the sufferings, that you suffer for the sake of Christ, are not in vain.

They are not just sufferings. They are travailing. And as Zion prevails, it will bring forth a man-child.

And that reminds us of Revelation chapter 12. The woman was in travail. And out of the travail a man-child was born.

And the man-child was destined to rule the world with an iron rod. And as the man-child is born and raptured to the throne, then there will be war in heaven, and Satan will have no place in heaven. He will be cast down upon the earth.

Brothers and sisters, the travail of Zion is essential. We may think that Zion travails long and hard. Before she travailed, she brought forth her son.

You know, brothers and sisters, to our feeling, especially when you are in travail, travailing, you will think that the time is so long. An hour becomes a day, a day becomes a month, a month becomes a year, or maybe a century. But we find in the Bible, He said, He that is to come will come soon and will not delay for a little while, only for a short time.

And He that is to come shall come. Brothers and sisters, the Zion of travail is short. It is not long.

It is so short, as if before she travails, the child has come. Do you think God will give conception and not let it be brought forth? Certainly. Oh, that Zion! The daughters of Zion are willing to travail for the purpose of God.

Oh, that the daughters of Zion may be comforted that their travailing is but for a short while. It is so short that before she travails, she brings forth. Thank God for that.

And brothers and sisters, it is through the travail of Zion that Jerusalem is brought back into the blessing of God. Therefore you'll find in verse 12, For thus said Jehovah, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the nation like an overflowing port. And ye shall suck, ye shall be carried upon the side, and be dangled upon the knees.

As one whom his mother comforted, so will I comfort you, and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem. The overcomers in the church travail for the whole church. And because of their travail, the church is brought into maturity.

That a bridegroom may come to claim his bride. Oh, brothers and sisters, this is tremendous. And then lastly, you'll find God is working staggeringly towards his full purpose.

As God apprehends for himself a company of overcomers, those who have afflicted and contrived spirit, those who tremble at his word, as those who are called by God enter into travail. Through their travel, God will bring the whole church into maturity. And when the church is fully grown, the bridegroom will come back to claim as his bride.

And then judgment will follow very speedily upon the nations. And there will be the millennium. And the millennium will soon be past.

And there will be the new heaven and the new earth, even eternity. Brothers and sisters, he who has purpose in the beginning, he shall surely perform. And this is the conclusion of the book of Isaiah.

Let us pray. Our Heavenly Father, how we praise and thank Thee, because Thy purpose can never fail. Oh, how we praise and thank Thee.

Man may fail, but God never fails. We do praise and thank Thee that it does not depend upon us, but it does depend upon Thee. We thank Thee, Lord, that Thou art calling us to be a people with an afflicted and contrite spirit.

A people tremble at Thy word. Oh, Lord, if it means travail, we praise and thank Thee. It will not be long.

And Thou will bring forth the birth. We do praise and thank Thee. We can look forward to the day where the old heaven and the old earth shall pass away.

A new heaven and a new earth shall appear, and a new city, the holy city, New Jerusalem, shall descend upon it, having the glory of God. Oh, Lord, Thou art to be worshipped by Thy people and by the whole world forever and forever. In Thy precious name, Amen.

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