CRAWFORD BIBLE COMMENTARY

BIBLE STUDY

Isaiah Chapter 66 — The Final Word: Judgment and Glory

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 66 brings the book of Isaiah to its:

Final chapter.

Final warnings.

Final promises.

Final vision.

The chapter contains nearly every major theme that has appeared throughout Isaiah.

God's:

Majesty.

Holiness.

Judgment.

Comfort.

Glory.

Sovereignty.

Mercy.

Worldwide purpose.

New creation.

And final separation between:

The faithful.

And:

The rebellious.

Isaiah 65 ended with:

New heavens.

New earth.

Peace.

No harm.

No destruction.

Isaiah 66 now brings the prophecy to its final conclusion by showing:

Who God accepts.

Who God rejects.

How God comforts His people.

How He judges His enemies.

How the nations are gathered.

How His glory is proclaimed.

And how the new creation leads to universal worship.

The chapter begins with a magnificent declaration:

“Heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool.”

No temple can:

Contain God.

No building can:

Impress God.

No structure built by human hands can provide:

God's true dwelling place.

Why?

Because:

His hand made everything.

Yet immediately after declaring His greatness, God tells us whom He notices:

“The one who is humble and contrite in spirit, and who trembles at My word.”

This is one of the great paradoxes of Scripture.

The God whose throne is:

Heaven—

looks toward:

The humble.

The God who created:

Everything—

takes notice of the person who:

Trembles at His Word.

Isaiah 66 therefore begins by separating:

True worship.

From:

Empty religion.

The people may still:

Sacrifice.

Offer gifts.

Burn incense.

Perform religious rituals.

But if their hearts are rebellious, those rituals become:

Offensive.

God says:

They have chosen:

Their own ways.

Their souls delight in:

Abominations.

Therefore God says:

He will choose:

Judgment.

Then the chapter turns toward:

The faithful.

Those who tremble at God's Word may be:

Mocked.

Rejected.

Excluded.

Hated.

But God promises:

Vindication.

Their enemies will experience:

Shame.

Then comes a picture of:

Sudden deliverance.

Zion gives birth:

Before labor.

A nation appears:

In a moment.

God asks:

“Shall I bring to the point of birth and not deliver?”

The implied answer is:

No.

The God who begins the work will:

Complete it.

Then Jerusalem becomes a place of:

Comfort.

Peace flows like:

A river.

God compares His comfort to:

A mother's tenderness.

“As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you.”

But Isaiah's final chapter is not only:

Comfort.

It is also:

Judgment.

The Lord comes with:

Fire.

Whirlwind.

Sword.

His enemies face:

Recompense.

Those practicing false religion face:

Destruction.

Then the vision expands beyond:

Israel.

God gathers:

All nations.

All languages.

They come to see:

His glory.

Survivors go to distant lands and declare:

His glory among the nations.

The nations then bring people to:

Jerusalem.

God even says He will take some of them as:

Priests.

Levites.

The chapter therefore presents a dramatic expansion of:

God's worshiping people.

Finally Isaiah returns to:

The new heavens.

The new earth.

They endure before:

God.

So will:

The name.

And descendants.

Of His people.

All mankind will come to:

Worship.

But the final verse contains a solemn warning.

There remains an eternal distinction between:

Those who worship.

And:

Those who rebel.

Isaiah therefore ends with both:

Glory.

And:

Judgment.

Joy.

And:

Warning.

Worship.

And:

Separation.

The central truth of Isaiah 66 is:

The Lord who rules heaven and earth looks with favor upon the humble who tremble at His Word, rejects empty religion, vindicates His faithful people, comforts them like a mother, judges rebellion with perfect justice, gathers the nations to behold and proclaim His glory, and establishes an enduring new creation where all mankind worships before Him while rebellion receives its final judgment.

I. HEAVEN IS MY THRONE

Isaiah 66:1 — God Cannot Be Contained

“This is what the Lord says: ‘Heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool. Where is the house you would build for Me? Where would My resting place be?’”

The chapter begins with:

Majesty.

God declares:

Heaven is:

His throne.

Earth is:

His footstool.

Human beings cannot build:

A house large enough.

A sanctuary impressive enough.

A structure glorious enough.

To contain:

The Creator.

Cross References

Acts 7:49

Stephen quotes Isaiah's words to emphasize that the Most High does not dwell in temples made by human hands as though He could be confined by a building.

Matthew 5:34

Jesus warns against careless swearing by heaven because heaven is God's throne.

1 Kings 8:27

Solomon acknowledges at the dedication of the temple that even the highest heavens cannot contain God, much less the building he had constructed.

Spiritual Principle

God cannot be:

Contained.

Controlled.

Reduced to:

A building.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who uses temples does not need temples, because heaven is His throne and earth is only His footstool.

II. HEAVEN AS THRONE

A throne represents:

Authority.

Kingship.

Rule.

God does not merely occupy:

Heaven.

He reigns from:

Heaven.

Spiritual Principle

God's sovereignty extends over:

Everything.

III. EARTH AS FOOTSTOOL

The earth that seems enormous to us is pictured as:

God's footstool.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What appears immense from our perspective is small beneath the sovereignty of God.

IV. WHERE IS THE HOUSE?

The question exposes:

Human pride.

People may think:

We built something magnificent for God.

God responds:

Everything used to build it already:

Belonged to Him.

Spiritual Principle

We cannot give God anything that did not first come from:

His hand.

V. WHERE WOULD MY RESTING PLACE BE?

God refuses to be reduced to:

Location.

Architecture.

Human control.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God may choose to meet His people in a place, but no place becomes greater than the God who meets them there.

VI. MY HAND MADE ALL THESE THINGS

Isaiah 66:2 — The One God Looks Toward

“My hand made all these things, and so they all came into being,” declares the Lord. “But this is the one I will look to: the one who is humble and contrite in spirit, and who trembles at My word.”

Everything exists because:

God made it.

The temple materials?

His.

The earth?

His.

The heavens?

His.

Human beings?

His workmanship.

Yet the Creator tells us who receives:

His attention.

Not merely:

The wealthy.

Powerful.

Famous.

Religious.

Educated.

But:

The humble.

The contrite.

The one who trembles at:

His Word.

Cross References

Psalm 51:17

David declares that the sacrifices God truly desires include a broken and contrite heart, which He will not despise.

James 4:6

God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.

Acts 17:24

Paul declares that the God who made the world and everything in it does not dwell in temples made by human hands.

Spiritual Principle

God is impressed neither by:

Human greatness.

Nor:

Religious display.

He honors:

Humility.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who made the universe does not need us to impress Him; He looks for hearts humble enough to tremble at His Word.

VII. “THIS IS THE ONE I WILL LOOK TO”

What an extraordinary promise.

The Creator:

Looks toward.

The humble.

Spiritual Principle

Humility attracts:

Divine favor.

VIII. HUMBLE

Humility recognizes:

God is God.

And:

I am not.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

True humility begins when we stop competing with God for the right to define truth, direction, and authority.

IX. CONTRITE IN SPIRIT

Contrition means:

Broken over sin.

Teachable.

Repentant.

Sensitive toward:

God.

Spiritual Principle

God does not despise:

Repentant brokenness.

X. TREMBLES AT MY WORD

This is not:

Paralyzing terror.

It is:

Holy reverence.

Seriousness.

Submission.

The person who trembles at God's Word does not treat Scripture as:

Suggestion.

Opinion.

Background noise.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A person who truly trembles at God's Word asks not, “Do I agree with this?” but, “How must I respond to what God has said?”

XI. EMPTY RELIGION CONDEMNED

Isaiah 66:3 — Ritual Without Obedience

“The one who kills an ox is like one who murders a man; the one who sacrifices a lamb is like one who breaks a dog's neck; the one who brings an offering is like one who offers swine's blood; the one who burns incense is like one who blesses an idol. Yes, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delights in abominations.”

The religious acts themselves were once connected with:

Covenant worship.

Yet because the people's hearts were:

Rebellious—

the acts become compared with:

Murder.

Unclean sacrifice.

Idolatry.

Why?

Because worship without obedience becomes:

Hypocrisy.

Cross References

1 Samuel 15:22

Samuel tells Saul that obedience is better than sacrifice and listening to God is better than offering religious ritual while continuing in rebellion.

Proverbs 15:8

The sacrifice of the wicked is detestable to the Lord, while the prayer of the upright pleases Him.

Amos 5:21

God rejects Israel's religious festivals and assemblies when their worship is disconnected from justice and faithfulness.

Spiritual Principle

Religious activity cannot compensate for:

A rebellious heart.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not accept worship as a substitute for obedience.

XII. SACRIFICE WITHOUT SURRENDER

The people still:

Brought offerings.

But had not brought:

Their hearts.

Spiritual Principle

God wants:

The worshiper.

Not merely:

The worship act.

XIII. THEY CHOSE THEIR OWN WAYS

Here is the heart of the problem.

Not:

God's way.

Their way.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Empty religion often tries to keep God's rituals while rejecting God's rule.

XIV. THEIR SOUL DELIGHTS IN ABOMINATIONS

Sin has progressed from:

Action.

To:

Delight.

Spiritual Principle

Repeated rebellion can change:

What the heart loves.

XV. I WILL ALSO CHOOSE

Isaiah 66:4 — God Responds to Their Choice

“So I also will choose harsh treatment for them, and bring upon them what they dread. For when I called, no one answered; when I spoke, they did not listen. They did what was evil in My sight and chose what displeased Me.”

Notice the repeated word:

Choose.

They chose:

Their ways.

God chooses:

Their judgment.

They chose:

What displeased Him.

God brings:

What they dread.

Cross References

2 Thessalonians 2:11

Paul describes divine judgment falling upon those who reject truth and embrace deception.

Proverbs 1:26

Wisdom warns that those who persistently reject correction eventually face the consequences they refused to take seriously.

Jeremiah 11:11

God warns that judgment can reach a point where disaster arrives because His repeated calls have been ignored.

Spiritual Principle

Choices have:

Consequences.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When people continually choose what displeases God, they should not be surprised when God allows them to experience the fruit of those choices.

XVI. WHEN I CALLED

God's judgment came after:

His call.

His invitation.

His warning.

Spiritual Principle

God's warnings reveal:

Patience.

XVII. NO ONE ANSWERED

The tragedy is not:

Lack of revelation.

It is:

Lack of response.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's voice can become familiar enough to ignore if the heart repeatedly refuses to answer.

XVIII. WHEN I SPOKE

God had:

Communicated.

Spiritual Principle

Accountability increases with:

Revelation.

XIX. THEY DID NOT LISTEN

Hearing sound is not the same as:

Listening obediently.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The purpose of hearing God's Word is not information alone but transformation.

XX. THEY CHOSE WHAT DISPLEASED ME

The rebellion was:

Deliberate.

Spiritual Principle

Sin includes:

Choice.

Responsibility.

XXI. ENCOURAGEMENT FOR THE FAITHFUL

Isaiah 66:5 — Vindication for Those Who Tremble at His Word

“Hear the word of the Lord, you who tremble at His word: ‘Your own brothers who hate you, who exclude you because of My name, have said, “Let the Lord be glorified, that we may see your joy.” But they will be put to shame.’”

Now God speaks directly to:

The faithful.

They tremble at:

His Word.

Yet they are:

Hated.

Excluded.

Mocked.

Even by:

Their own brothers.

But God promises:

Vindication.

Cross References

John 15:19

Jesus tells His disciples that the world may hate them because they no longer belong to its rebellious system.

Matthew 5:11

Jesus pronounces blessing upon those who are insulted, persecuted, and falsely accused because of faithfulness to Him.

1 Peter 4:14

Those who are insulted because of Christ are called blessed because God's Spirit rests upon them.

Spiritual Principle

Faithfulness may result in:

Rejection.

But rejection by people does not mean:

Rejection by God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Being excluded by people because you honor God's Word is painful, but being accepted by God matters more than being accepted by the crowd.

XXII. THOSE WHO TREMBLE AT HIS WORD

Again God identifies:

His faithful people.

Not by:

Prestige.

But by:

Reverence.

Spiritual Principle

God knows:

Those who honor His Word.

XXIII. YOUR OWN BROTHERS HATE YOU

Opposition may come from:

Near.

Not only:

Far.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Some of the deepest wounds come when faithfulness to God costs acceptance among people we expected to understand.

XXIV. EXCLUDED BECAUSE OF MY NAME

Their suffering had a:

Spiritual cause.

Spiritual Principle

Loyalty to God can be:

Costly.

XXV. THEY WILL BE PUT TO SHAME

God promises:

Reversal.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The people who mock obedience today do not get the final verdict on the faithful.

XXVI. THE VOICE OF THE LORD

Isaiah 66:6 — Recompense from the Temple

“A voice of uproar comes from the city, a voice from the temple—the voice of the Lord, rendering recompense to His enemies.”

A sound rises:

From the city.

From the temple.

Ultimately it is:

The Lord's voice.

He gives:

Recompense.

Cross References

Revelation 16:17

A loud voice comes from the temple and throne at the completion of God's judgment.

Joel 3:16

The Lord roars from Zion and causes heaven and earth to tremble, while remaining a refuge for His people.

Nahum 1:2

The Lord is described as righteous in vengeance against His enemies while maintaining justice.

Spiritual Principle

God's judgment has:

A voice.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who seemed silent in times of injustice will not remain silent forever.

XXVII. RECOMPENSE

God repays according to:

Truth.

Spiritual Principle

Divine justice is:

Certain.

XXVIII. ZION'S SUDDEN DELIVERANCE

Isaiah 66:7 — Birth Before Labor

“Before she was in labor, she gave birth; before her pain came, she delivered a son.”

The imagery is deliberately:

Unexpected.

Normally:

Labor.

Pain.

Then:

Birth.

Here:

Birth arrives suddenly.

The picture emphasizes:

Unexpected divine intervention.

Cross References

Revelation 12:5

John's vision pictures a woman giving birth to a male child destined for rule.

Micah 5:3

Micah uses childbirth imagery in connection with God's promised ruler and the restoration of His people.

John 16:21

Jesus compares sorrow turning into joy with a woman who forgets labor pain after the child is born.

Spiritual Principle

God can fulfill His purpose:

Suddenly.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God may take years preparing what He chooses to reveal in a moment.

XXIX. BEFORE THE PAIN CAME

The order is:

Miraculous.

Unexpected.

Spiritual Principle

God is not bound by:

Ordinary expectation.

XXX. A NATION IN A DAY

Isaiah 66:8 — Who Has Heard Such a Thing?

“Who has heard of such a thing? Who has seen such things? Can a land be born in one day? Can a nation be delivered in a moment? Yet as soon as Zion was in labor, she brought forth her children.”

Isaiah himself emphasizes:

The extraordinary nature.

Who has heard?

Who has seen?

Can this happen?

Human answer:

Impossible.

God's answer:

Yes.

Cross References

Acts 2:41

At Pentecost thousands responded to the gospel in a single day, showing how rapidly God can expand His people.

Romans 11:26

Paul looks toward God's saving purpose for Israel and speaks of a future work of redemption.

Ezekiel 37:10

In Ezekiel's vision, a lifeless valley becomes a vast living army through God's power.

Spiritual Principle

God can accomplish quickly what seems impossible:

Gradually.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never confuse a long season of waiting with a limitation upon God's ability to act suddenly.

XXXI. WHO HAS SEEN SUCH THINGS?

The event exceeds:

Human precedent.

Spiritual Principle

God's work can exceed:

Past experience.

XXXII. ZION BROUGHT FORTH CHILDREN

Restoration produces:

Life.

Growth.

People.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God breathes life into Zion, barrenness does not get the final word.

XXXIII. SHALL I BRING TO BIRTH AND NOT DELIVER?

Isaiah 66:9 — God Completes What He Begins

“‘Shall I bring to the point of birth and not deliver?’ says the Lord. ‘Shall I, who cause delivery, shut the womb?’ says your God.”

God asks two:

Rhetorical questions.

Would He bring the process to:

Completion's edge—

and then abandon it?

No.

Cross References

2 Kings 19:3

A time of crisis is compared to children reaching the point of birth when there is no strength to deliver.

Hosea 13:13

Ephraim is pictured as foolishly remaining in the birth canal, resisting the moment of necessary deliverance.

Galatians 4:19

Paul uses childbirth imagery to describe spiritual formation until Christ is formed in believers.

Spiritual Principle

God finishes:

His purposes.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who brings His promise to the point of birth does not suddenly forget how to deliver it.

XXXIV. GOD COMPLETES

What He begins:

He is able to finish.

Spiritual Principle

Divine purpose is not:

Half-hearted.

XXXV. REJOICING WITH JERUSALEM

Isaiah 66:10 — Mourning Turned to Joy

“Rejoice with Jerusalem and be glad for her, all you who love her; rejoice greatly with her, all you who mourn over her.”

Those who once:

Mourned.

Will:

Rejoice.

The city associated with:

Grief.

Becomes associated with:

Gladness.

Cross References

Galatians 4:26

Paul speaks of the Jerusalem above as free and as the mother of God's people.

Psalm 122:6

God's people are commanded to pray for Jerusalem's peace.

Romans 12:15

Believers are instructed to rejoice with those who rejoice and mourn with those who mourn.

Spiritual Principle

God can transform:

Shared mourning.

Into:

Shared joy.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Those who faithfully mourned over Zion's ruins will not be excluded from rejoicing over Zion's restoration.

XXXVI. LOVE FOR JERUSALEM

The people are emotionally connected with:

God's purposes.

Spiritual Principle

Love for God's work includes:

Joy.

And:

Sorrow.

XXXVII. COMFORTING ABUNDANCE

Isaiah 66:11 — Satisfied and Delighted

“For you will nurse and be satisfied at her comforting breast; you will drink deeply and delight in her overflowing abundance.”

The imagery is:

Nurturing.

Comforting.

Abundant.

Restoration is not pictured as:

Bare survival.

But:

Deep satisfaction.

Cross References

1 Peter 2:2

Believers are encouraged to desire pure spiritual nourishment so they may grow.

Isaiah 60:16

Isaiah previously pictured Zion receiving abundance from the nations.

Luke 11:27

A woman uses maternal imagery regarding blessing associated with Jesus' mother.

Spiritual Principle

God's restoration includes:

Nourishment.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not restore His people merely enough to keep them alive; He pictures them drinking deeply from His abundant comfort.

XXXVIII. SATISFIED

God's provision answers:

Need.

Spiritual Principle

God is able to:

Satisfy.

XXXIX. PEACE LIKE A RIVER

Isaiah 66:12 — Carried and Comforted

“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 bounced on her knees.’”

Peace comes:

Like a river.

Not:

A drop.

Not:

A trickle.

A river.

God's restored people are pictured as:

Children.

Carried.

Held.

Cared for.

Cross References

Isaiah 48:18

God says that obedience would have brought peace flowing like a river.

John 14:27

Jesus promises His disciples a peace unlike the fragile peace offered by the world.

Psalm 131:2

The psalmist pictures his soul quiet and content like a child resting peacefully with its mother.

Spiritual Principle

God's peace can become:

Abundant.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who once judged Jerusalem promises to extend peace to her like a river.

XL. PEACE LIKE A RIVER

Peace moves:

Continuously.

Abundantly.

Spiritual Principle

God's peace is not:

Scarce.

XLI. CARRIED ON HER ARM

The picture is:

Tender.

Secure.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's restoration includes moments when His people are not merely told to walk—they are pictured as being carried.

XLII. AS A MOTHER COMFORTS

Isaiah 66:13 — Divine Comfort

“As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you; and you will be comforted in Jerusalem.”

God compares His own comfort with:

A mother's tenderness.

This does not redefine:

God's identity.

It reveals:

The tenderness of His care.

Cross References

2 Corinthians 1:4

God comforts His people in their troubles so they may become comforters to others.

John 14:18

Jesus promises not to leave His disciples abandoned or orphaned.

Matthew 5:4

Jesus promises comfort to those who mourn.

Spiritual Principle

God's strength does not eliminate:

Tenderness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who comes with fire against His enemies can still comfort His children with the tenderness of a mother.

XLIII. “SO WILL I COMFORT YOU”

God personally claims the role of:

Comforter.

Spiritual Principle

Divine comfort is:

Personal.

XLIV. HEARTS REJOICE

Isaiah 66:14 — The Hand of the Lord Known

“When you see this, your heart will rejoice, and your bones will flourish like new grass. The hand of the Lord will be known to His servants, but His fury will be against His enemies.”

Two groups appear again:

Servants.

Enemies.

The servants experience:

Joy.

Renewal.

Life.

The enemies experience:

Fury.

Cross References

Proverbs 3:8

Trusting and fearing the Lord is described as bringing healing and strength.

Isaiah 58:11

God promises to satisfy and strengthen His people so they become like a watered garden.

Luke 24:32

The disciples describe their hearts burning within them as Christ opened Scripture to them.

Spiritual Principle

God's hand means:

Blessing to servants.

Judgment to enemies.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The same hand of God can be recognized as comfort by His servants and judgment by His enemies.

XLV. BONES FLOURISH LIKE GRASS

The image represents:

Renewal.

Strength.

Life.

Spiritual Principle

God can revive:

What seemed exhausted.

XLVI. THE HAND OF THE LORD

God's activity becomes:

Visible.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God moves, His servants eventually recognize that the change was more than circumstance—it was His hand.

XLVII. FINAL JUDGMENT

Isaiah 66:15 — The Lord Comes with Fire

“For behold, the Lord will come with fire, and His chariots like a whirlwind, to bring down His anger with fury and His rebuke with flames of fire.”

The imagery becomes:

Terrifying.

Fire.

Whirlwind.

Chariots.

Fury.

Rebuke.

God's judgment is:

Active.

Final.

Powerful.

Cross References

2 Thessalonians 1:8

The Lord Jesus is revealed in flaming fire, bringing righteous judgment upon persistent rebellion.

Psalm 50:3

God comes and does not remain silent; consuming fire and storm surround Him.

Nahum 1:3

The Lord is slow to anger but great in power, and He does not leave guilt unpunished.

Spiritual Principle

God's patience does not eliminate:

Final judgment.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God who delays judgment should never be mistaken for a God who has abandoned justice.

XLVIII. FIRE

Fire represents:

Judgment.

Holiness.

Purification.

Spiritual Principle

Sin cannot permanently withstand:

God's holiness.

XLIX. CHARIOTS LIKE A WHIRLWIND

The image communicates:

Speed.

Power.

Overwhelming force.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God's appointed moment of judgment arrives, human resistance cannot slow the whirlwind.

L. JUDGMENT ON ALL FLESH

Isaiah 66:16 — Fire and Sword

“For with fire and with His sword the Lord will execute judgment on all flesh; and the slain of the Lord will be many.”

Judgment extends:

Broadly.

No human category grants:

Automatic exemption.

Cross References

Jeremiah 25:31

The Lord brings judgment against the nations and holds humanity accountable for wickedness.

Ezekiel 38:22

God's judgment is portrayed through overwhelming acts that demonstrate His holiness and authority.

Zephaniah 1:18

Neither wealth nor human resources can protect people from the day of God's righteous judgment.

Spiritual Principle

Every person remains:

Accountable to God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

All flesh may differ in language, nation, wealth, and status, but all flesh remains accountable to the same Lord.

LI. FALSE PURIFICATION

Isaiah 66:17 — Religious Abomination Ends

“Those who consecrate and purify themselves to enter the gardens, following one in the midst, who eat swine's flesh, abominable things, and mice, will come to an end together,” declares the Lord.

They practiced:

Self-consecration.

Self-purification.

Religious ceremonies.

But their worship remained:

Idolatrous.

Disobedient.

Abominable.

Cross References

2 Kings 21:5

Manasseh built altars to heavenly powers in the courts associated with the Lord's temple.

Ezekiel 8:10

Ezekiel sees detestable images and creatures connected with secret idolatrous practices.

1 Kings 14:23

Judah built forbidden places of worship and engaged in idolatrous practices contrary to God's covenant.

Spiritual Principle

Self-made holiness is not:

God's holiness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

You cannot purify yourself through a religious system that God Himself calls unclean.

LII. THE GARDENS

Again gardens represent:

False worship.

Spiritual Principle

Location does not sanctify:

Rebellion.

LIII. THEY WILL COME TO AN END TOGETHER

Different expressions of rebellion share:

The same final accountability.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

False religion may have many forms, but every form that rejects God's truth ultimately answers to the same Judge.

LIV. THE GATHERING OF THE NATIONS

Isaiah 66:18 — All Nations See His Glory

“For I know their works and their thoughts; the time is coming to gather all nations and tongues, and they will come and see My glory.”

God knows:

Works.

Thoughts.

Actions.

Motives.

Then the vision becomes:

Global.

All nations.

All languages.

Gathered to:

See His glory.

Cross References

Revelation 7:9

John sees an innumerable multitude from every nation, tribe, people, and language standing before God.

Matthew 25:32

Jesus describes all nations being gathered before Him for judgment.

Revelation 21:24

The nations walk by the light associated with the glory of the new creation.

Spiritual Principle

God's purposes are:

Global.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah begins with one nation but ends with all nations coming to see the glory of God.

LV. I KNOW THEIR WORKS

God sees:

Actions.

Spiritual Principle

Nothing is:

Hidden.

LVI. I KNOW THEIR THOUGHTS

God sees:

Motives.

Intentions.

Inner reasoning.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

People judge visible behavior; God also knows the thoughts that produced it.

LVII. ALL NATIONS AND TONGUES

God's glory crosses:

Ethnic.

National.

Linguistic.

Boundaries.

Spiritual Principle

God's kingdom is:

Worldwide.

LVIII. THEY WILL SEE MY GLORY

This is the great goal:

God's glory.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Mission reaches its highest purpose when people who never knew God's fame finally see and proclaim His glory.

LIX. SURVIVORS SENT TO THE NATIONS

Isaiah 66:19 — Declare My Glory

“I will set a sign among them, and I will send survivors to the nations—to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud (archers), to Tubal and Javan, and to the distant islands that have not heard of My fame or seen My glory. They will declare My glory among the nations.”

Those who survive become:

Messengers.

They go to:

Distant peoples.

Unreached places.

People who have not:

Heard.

Seen.

Known.

What do they proclaim?

God's:

Glory.

Cross References

Matthew 24:14

Jesus teaches that the gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the world as a witness to all nations.

Acts 1:8

Christ sends His witnesses outward from Jerusalem to increasingly distant regions and ultimately to the ends of the earth.

Romans 15:21

Paul describes his missionary ambition in terms of bringing the message to those who had not previously heard of Christ.

Spiritual Principle

Those who experience God's deliverance become:

Witnesses.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Survivors are not preserved merely to survive; they are sent to tell people who have never heard of God's glory.

LX. TO DISTANT ISLANDS

The mission goes:

Far.

Spiritual Principle

No place is:

Too remote.

LXI. THEY HAVE NOT HEARD

Ignorance creates:

Mission opportunity.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Where God's fame has not been heard, God's people still have work to do.

LXII. THEY WILL DECLARE MY GLORY

The message centers on:

God.

Spiritual Principle

True mission magnifies:

The Lord.

LXIII. THE NATIONS BRING AN OFFERING

Isaiah 66:20 — People Brought to God's Holy Mountain

“And they will bring all your people from all the nations as an 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 Israelites bring their grain offerings in clean vessels to the house of the Lord.”

People themselves are pictured as:

An offering.

The nations participate in:

Gathering.

Return.

Worship.

Cross References

Romans 15:16

Paul describes his ministry among the Gentiles in priestly terms, presenting the Gentiles as an acceptable offering sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

Romans 12:1

Believers are called to present their bodies to God as living sacrifices.

1 Peter 2:5

Christians are described as a holy priesthood offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God.

Spiritual Principle

God desires not merely:

Things.

But:

People.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The greatest offering the nations bring is not silver or gold but people presented to the Lord.

LXIV. CLEAN VESSELS

The offering is connected with:

Holiness.

Spiritual Principle

Worship should honor:

God's holiness.

LXV. PRIESTS AND LEVITES

Isaiah 66:21 — God Expands the Priesthood

“And I will also take some of them to be priests and Levites,” says the Lord.

This is a remarkable statement.

People drawn from the nations become associated with:

Sacred service.

The vision moves beyond:

Old boundaries.

Cross References

1 Peter 2:9

Believers are called a chosen people and royal priesthood who proclaim God's excellencies.

Revelation 5:10

The redeemed are described as a kingdom and priests serving God.

Malachi 3:3

God purifies those who serve Him so that they may present offerings in righteousness.

Spiritual Principle

God's redemptive plan creates:

A worshiping priestly people.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's grace not only brings outsiders near; it gives some of those once far away a place of sacred service.

LXVI. THE NEW HEAVENS AND NEW EARTH

Isaiah 66:22 — An Enduring Creation and Enduring People

“For just as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make will endure before Me,” declares the Lord, “so your descendants and your name will endure.”

Isaiah returns to:

The promise of Isaiah 65.

New heavens.

New earth.

But now emphasis falls upon:

Endurance.

They remain.

So will:

God's people.

Their name.

Their future.

Cross References

Revelation 21:1

John sees the promised new heaven and new earth.

2 Peter 3:13

Believers wait for new heavens and a new earth where righteousness dwells.

Isaiah 65:17

God previously promised to create new heavens and a new earth.

Spiritual Principle

God's final restoration is:

Permanent.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What God makes new at the end will not need to be replaced again.

LXVII. WILL ENDURE BEFORE ME

The new creation remains:

Before God.

Spiritual Principle

Eternal security rests in:

God's permanence.

LXVIII. YOUR NAME WILL ENDURE

Isaiah has repeatedly emphasized:

Names.

Forsaken.

Hephzibah.

Redeemed.

Another name.

Now:

An enduring name.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's final word over His people is not disappearance but enduring identity.

LXIX. ALL MANKIND WILL WORSHIP

Isaiah 66:23 — Universal Worship

“From one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, all mankind will come and bow down before Me,” says the Lord.

Isaiah's vision ends in:

Worship.

People come:

Continually.

Universally.

To:

Bow before God.

Cross References

Zechariah 14:16

The nations that remain come to Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord Almighty.

Revelation 15:4

All nations are pictured coming before God and worshiping because His righteous acts have been revealed.

Psalm 86:9

All nations God has made will come and worship before Him and glorify His name.

Spiritual Principle

History is moving toward:

Worship.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The book of Isaiah moves from a rebellious nation refusing God's Word to all mankind bowing before the Lord.

LXX. FROM NEW MOON TO NEW MOON

The imagery suggests:

Continuity.

Regularity.

Ongoing worship.

Spiritual Principle

Worship belongs at the center of:

Life.

LXXI. ALL MANKIND

The scope is:

Universal.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's final worshiping community is larger than one tribe, one nation, one language, or one generation.

LXXII. THEY WILL BOW DOWN

Worship includes:

Submission.

Spiritual Principle

True worship recognizes:

God's authority.

LXXIII. THE FINAL WARNING

Isaiah 66:24 — The End of Rebellion

“And they will go out and look on the dead bodies of those who rebelled against Me; for their worm will not die, their fire will not be quenched, and they will be abhorrent to all mankind.”

Isaiah ends with:

A warning.

The final destiny of rebellion is:

Judgment.

The imagery is:

Severe.

Unforgettable.

Jesus later draws upon this language.

Isaiah's final verse refuses to let us imagine:

Everyone receives the same final outcome regardless of response to God.

There is:

Worship.

And:

Rebellion.

Life.

And:

Judgment.

Cross References

Mark 9:44

Jesus uses Isaiah's imagery of the undying worm in His warnings about final judgment.

Mark 9:48

Jesus explicitly echoes Isaiah's language regarding the worm that does not die and fire that is not quenched.

Revelation 14:11

Revelation uses enduring fire and smoke imagery to describe the seriousness and finality of divine judgment.

Spiritual Principle

Rebellion has:

A final consequence.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah ends not by allowing us to choose between a God of glory and a God of judgment, but by revealing that the holy God is both.

LXXIV. THEIR WORM WILL NOT DIE

The image emphasizes:

Continuing judgment.

Spiritual Principle

Sin should never be treated:

Lightly.

LXXV. THEIR FIRE WILL NOT BE QUENCHED

Judgment cannot be:

Extinguished by human effort.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A person who repeatedly refuses God's mercy should not assume he will control the terms of God's judgment.

LXXVI. THE BOOK ENDS WITH A CHOICE

Throughout Isaiah, people have been called to:

Trust.

Repent.

Believe.

Return.

Seek.

Listen.

Tremble at God's Word.

The final chapter shows:

Two outcomes.

Spiritual Principle

God's Word demands:

Response.

LXXVII. ISAIAH 66 AS A WORSHIP CHAPTER

Temple.

Sacrifice.

Incense.

Holy mountain.

Priests.

Levites.

All mankind bowing.

Key Truth

Isaiah distinguishes between:

False worship.

And:

True worship.

LXXVIII. ISAIAH 66 AS A HUMILITY CHAPTER

Humble.

Contrite.

Trembling at the Word.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's attention is not captured by spiritual performance but by humble hearts that take Him seriously.

LXXIX. ISAIAH 66 AS A WORD OF GOD CHAPTER

Tremble at My Word.

I called.

I spoke.

They did not listen.

Hear the Word of the Lord.

Spiritual Principle

Response to God's Word reveals:

The heart.

LXXX. ISAIAH 66 AS A JUDGMENT CHAPTER

Recompense.

Fury.

Fire.

Sword.

Enemies.

Unquenchable fire.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah's final chapter makes clear that God's holiness requires final accountability.

LXXXI. ISAIAH 66 AS A COMFORT CHAPTER

Rejoice.

Nurse.

Be satisfied.

Peace like a river.

Carried.

Comforted.

Heart rejoices.

Spiritual Principle

God's judgment upon enemies does not erase:

His tenderness toward His people.

LXXXII. ISAIAH 66 AS A MISSION CHAPTER

All nations.

All tongues.

Survivors sent.

Distant islands.

Declare My glory.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah's vision of God's glory eventually turns survivors into missionaries.

LXXXIII. ISAIAH 66 AS A NEW CREATION CHAPTER

New heavens.

New earth.

Enduring name.

Universal worship.

Spiritual Principle

God's plan moves toward:

Permanent renewal.

LXXXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 66 TEACHES ABOUT GOD'S GREATNESS

Heaven:

Throne.

Earth:

Footstool.

His hand made:

All things.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The universe is not God's house; it is His creation.

LXXXV. WHAT ISAIAH 66 TEACHES ABOUT HUMILITY

God looks toward:

The humble.

The contrite.

Those who tremble at His Word.

Spiritual Principle

Humility places us in:

A teachable position.

LXXXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 66 TEACHES ABOUT WORSHIP

Sacrifice without obedience is:

Empty.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God would rather have obedient hearts than impressive ceremonies performed by rebellious people.

LXXXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 66 TEACHES ABOUT GOD'S WORD

Some:

Tremble.

Others:

Ignore.

Spiritual Principle

The same Word may produce:

Submission.

Or:

Resistance.

LXXXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 66 TEACHES ABOUT PERSECUTION

Faithful people may be:

Hated.

Excluded.

Mocked.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The approval of God can sustain a believer through the rejection of people.

LXXXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 66 TEACHES ABOUT DELIVERANCE

Birth can occur:

Suddenly.

Spiritual Principle

God's timing may surprise:

Everyone.

XC. WHAT ISAIAH 66 TEACHES ABOUT GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

He does not bring to:

Birth—

and abandon:

Delivery.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not begin His redemptive purpose only to lose strength before completion.

XCI. WHAT ISAIAH 66 TEACHES ABOUT PEACE

Peace like:

A river.

Spiritual Principle

God can provide:

Deep calm.

XCII. WHAT ISAIAH 66 TEACHES ABOUT COMFORT

Like:

A mother.

God comforts:

His people.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Divine comfort is strong enough for judgment and tender enough for tears.

XCIII. WHAT ISAIAH 66 TEACHES ABOUT JUDGMENT

Fire.

Sword.

Whirlwind.

Recompense.

Spiritual Principle

Final judgment is:

Certain.

XCIV. WHAT ISAIAH 66 TEACHES ABOUT THE NATIONS

They are:

Gathered.

They see:

Glory.

They hear:

Proclamation.

They participate in:

Worship.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The God of Israel reveals His glory with a purpose that reaches every nation and language.

XCV. WHAT ISAIAH 66 TEACHES ABOUT MISSION

Survivors become:

Messengers.

Spiritual Principle

Deliverance creates:

Witness.

XCVI. WHAT ISAIAH 66 TEACHES ABOUT PRIESTHOOD

God calls people into:

Sacred service.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Grace not only rescues people from judgment; it brings them into service.

XCVII. WHAT ISAIAH 66 TEACHES ABOUT ETERNITY

New heavens.

New earth.

Enduring people.

Continual worship.

Final judgment.

Spiritual Principle

Eternity contains:

Finality.

XCVIII. HEAVEN IS MY THRONE

Majesty.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Do not reduce an infinite God to the size of your religious building.

XCIX. EARTH IS MY FOOTSTOOL

Sovereignty.

Spiritual Principle

God rules:

Creation.

C. MY HAND MADE EVERYTHING

Creator.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God cannot be impressed by possessions that came from materials He created.

CI. HUMBLE

Submission.

Spiritual Principle

Humility honors:

God.

CII. CONTRITE

Repentance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A broken heart over sin is more precious to God than polished religion without repentance.

CIII. TREMBLES AT MY WORD

Reverence.

Spiritual Principle

Scripture deserves:

Serious response.

CIV. THEY CHOSE THEIR OWN WAYS

Self-rule.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Every false religion eventually becomes a way to preserve self-rule while pretending to honor God.

CV. I CALLED

Grace.

Spiritual Principle

God reaches:

First.

CVI. THEY DID NOT ANSWER

Resistance.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Silence toward God's call is itself a response.

CVII. THEY DID NOT LISTEN

Hardness.

Spiritual Principle

Truth ignored becomes:

Accountability.

CVIII. FAITHFUL PEOPLE EXCLUDED

Persecution.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God sees every door closed against someone because that person remained faithful to His name.

CIX. ENEMIES SHAMED

Vindication.

Spiritual Principle

God's verdict becomes:

Final.

CX. NATION BORN SUDDENLY

Power.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God does not need centuries to accomplish what He appoints for one day.

CXI. SHALL I NOT DELIVER?

Faithfulness.

Spiritual Principle

God finishes:

His purpose.

CXII. REJOICE WITH JERUSALEM

Restoration.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Those who shared the tears of God's people will one day share their joy.

CXIII. PEACE LIKE A RIVER

Abundance.

Spiritual Principle

God supplies:

Peace.

CXIV. CARRIED ON THE ARM

Security.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Sometimes restoration is pictured not as running again but as being safely carried.

CXV. MOTHERLY COMFORT

Tenderness.

Spiritual Principle

God comforts:

Personally.

CXVI. HEART REJOICES

Inner renewal.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's restoration reaches deeper than circumstances; it reaches the heart.

CXVII. FIRE

Judgment.

Spiritual Principle

God is:

Holy.

CXVIII. WHIRLWIND

Power.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

No human defense can stand against the sovereign Judge when His appointed day arrives.

CXIX. SWORD

Justice.

Spiritual Principle

God judges:

Righteously.

CXX. ALL NATIONS

Global purpose.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's final purpose is too large to fit inside one nation's borders.

CXXI. ALL TONGUES

Every language.

Spiritual Principle

God's glory crosses:

Culture.

CXXII. SEE MY GLORY

Revelation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The ultimate missionary goal is not merely that nations know facts about God but that they behold His glory.

CXXIII. SURVIVORS SENT

Mission.

Spiritual Principle

Those delivered become:

Witnesses.

CXXIV. DISTANT ISLANDS

Unreached peoples.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's glory deserves to be declared wherever His fame has not yet been heard.

CXXV. PEOPLE AS OFFERINGS

Consecration.

Spiritual Principle

God desires:

Lives.

CXXVI. PRIESTS AND LEVITES

Service.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The people God gathers become the people God uses.

CXXVII. NEW HEAVENS AND NEW EARTH

Final renewal.

Spiritual Principle

God's future is:

Permanent.

CXXVIII. NAME ENDURES

Identity.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

What God establishes in His final kingdom will not be erased by another exile.

CXXIX. ALL MANKIND WORSHIPS

Universal glory.

Spiritual Principle

History ends at:

God's throne.

CXXX. REBELLION JUDGED

Final separation.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The final chapter of Isaiah refuses to remove either half of the truth: eternal worship for the faithful and final judgment for rebellion.

CXXXI. ISAIAH 1 AND ISAIAH 66

Isaiah 1:

God rejects:

Empty sacrifice.

Isaiah 66:

God again rejects:

Empty sacrifice.

Key Truth

The book begins and ends by teaching:

Religion without obedience is unacceptable to God.

CXXXII. ISAIAH 1 AND HUMILITY

Isaiah 1 called the people to:

Repent.

Isaiah 66 identifies the one God honors:

Humble.

Contrite.

Trembling at His Word.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The book of Isaiah begins by confronting pride and ends by honoring humility.

CXXXIII. ISAIAH 6 AND ISAIAH 66

Isaiah 6:

Isaiah sees:

The Lord high and lifted up.

Isaiah 66:

Heaven is:

His throne.

Spiritual Principle

Isaiah begins his ministry with:

A vision of God's holiness.

And ends his prophecy with:

The same majestic God.

CXXXIV. ISAIAH 11 AND ISAIAH 66

Isaiah 11:

The nations seek:

The Messiah.

Isaiah 66:

All nations come to:

See God's glory.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The global hope introduced earlier in Isaiah reaches its great conclusion in the gathering of the nations.

CXXXV. ISAIAH 40 AND ISAIAH 66

Isaiah 40:

Comfort My people.

Isaiah 66:

As a mother comforts her child:

I will comfort you.

Key Truth

The comfort promised in Isaiah 40 continues to:

The final chapter.

CXXXVI. ISAIAH 53 AND ISAIAH 66

Isaiah 53 reveals:

The suffering Servant.

Isaiah 66 reveals:

The worldwide people gathered to worship.

Spiritual Principle

The Servant's redemptive work opens toward:

Worldwide worship.

CXXXVII. ISAIAH 60 AND ISAIAH 66

Isaiah 60:

Nations come to:

Zion's light.

Isaiah 66:

All nations come to:

See God's glory.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah's vision consistently moves from restored Zion toward the nations beholding the glory of God.

CXXXVIII. ISAIAH 62 AND ISAIAH 66

Isaiah 62:

God's people receive:

New identity.

Isaiah 66:

Their name:

Endures.

Spiritual Principle

Redemption creates:

Permanent belonging.

CXXXIX. ISAIAH 65 AND ISAIAH 66

Isaiah 65:

New heavens.

New earth.

Isaiah 66:

New heavens.

New earth.

Enduring before:

God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Isaiah closes by repeating the promise that renewal is not temporary—it endures before the Lord.

CXL. TWELVE GREAT CONTRASTS IN ISAIAH 66

1. **Heavenly Throne → Humble Heart**
2. **Temple Building → Trembling at God's Word**
3. **Religious Ritual → True Obedience**
4. **Self-Chosen Ways → God's Judgment**
5. **Human Exclusion → Divine Vindication**
6. **Mourning → Rejoicing**
7. **Labor Pain → Sudden Birth**
8. **Trouble → Comfort**
9. **Enemies → Servants**
10. **Judgment by Fire → Peace Like a River**
11. **Distant Nations → Gathered Worshipers**
12. **Rebellion → Eternal Worship**

Key Truth

Isaiah 66 separates:

True worship from false worship.

Humility from pride.

Servants from enemies.

Worship from rebellion.

Comfort from judgment.

And shows that God's final word includes both:

Glory.

And:

Justice.

CXLI. TWELVE GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 66

1. God Cannot Be Contained

Principle:

Heaven is His throne and earth His footstool.

2. God Honors the Humble

Principle:

He looks toward the contrite person who trembles at His Word.

3. Obedience Matters More Than Ritual

Principle:

Sacrifice without surrender is empty.

4. God's Call Must Be Answered

Principle:

Repeatedly ignoring His voice leads to judgment.

5. God Vindicates the Faithful

Principle:

Those rejected for His name will not remain ashamed.

6. God Can Deliver Suddenly

Principle:

A nation can be born in a moment when God acts.

7. God Completes What He Begins

Principle:

He does not bring to birth and fail to deliver.

8. God Comforts Tenderly

Principle:

His comfort is compared with a mother's care.

9. Final Judgment Is Certain

Principle:

Fire and sword testify to God's holy justice.

10. God's Glory Reaches All Nations

Principle:

His mission extends to peoples who have never heard His fame.

11. The New Creation Will Endure

Principle:

The new heavens and earth will remain before Him.

12. History Ends in Worship and Judgment

Principle:

All mankind bows before God, while rebellion receives its final consequence.

CXLII. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

What does God call heaven?

His throne.

Question 2

What does He call the earth?

His footstool.

Question 3

Can a human building contain God?

No. Heaven itself cannot contain the fullness of His greatness.

Question 4

Who made all things?

The Lord.

Question 5

To whom does God look with favor?

The humble and contrite person who trembles at His Word.

Question 6

What kind of worship does God reject?

Religious ritual performed by people who deliberately choose rebellion.

Question 7

What had the people chosen?

Their own ways and things that displeased God.

Question 8

What happened when God called?

They did not answer.

Question 9

What happened when God spoke?

They did not listen.

Question 10

Who receives encouragement in verse 5?

Those who tremble at God's Word.

Question 11

What were some faithful people experiencing?

Hatred, exclusion, and mockery because of God's name.

Question 12

What would happen to those who mocked them?

They would be put to shame.

Question 13

What voice comes from the temple?

The voice of the Lord rendering recompense to His enemies.

Question 14

What unusual birth imagery appears in verse 7?

Zion gives birth before labor pains arrive.

Question 15

What astonishing question is asked in verse 8?

Whether a land can be born in one day or a nation delivered in a moment.

Question 16

Will God bring His purpose to the point of birth and fail to deliver?

No.

Question 17

Who is called to rejoice with Jerusalem?

All who love her and those who mourned over her.

Question 18

What does God promise to extend like a river?

Peace.

Question 19

How does God describe His comfort?

Like a mother comforting her child.

Question 20

What happens to the hearts of God's people?

They rejoice.

Question 21

How are their bones described?

Flourishing like new grass.

Question 22

To whom is God's hand revealed?

His servants.

Question 23

Against whom is His fury directed?

His enemies.

Question 24

How does the Lord come in judgment?

With fire and chariots like a whirlwind.

Question 25

What instruments of judgment are mentioned?

Fire and sword.

Question 26

What happens to those practicing idolatrous purification?

They come to an end together.

Question 27

What does God know about humanity?

Their works and their thoughts.

Question 28

Whom will God gather?

All nations and tongues.

Question 29

What will they see?

God's glory.

Question 30

Where will survivors be sent?

To distant nations and lands that have not heard God's fame or seen His glory.

Question 31

What will they declare?

God's glory among the nations.

Question 32

What will the nations bring?

God's people as an offering to the Lord.

Question 33

What roles will God give to some of those gathered?

Priests and Levites.

Question 34

What does God promise to make?

New heavens and a new earth.

Question 35

How long will the new creation endure?

It will endure before God.

Question 36

What else will endure?

The descendants and name of God's people.

Question 37

Who will come to worship God?

All mankind.

Question 38

What happens to those who rebel against God?

They face final judgment.

Question 39

What language describes that judgment?

Their worm does not die and their fire is not quenched.

Question 40

What is the central message of Isaiah 66?

The sovereign Lord honors the humble who tremble at His Word, rejects empty religion, comforts and vindicates His servants, judges persistent rebellion, gathers the nations to behold and proclaim His glory, and establishes an enduring new creation filled with worship while rebellion receives final judgment.

CXLIII. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 66 asks several serious questions.

Do I truly understand:

Who God is?

Do I sometimes treat God as though He exists merely inside:

My church?

My tradition?

My denomination?

My theological system?

My preferences?

Or do I remember:

Heaven is His throne.

Earth is His footstool.

Do I understand that God does not need:

Anything I possess?

Do I approach worship trying to:

Impress God?

Or:

Honor God?

Would God describe me as:

Humble?

Am I:

Contrite?

When I sin, am I:

Broken over it?

Or:

Defensive?

Do I tremble at:

God's Word?

When Scripture confronts:

My opinion—

which one changes?

When Scripture challenges:

My lifestyle—

do I obey?

When Scripture exposes:

My sin—

do I repent?

Do I treat God's Word like:

Authority?

Or:

Advice?

Am I practicing:

Religion without obedience?

Could I be:

Singing.

Giving.

Serving.

Attending.

Teaching.

Praying.

While still choosing:

My own ways?

Have I kept:

Religious ritual—

while resisting:

God's rule?

When God calls:

Do I answer?

When God speaks:

Do I listen?

Is there something God has told me repeatedly that I continue to:

Ignore?

Have I trained my heart to:

Delay obedience?

Have I ever been:

Rejected.

Mocked.

Excluded.

Because I tried to remain faithful to:

God's Word?

If so, do I remember:

God sees?

Do I believe:

His verdict matters more?

Am I waiting for God to act in an area that seems:

Impossible?

Could God produce:

Sudden change?

Do I believe He can bring a promise to:

Birth?

Do I believe He finishes:

What He begins?

Am I mourning over:

Something broken?

Can I believe mourning may become:

Rejoicing?

Do I know God's:

Comfort?

Can I receive the picture:

“As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you”?

Am I trying to be:

Strong enough—

when God is willing to:

Carry me?

Do I need peace:

Like a river?

Am I allowing:

Fear.

Anxiety.

Bitterness.

Uncertainty.

To dominate my heart?

Do I remember:

God's peace is deeper than circumstance?

Do I take final judgment:

Seriously?

Do I treat sin as though:

It does not matter?

Have I mistaken God's patience for:

Approval?

Do I understand that God knows:

My works?

And:

My thoughts?

What would God find:

Inside?

Do I care about:

The nations?

Do I care about people who have:

Never heard?

Do I see myself as:

A witness?

Has God delivered me merely so I can:

Live comfortably?

Or has He preserved me so I can:

Declare His glory?

Do I believe the gospel belongs:

Beyond my own community?

Am I praying for:

People.

Languages.

Nations.

Who have not heard:

God's fame?

Do I understand that worship is where:

History is heading?

Am I living as a:

Worshiper now?

Would God describe my worship as:

True?

Humble?

Obedient?

Do I live with:

Eternity in view?

Do I believe:

The new heavens and new earth will endure?

And finally:

Which side of Isaiah 66 describes me?

Humble?

Or:

Proud?

Trembling at His Word?

Or:

Ignoring His voice?

Servant?

Or:

Enemy?

Worshiper?

Or:

Rebel?

CXLIV. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“God Looks Lower Than We Expect”

God's throne is:

Heaven.

His footstool:

Earth.

Yet where does He look?

Toward:

The humble.

The contrite.

The person trembling at:

His Word.

Principle:

The highest God turns His attention toward the lowest heart.

CXLV. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“A Beautiful Temple Cannot Impress the God Who Made the Universe”

Heaven:

His throne.

Earth:

His footstool.

Everything:

Made by His hand.

Principle:

What impresses God is not the size of our building but the humility of our heart.

CXLVI. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Obedience Is Better Than Impressive Religion”

They sacrificed.

Brought offerings.

Burned incense.

Yet:

Chose their own ways.

Principle:

God will never allow ritual to become a substitute for surrender.

CXLVII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Trembling at God's Word Means Taking God Seriously”

God honors the one who:

Trembles.

Principle:

The measure of our respect for Scripture is not how often we quote it but how willingly we obey it.

CXLVIII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Human Rejection Does Not Cancel Divine Acceptance”

They were:

Hated.

Excluded.

Mocked.

But God addressed them as:

Those who tremble at His Word.

Principle:

You can be rejected in the room and still accepted at the throne.

CXLIX. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“God Can Do in a Day What Humans Could Not Accomplish in Generations”

Can a nation be born:

In a day?

God says:

Watch.

Principle:

Never measure divine possibility by human speed.

CL. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“God Does Not Bring His Purpose to Birth and Then Abandon It”

The Lord asks:

“Shall I bring to the point of birth and not deliver?”

Principle:

What God truly begins according to His purpose, He has power to complete.

CLI. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Peace Can Flow Where Tears Once Fell”

Jerusalem mourned.

Then God says:

Peace like:

A river.

Principle:

God can send rivers of peace through places previously soaked with tears.

CLII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“God's Strength Includes Tenderness”

Fire against:

Enemies.

Comfort like:

A mother.

Principle:

God's tenderness does not weaken His holiness, and His holiness does not eliminate His tenderness.

CLIII. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Survivors Become Witnesses”

God preserves:

Survivors.

Then sends:

Them.

Principle:

Sometimes the reason God brought you through something is so that your survival can become someone else's testimony of His glory.

CLIV. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The Nations Are Not an Afterthought”

All nations.

All tongues.

Distant islands.

People who never heard.

Principle:

The mission of God has always been larger than one people, one language, or one border.

CLV. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“The Book Ends Where History Is Heading: Worship”

All mankind:

Bows.

Principle:

Every life should be lived now in light of the worship that will one day surround the throne of God.

CLVI. ANOTHER CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Isaiah's Final Word Is Both Glory and Judgment”

New heavens.

New earth.

Worship.

And:

Unquenchable judgment.

Principle:

Biblical hope is glorious precisely because evil is not ignored forever.

CLVII. ISAIAH 66 AS A WHOLE

Isaiah 66 begins with:

A throne.

“Heaven is My throne.”

Immediately we are reminded:

God is:

Great.

Sovereign.

Uncontainable.

But then something surprising happens.

The God whose throne is:

Heaven—

looks toward:

The humble.

The contrite.

The one trembling at:

His Word.

From there the chapter contrasts:

True worship.

And:

False worship.

People can:

Sacrifice.

Offer.

Burn incense.

And still:

Choose their own ways.

Then God says:

When I called:

You did not answer.

When I spoke:

You did not listen.

But to the faithful He says:

Hear My Word.

You may be:

Hated.

Excluded.

Mocked.

But:

Your enemies will be ashamed.

Then suddenly:

Birth.

A nation.

Deliverance.

God reminds His people:

I do not bring to the point of birth and fail to deliver.

Then:

Jerusalem rejoices.

Those who mourned:

Rejoice.

Peace flows:

Like a river.

God's people are:

Carried.

Comforted.

Their hearts:

Rejoice.

Then:

Fire.

Judgment.

Sword.

False worship ends.

Then the horizon widens:

All nations.

All languages.

Distant islands.

People who have never heard:

God's fame.

Survivors go.

They declare:

His glory.

People are gathered.

Priests arise.

Worship expands.

Then:

New heavens.

New earth.

Enduring people.

Enduring name.

Universal worship.

And finally:

The solemn reminder that rebellion receives:

Final judgment.

The chapter therefore moves:

From:

Heavenly throne.

To:

Humble heart.

From:

Temple ritual.

To:

True obedience.

From:

Human rejection.

To:

Divine vindication.

From:

Labor pain.

To:

Sudden birth.

From:

Mourning.

To:

Rejoicing.

From:

Fear.

To:

Peace.

From:

Tears.

To:

Comfort.

From:

Enemies.

To:

Judgment.

From:

One nation.

To:

All nations.

From:

Local worship.

To:

Universal worship.

From:

Old creation.

To:

New heavens and new earth.

And from:

Rebellion.

To:

Final separation.

Key Truth

Isaiah 66 closes the prophecy by revealing the sovereign God who cannot be contained by heaven or earth, yet looks with favor upon the humble; the holy God who rejects empty religion, comforts His faithful people, judges His enemies, gathers every nation to see His glory, and brings history into an enduring new creation filled with worship.

CLVIII. TEN GREAT MOVEMENTS IN ISAIAH 66

1. God Declares His Greatness

Heaven:

His throne.

Earth:

His footstool.

2. God Identifies the Worshiper He Honors

Humble.

Contrite.

Trembling at His Word.

3. God Rejects Empty Religion

Ritual without obedience becomes:

Offensive.

4. God Vindicates the Faithful

Those excluded for His name will:

Rejoice.

5. God Brings Sudden Deliverance

Zion gives birth:

Suddenly.

6. God Comforts Jerusalem

Peace flows:

Like a river.

Comfort comes:

Like a mother's care.

7. God Judges His Enemies

Fire.

Whirlwind.

Sword.

8. God Gathers the Nations

Every nation and language comes to:

See His glory.

9. God Sends Witnesses

Survivors declare His glory to:

Unreached peoples.

10. God Establishes Eternal Worship

New heavens.

New earth.

All mankind bowing.

Final judgment upon rebellion.

Key Truth

Isaiah 66 moves from God's heavenly throne to universal worship, showing that the God who created everything will finally gather, judge, comfort, redeem, and establish His glory throughout the new creation.

CLIX. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah ends with:

God.

That is fitting.

The book began with:

A rebellious people.

It ends with:

The sovereign Lord.

God says:

“Heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool.”

Think about that.

The earth contains:

Mountains.

Oceans.

Nations.

Cities.

Billions of people.

And God calls it:

His footstool.

How large is your:

Problem?

How strong is your:

Enemy?

How complicated is your:

Situation?

How impossible is your:

Need?

Put it beside:

The God whose throne is heaven.

Then God asks:

What house could you build:

For Me?

People often think God is impressed by:

Buildings.

Money.

Attendance.

Programs.

Religious achievement.

But God says:

I made:

Everything.

Then He tells us what actually catches:

His attention.

“This is the one I will look to.”

Who?

The celebrity?

No.

The wealthy?

No.

The powerful?

No.

The religious performer?

No.

The one who is:

Humble.

Contrite.

And:

Trembles at My Word.

That raises the question:

Do I tremble at:

God's Word?

When Scripture says:

Forgive—

do I forgive?

When Scripture says:

Repent—

do I repent?

When Scripture says:

Flee sin—

do I flee?

When Scripture says:

Love—

do I love?

When Scripture corrects:

My opinion—

do I change my opinion?

Or do I try to:

Change Scripture?

God is looking for people who take:

His Word seriously.

Then Isaiah confronts:

Empty religion.

People were still:

Sacrificing.

Giving.

Burning incense.

But God rejected:

Their worship.

Why?

Because they had chosen:

Their own ways.

That is a frightening possibility.

You can be:

Religious.

And rebellious.

Active in church.

And disobedient.

Singing:

And resisting God.

Giving:

And refusing to repent.

Teaching:

And refusing to obey.

God says:

When I called:

You did not answer.

When I spoke:

You did not listen.

Do not let that describe:

You.

If God calls:

Answer.

If God speaks:

Listen.

If His Word confronts:

Obey.

Then God speaks to people who:

Tremble at His Word.

They have been:

Rejected.

Excluded.

Mocked.

Perhaps you have experienced:

Something similar.

Maybe faithfulness cost you:

Friendships.

Acceptance.

Approval.

God says:

I see.

Human rejection does not mean:

Divine rejection.

Then comes:

Sudden birth.

“Can a nation be born in one day?”

What a reminder.

God may work:

Slowly.

Quietly.

Invisible to you.

Then suddenly:

Everything changes.

Never assume:

Nothing is happening.

Because you cannot yet:

See the birth.

Then God says:

“Shall I bring to the point of birth and not deliver?”

Maybe something in your life feels:

Unfinished.

You have prayed.

Waited.

Hoped.

Trusted.

And wondered:

God—

Will You finish this?

Isaiah reminds us:

God does not lose:

Power halfway through.

Then comes one of Scripture's tenderest promises:

“As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you.”

Maybe today you do not need:

A theological argument.

Maybe you need:

Comfort.

God knows:

How to comfort.

Maybe you are:

Grieving.

Lonely.

Afraid.

Exhausted.

Broken.

God says:

I will:

Comfort you.

Then He says:

“I will extend peace to her like a river.”

Not:

A cup.

A river.

Maybe your heart is:

Restless.

Anxious.

Troubled.

Ask for:

Peace like a river.

But Isaiah refuses to end with comfort alone.

He reminds us:

Judgment is real.

The Lord comes with:

Fire.

This matters.

God's mercy does not mean:

Sin does not matter.

God's patience does not mean:

Judgment is imaginary.

God's love does not mean:

Rebellion has no consequences.

Then suddenly the chapter expands.

God says:

All nations.

All tongues.

They will see:

My glory.

Survivors go:

Out.

Why?

To tell people who have never:

Heard.

That means if God has:

Saved you—

You have something to:

Tell.

If He has:

Delivered you—

You have something to:

Tell.

If He has:

Forgiven you—

You have something to:

Tell.

If He has:

Carried you—

You have something to:

Tell.

Survivors become:

Witnesses.

Then people from the nations become:

Offerings.

Servants.

Priests.

Worshipers.

God's family expands far beyond:

One nation.

One language.

One location.

Then comes the great promise:

New heavens.

New earth.

They will:

Endure.

No more:

Exile.

No more:

Destruction of the final creation.

No more:

Temporary restoration.

God's new creation:

Endures.

Then the book of Isaiah reaches its final vision of:

Worship.

“All mankind will come and bow down before Me.”

Think about Isaiah's entire journey.

Isaiah 1:

Rebellion.

Isaiah 6:

Holy, holy, holy.

Isaiah 7:

Immanuel.

Isaiah 9:

A Child is born.

Isaiah 11:

The righteous Branch.

Isaiah 40:

Comfort My people.

Isaiah 53:

The suffering Servant.

Isaiah 60:

Arise, shine.

Isaiah 61:

The Spirit of the Lord.

Isaiah 62:

A new name.

Isaiah 63:

Mighty to save.

Isaiah 64:

Come down.

Isaiah 65:

New heavens and new earth.

Isaiah 66:

All mankind bows before God.

What a journey.

The book begins with:

A nation that will not listen.

It ends with:

Nations worshiping.

It begins with:

Sin.

It moves through:

Judgment.

Promise.

Messiah.

Suffering.

Redemption.

Restoration.

And ends with:

Glory.

But Isaiah's final verse gives one last:

Warning.

Rebellion still has:

A consequence.

The final choice is:

Worship.

Or:

Rebellion.

Submission.

Or:

Resistance.

Humility.

Or:

Pride.

Trembling at God's Word.

Or:

Ignoring God's voice.

So Isaiah 66 asks:

Am I humble before:

God?

Am I contrite over:

Sin?

Do I tremble at:

His Word?

Am I practicing:

True worship?

Or merely:

Religious ritual?

When God calls:

Do I answer?

When God speaks:

Do I listen?

Can I remain faithful when:

People reject me?

Do I believe God can bring:

Sudden deliverance?

Do I trust Him to finish:

What He begins?

Do I know His:

Comfort?

Do I receive His:

Peace?

Do I take His:

Judgment seriously?

Am I declaring:

His glory?

Do I care about people who have never:

Heard?

Am I living for:

The new creation?

And above everything:

Am I already doing what all mankind will eventually be summoned to do?

Bow before the Lord.

Isaiah began with a people who would not:

Listen.

Let us end Isaiah by becoming people who:

Tremble at His Word.

Who:

Listen.

Who:

Obey.

Who:

Worship.

Who:

Declare His glory.

And who look forward to:

The new heavens.

The new earth.

And the day when:

All mankind will come and bow down before Him.

Final Crawford Bible Study Principle

The final message of Isaiah is that the God whose throne is heaven still looks toward the humble heart, rejects empty religion, comforts His faithful people, judges rebellion, gathers every nation to see His glory, and moves all history toward the enduring new creation where worship belongs forever to Him.