

## The Ultimate Conclusion

### Isaiah 66

*"Pass me not, O gentle Savior, hear my humble cry. While on others thou are calling, do not pass me by."*

\*Welcome in-person & online as we gather in the name of Jesus, who is gentle Savior & sovereign King.

\*N.H. is honored to partner with ministries around the world & locally who love Jesus:

\*One **local partner** is the **Pregnancy Care Center**, who we recently supported w/ a year end gift:

*"Wow!!!! I am **blown away** by the generosity of New Hope. I was literally **jumping up and down** with excitement. Not just because of the income, although...that is a huge blessing. But because of the evidence that **God is in control** and insuring that the mission of Pregnancy Care Center is His mission and will be moved forward. Thank you again from the bottom of my heart for all that you have done and continue to do...**Lives are being saved for now and eternity** because of your faithfulness in this way.*  
(Rhonda, Pregnancy Care)

There is no question we live in a time of **political instability and national uncertainty**. So did Isaiah.

\*Though his writing is old, its message is remarkable relevant. And the **one thing that Isaiah believed, which gave him confidence in the hard times: "God's Unfolding Plan."**

\*Today we turn for the **48<sup>th</sup> time** to get insight for what God's plan is for the **future of humanity**

\*There are **4 Big Worldview Issues** all people, democrat or republican, eventually ask:

- **Origin** – Where did we come from?
- **Meaning** – Why are we here?
- **Morality** – How do we know the difference between right/wrong?
- **Destiny** – Where is the world headed?

\*Some people look at the future and believe everything is simply a matter of **fate and chance** there is nobody guiding a master plan of the world.

\*One friend wrote me years ago:

*"As a human race, we are headed to nearly total destruction. Few pockets will survive, and they will live in extreme discomfort for many centuries to come, fighting the possibility of total extinction. I don't believe we have a soul that can go to a better place. We have a consciousness that developed through the early years of our life. And it dies with us with our last breath."*

\*Although that is a common belief today, Scripture says there is a **Master Plan** at work in history:

*"God has **fixed a day** on which He will judge the world."* (Acts 17)

\*Turn to **Is. 66**, the **final chapter** which speaks to **final issues** of where **all people/nations** are headed.

#### **1. God dwells in an unlikely place, (v.1-6)**

- Where God lives. (v.1-2)
- Who God opposes. (v.3-6)

- **Where God lives. (v.1-2)**

1 *"Thus says the Lord: "Heaven is **my throne**, and the earth is **my footstool**; what is the house that you would build for me, and what is the place of my rest?"*

It's a great verse! And a vivid picture of God's Kingship. **Heaven/Throne. Earth/Footstool.**

\*If you like the **NT**, a famous man quoted this verse...and then was killed for his sermon.

\*Stephen, the first Christian martyr, confronted **leaders in the Capitol City** and reminded them that God is the ultimate King who Rules over the Universe. (Acts 7)

\*Notably, as he was dying, **Stephen saw "heavens opened and the Son of Man standing" at the throne.**

\*A great reminder that even when **Capital cities face turmoil**, Jesus is still King.

\*So if **the earth is a "footstool"** to God, what **HOUSE** is actually big enough to contain Him?

\*Is **N.H.** good enough? Is the **Capitol building** safe enough? Is **Montana** big enough?

\*No! It's almost silly to think that **the God of glory** could be contained in a temple.

\*BUT...**There is ONE PLACE** the Living God will dwell...a most unlikely place:

**v.2: "...But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is *humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word.*"**

\*God is so **BIG AND TRANSCENDENT** that the earth is nothing but a footstool.

\*But the **ONE PLACE** He is willing to take up residence on earth...the heart of the humble

\*He dwells with those who *"tremble at His word"* = **Reverently responsive.**

\*What a remarkable truth: **"A humble heart is a holy place!"**

- **Who God opposes. (v.3-6)**

3 *"He who slaughters an ox is like one who kills a man; he who sacrifices a lamb, like one who breaks a dog's neck; he who presents a grain offering, like one who offers pig's blood; he who makes a memorial offering of frankincense, like one who blesses an idol.*

\*Let me that confusing language into **Modern, Relevant Language. God is describing people:**

- The **worship leader** is no better than an **abortion doctor**.
- The **preacher** is no better than a **corrupt politician**.
- The **man who attends church** is no better than the **man who stars in porn films**.
- The **woman who raises hands** is no better than a **woman who reads palms**.

\*All 4 metaphors have a single point: ***Worship, even when done in a holy place, loses all significance when the hearts of worshipers are not right with God.***

\*The people may have gathered to worship in a holy temple, but their hearts were unholy:

- Chose their own way. (v.3)

- Delighted in sin. (v.3)
- Refused to answer God's call. (v.4)
- Refused to listen to God's word. (v.4)
- Did evil in God's sight. (v.4)
- Did what God hates. (v.4)

\*How do you think the Lord views such worship? He opposes it strongly! **Isaiah 66:6 is as ominous as its 666 number suggests:**

*"The sound of the Lord, rendering recompense to his enemies!"*

\*Last Wednesday I had a great time **w/ our High Schoolers. The #1 need for believers:**

**"Information" about God that leads to "transformation" by God.**

\*Somehow, friend, the things we believe need to sink in: **"HEAD to HEART to FEET."**

**\*That is what it means: "Reverently Responsive" to God.**

## 2. ...and announced an unexpected birth, (v.7-14)

- **Birthered Quickly** (v.7-8)
- **Delivered Faithfully** (v.9)
- **Nourished Lovingly** (v.10-13)
- **Celebrated Globally** (v.14)

\***v.7-14** is one of those passages that you read and causes *intellectual hemorrhoids*.

\*These verses are **hard on the surface**, but **drill underneath to find a massive reservoir of oil**.

\*The Lord gives a **prophecy** = a lengthy **metaphor of motherhood** including imagery of: *labor, birth, breast feeding, children carried on hips, and nations being comforted & nourished*.

\*It describes a work so marvelous that **the WORLD has never seen anything like it! (v.8)**

- **Birthered quickly (v.7-8):** A mom quickly & unexpectedly gives birth to a son and then to children.

*"No sooner is Zion in labor than she gives birth to her children." (v.8)*

- **Delivered faithfully (v.9):** God guarantees to oversee the entire birth process. **Not aborted!**

*'Do I bring to the moment of birth and not give delivery?' says the Lord. (v.9)*

- **Nourished Lovingly (v.10-13):** The mom breast feeds the children, carried them on her hip, bounces them on her knee, and comforts them as they grow.

*"You will nurse and be satisfied...As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you." (v.11)*

- **Celebrated Globally (v.14):** Somehow as a result of this birth, the nations would rejoice.

*"When you see this, your heart shall rejoice and you will flourish..." (v.14)*

\*OK. Cool. The question is: **What in the world is God talking about? Who is breast feeding?**

**\*Let me simplify it & save time:**

\*God is likely promising the **sudden birth of His Church** which would flourish around the world and bring blessing to all nations, giving nourishment and comfort to all peoples.

- **Birthered Quickly** - It would be birthed suddenly, through **the power of the Holy Spirit** (Acts 2).
- **Delivered Faithfully** – It would be supervised, start to finish, by the One who **promised to do it**.
- **Nourished Lovingly** – It would **nourish people**, giving comfort and growth to all attached to her.
- **Celebrated Globally** – It would cause **global joy and celebration** to all corners of the globe.

*v.12: "I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the nations like an overflowing stream..."*

**\*Let me illustrate:** One of our mission partners, **Mission India**, exists to transform India with the love of Christ through church planting, literacy, and Bible clubs...and in 2020: **Relief Kits**.

**\*2 years ago, a Mission India staff member from G.R. (Josh) travelled to India where a local man named Sharav handled all his travel needs. Sharav is a practicing Hindu.**

\*After the trip, Josh assumed he'd never hear from Sharav again...and then 2020 hit.

\*The global pandemic caused great distress in India especially in the travel industry, bringing **Sharav and his family of 8** to a point of desperation.

\*With nowhere else to turn, Sharav found the old contact of the "white American" Josh he had worked with 2 years earlier from Mission India. He texted:

*"I am sorry to ask you but hope you will understand my situation. Since March till now I don't have any work...no sources of income...I am requesting you to please help me in such a bad time...To be honest with you, we really need help to feed us cause I don't have food to eat."*

\*What does "the church" do when they see a need? They **breast feed the nations**. **(Pictures)**

**\*Josh (in GR) contacted** their Field Coordinator **Mahindra (in Mumbai)** who found out Sharav had moved from **Jaipur to a remote village 4 hours into the desert** ...and as it turns out, M.I. has a nearby ministry partner who was able to visit Sharav's family, minister to them in Jesus' name, and deliver food supplies to sustain them for months.

\*Marvel at how God uses **the Church like a mother, to bring comfort to people in the world**.

\*Sharav is **1 of 75,000 relief kits given out**; New Hope partnered with **750 kits**.

\*This is what Is. 66 promised: **"explosive expansion of the church"** that brings **relief to the Nations**

\*What a privilege to join God's work and be part of the most amazing organization in the world.

**3. ...and He will accomplish His unfolding plan. (v.15-24)**

- **Judgment executed.** (v.15-17)
- **Believers gathered.** (v.18-21)
- **Victory celebrated.** (v.22-24)

\*Where are we headed? Where are all nations and people going? Is there a Master Plan?

\*Isaiah ends his book by **turning the page to the final chapter of human history**: Eternal life/death.

\*Martin Luther: ***“There are two days on my calendar: This day and that day.”***

- **Judgment executed. (v.15-17)**

*15 “For behold, the Lord will come **in fire**, and his chariots like the whirlwind, to render his anger in fury, and his rebuke with **flames of fire**. 16 For **by fire** will the Lord **enter into judgment**, and by **his sword**, with all flesh; and those slain by the Lord shall be many.*

\*Note: Until the end of time, the gospel of Jesus will be opposed by people and governments who oppose the King and the church...but they will not succeed!

\*Our Lord promises a day of judgment, when He will come with “Fire & sword.”

\*It is descriptive of His judgment upon the world. *God considers it just to repay...*

- **Believers gathered. (v.18-21)**

*18 “...the time is coming to **gather all nations** and tongues. And they shall come and shall see my glory...19 And from them I will **send survivors to the nations**...that have not heard my fame or seen my glory. And they shall declare **my glory among the nations**...20 And they shall bring all your **brothers from all the nations**...to my holy mountain Jerusalem, says the Lord...”*

\*It’s a gorgeous picture of **God’s work in the nations**.

\*His sending and declaring (**Missionary work**); His gathering & bringing (**Homecoming**)

\*Our Lord gave a **Great Commission to “Go”** into all the world...to people who have never heard...and make disciples.

\*And the great promise is that God will one day gather **“brothers from all the nations”**

\*Listen BROTHERS/SISTERS: **The Church is the most Racially Diverse, Cross-cultural organization** in the world, which unites people of all nations, and we all have One Father.

- **Victory celebrated. (v.22-24)**

*22 “For as the **new heavens and the new earth** that I make shall remain before me, says the Lord, so shall your offspring and your name **remain**. 23 From new moon to new moon, and from Sabbath to Sabbath, all flesh shall come to worship before me, declares the Lord.*

\*This is the **Master Plan**. The final destination of earths train: New heavens/new earth.

\*All of creation will be **renewed & reborn** to its glorious perfection of Gen. 1.

\*The New Earth will never die off but will exist from “*new moon to new moon.*”

IOW: “*From **Sunday to Sunday; Easter to Easter; and everywhere in between.***”

\*And with that we come to the **final verse of Isaiah**; a picture of **saints gathered in glory: (v.24)**

*“they shall go out and look on the dead bodies of the men who have rebelled against me. For their worm shall not die, their fire shall not be quenched...”*

\*Wow! **So much for “And they all lived happily ever after.”**

**\*At first glance**, it seems a terrible way to end the book. But **on further review, it is a powerful picture of God’s grace to believers!**

*“They shall go out”* = Who? Believers. Go where? They have gathered in God’s presence and walk out of the worship assembly, like leaving the church doors.

*“And look on the dead bodies”* = As if **Heaven itself has a cemetery outside the gates.**

*“...their worm shall not die; fire shall not be quenched.”*

\*Which sounds familiar...because this is the verse Jesus quoted when he warned about the reality of hell (**Mark 9:48**)

**IOW: Isaiah ends with a graphic picture of eternity that shows believers being rescued from eternal torment and we will marvel: “THAT COULD’VE BEEN ME, apart from the grace of God.”**

\*Will we actually see the fires of hell? I don’t know. But I know this: **we will NEVER FORGET the VICTORY that Christ earned for us through the cross and resurrection.**

#### **Action Steps:**

##### **Get right with God.**

\*He has “fixed a day” when He will judge the living and the dead. It is critical that we humble ourselves before Him and get our hearts right with the Lord, looking to Jesus as Lord.

##### **Be a “Doer” of the Word.**

\*We have to go from **“Information – Transformation.”** Let the word transform our lives.

\*We don’t “go to church.” We are “the church” – **people that follow a risen Savior!**

##### **Partner/Serve with local missions.**

\*Groups like **Safe Harbor** who nourish the homeless; **Keys to Freedom** who serve incarcerated

\*Believers are to **“Breast Feed”** those in need. Where could you do bring comfort? Nourish?

Who could you support through time, prayer, or service?

##### **Support Global Efforts that make Jesus know.**

\*I.e. There is a region in India with **8.1 million people and is 1% Christian.** Unreached people.

**\*We are committed to** raising up churches in all **2,153 villages** over the next 3 years.

\*It will **cost \$18k/month.** We are sending **6k/month.** A family at NH is also **giving \$6k/month** as a match...to anyone who wants to chip in for the last \$6k/month.

**\*Why do that?** Because we believe the picture of Is. 66 describes the reality of heaven/hell... and that people who have never heard desperately need the good news of Jesus.