

THE GLORY OF GOD ON EARTH
Isaiah 66:5-24

Intro: These closing verses of Isaiah's prophecy describe a scene which is both hard to express in words and hard to comprehend--so great will be that work of the Lord in the day that He comes to the earth to reign. This would be at the end of the Tribulation period when it seems that Israel will have been utterly destroyed.

The only thing that the people of God have to cling to is the Word of the Lord. The hope is really beyond all possibility from a human perspective, but there will still be those in that day, as well as in Isaiah's day who trembled at the Word of the Lord. It is no wonder that the Apostles had such difficulty in accepting what the Lord had to say about the Cross when such glowing pictures of world-wide triumph must have been in their hearts.

And yet we all know that without the Cross there could be no Crown. And here we are talking about the Crown--when the glory of God will be seen in the earth as never before.

Verse 5 really sounds the keynote for this concluding part of the prophecy. Note three things in this verse:

- 1) This is "the word of the Lord."
- 2) It is for the comfort of those "that tremble at his word."
- 3) Those who mock the promise of the glory of the Lord will be put to shame.

The message declares five aspects relative to the coming of the Lord and the manifestation of His glory. Note what they are.

I. THE LORD WILL APPEAR WITH JOY (Isa. 66:5-11).

Joy will be unknown during the time of Jacob's trouble. You can see this in the Book of the Revelation.

But how different it will be when the Lord comes. Cf. Isa. 35:10; 51:11.

The suddenness of the change for Zion is what will bring the joy, not only for the people of Zion, but for all who love Jerusalem. See v. 10. World-wise blessing will result.

II. THE LORD WILL COME WITH PEACE (Isa. 65:12, 13).

As the joy will be universal, so will the peace

III. THE LORD WILL APPEAR WITH FIRE (Isa. 66:14-17).

The first two would be impossible if it were not for this third declaration. God will have long been silent, but here His silence will be broken, and the devastation and death will be unbelievable.

IV. THE LORD WILL APPEAR WITH GLORY (Isa. 66:18-21).

There are two great truths here:

- A. The completion of the salvation of the Gentiles (vv. 18, 19).
- B. The regathering of scattered Israel (vv. 20, 21).

We have five places mentioned in v. 19. Not all can be identified exactly, but the point seems to be that the Gospel will be taken to places where it had not gone. Places in the vicinity of Israel are mentioned to indicate all of the earth:

- 1) Tarshish -- Spain.
- 2) Pul, or Pud -- Egypt.
- 3) Lud -- Africa.
- 4) Tubal -- the southeast coast of the Black Sea which is north of Israel, above Turkey.
- 5) Javan -- Greece.

And so it is like saying to Europe, Asia, and Africa, or, as we would say, to the four corners of the earth.

Remember what the Lord said in Matt. 24:14,
And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached
in all the world for a witness unto all nations;
and then shall the end come.

Finally,

V. THE LORD SHALL APPEAR TO BE WORSHIPPED (Isa. 66:22-24).

Verse 22 indicates that this will be like "the new heavens and the new earth"--another indication that the millennial reign will be similar to the eternal state.

The three verses indicate that the glory of the Lord will be seen:

- 1) In v. 22, permanently.
- 2) In v. 23, universally.
- 3) In v. 24, with power--God's judgment against sin.

Concl: What lessons are we to learn from this closing part of Isaiah's prophecy?

Let me mention just a few:

- 1) The way the Lord points to the authority, the dependability, the sufficiency of His Word.
- 2) The ministry of the Lord to those who tremble at His Word.

Even though there might be many circumstances which seem to contradict the Word of God, we never go wrong by putting our faith in what the Lord has said.

- 3) The warning that this is to the wicked--both among those who claim to be the people of God as well as to those who scorn anything that has to do with God and His Word.
- 4) The most obvious point of all has to do with the glory of the Lord.

Cf. vv. 5, 18, 19.

Remember that the glory of God is the sum-total of all of His attributes. We see them now in the Word. We see them now in Christ. But the day will come when we will see them manifested as never before through our Lord when He comes in power and great glory.

There is nothing that will transform our lives more than a knowledge of God in connection with His glorious attributes. There is no greater objective for any of than knowing God. If people knew more about God, they would have no trouble with the doctrines of God's sovereign grace. But it is because they do not look at Scripture from the standpoint of the glory of God that they humanize the Word of God, and miss the blessings that come through knowing the Lord in a greater and greater degree of His fulness.

Cf. 2 Cor. 3:18.