



Sermon Discussion Questions
November 26, 2023,
The Gospel According to Isaiah
THE NATIONS SHALL GATHER TO WORSHIP
Isaiah 66:18-24

1. Opening Discussion Questions

- a. This past week we celebrated the Thanksgiving Holiday – a day when many gather with family and/or friends. What was the most memorable or exciting family gathering in which you have participated? What made it so special?
- b. We are fascinated by survivors – whether it is from a natural disaster, a manmade atrocity or just a TV show – accounts of surviving seems to capture our imagination. What is the most challenging situation you have “survived” (don’t worry if it is not something dramatic – thankfully, most of us have not had really dramatic survival experiences – but we can learn and grow from those God has allowed us to experience)? How, if at all, did the experience change your life, relationships, or outlook?

2. Sermon Outline/Key Points

- a. God is Gathering the Nations to Worship
 - i. God's desire and will is to bring together people from every nation and language to worship Him.
 - ii. His will will be done.
- b. God Is Sending the Church on Mission
 - i. God accomplishes His will by sending His people out on mission.
 - ii. The current status of God's mission
- c. Are You on God's Mission?

3. Study/Discussion Points:

- a. *Sunday Afternoon* – As soon as possible after listening to the sermon set aside some time to prayerfully ponder these questions:
 - i. What one thing most stood out to you in this sermon?
 - ii. What new truth did you learn or of what truth were you reminded?
 - iii. After listening to the sermon, is there a Scripture passage you feel led to meditate on or commit to memory this week?
 - iv. What is one specific thing you feel God is leading you to do after hearing this message?
 - v. Did God convict you of a need to make any changes in your life and walk with Him?

b. **Monday** – *God is Gathering the Nations to Worship*

Isaiah ends his book by again presenting the alternatives he has expressed throughout: trust the Lord and you will live; rebel against Him and you will certainly die. There will be glory for those who believe and judgement for those who scoff and trust in man's wisdom.

i. Read Isaiah 66:1-2 as an introduction to this week's study.

1. Compare these two verses to Solomon's prayer of dedication for the Temple in 1 Kings 8:12-53 (especially verses 27-30). How are they similar?
2. Do you think that God was rebuking efforts that would be made to rebuild the temple when the Jews returned to Jerusalem from Babylonian captivity (see Isaiah 44:28)?
3. Based on these verses what do you think God would say about the huge amounts of money that have been spent (and are still being spent) building places of worship?
4. What message do you get about how we should worship?
5. How did Jesus capture this point in His teaching (see Matthew 5:3-4, 23:12 and Luke 18:13-14)?
6. Finally, read and meditate on 1 Peter 2:5-7.

ii. Verse 2 not only tells us to be humble but that we should tremble "at my word".

1. What does the thought of "trembling at God's Word" mean to you?
2. How would you relate Isaiah 55:10-11 to the idea of "trembling at God's Word"? Why?
3. What do you think someone's "trembling at God's Word", or lack thereof, says about their view of God?

c. **Tuesday** – *God is Gathering the Nations to Worship (Isaiah 66:18-23)*

i. Read Isaiah 66:18-23.

1. This is a difficult passage and there are several different interpretations about what is being said and what timeframe is envisioned. Part of the difficulty arises from trying to understand who the pronouns "their", "they" and "them" refer to. A common view among evangelicals is that Isaiah is covering a period that encompasses both Jesus' first and His second coming. With that idea in mind:
 - a. What would verse 18 be saying about God's purpose in history?
 - b. How does He intend to carry it out according to verses 19-21 and what is the "sign"?

- c. Who would the “survivors” (or remnant) be (consider Romans 11:1-5)?
 - d. What would be meant by “Jerusalem” (see Galatians 4:25-26, Hebrews 12:22, and Revelation 21)?
 - 2. If you have a good Bible atlas locate the places named in verse 19. What part of the known world do they seem to encompass?
 - ii. While we know from the Scriptures that our salvation is a gift from God obtained by our faith and not by any work we do, the Bible does emphasize the importance of works. Verse 18 tells us that God knew their “works”. A similar phrase is found repeatedly in the letters to the seven churches in Revelation. See Revelation 2:2, 2:19, 3:1, 3:8, and 3:15. What does this suggest to you about the need to share the Gospel?
- d. **Wednesday** – *God is Gathering the Nations to Worship (Isaiah 66:18-23)*
 - i. Who do you think “your brothers” (“people” in the NIV) are (see Romans 15:15-16)?
 - ii. What is the significance of the use of the word “all” twice in verse 20? How do you think it relates to Revelation 7:9?
 - iii. What does it mean to you that some Gentiles will be chosen to be “priests and Levites”?
 - iv. Isaiah 66:18-23 are positive verses emphasizing God’s glory and our worship of Him. Verse 24 is markedly different.
 - 1. What does verse 24 emphasize?
 - 2. Verses 15 and 16 also emphasize judgement. How do you think placing verses 18-23 between these passages on judgment reinforces the overall message Isaiah is communicating?
 - 3. Why should verses 15-16 and 24 cause us to “tremble at God’s Word”? Why should they be a serious motivation to share the Gospel?
- e. **Thursday** – *God Is Sending the Church on Mission*
 - i. Read the Great Commission passages:
 - 1. Matthew 28:18-20
 - 2. Mark 16:15-18
 - 3. Luke 24:44-48
 - 4. John 20:21-23
 - 5. Acts 1:8
 - 6. Romans 10:9-15
 - ii. Prayerfully consider what your role should be in God’s mission for the church.
 - 1. Going?

2. Teaching?
3. Praying?
4. Giving?

f. Friday – Current Status of God’s mission

- i. There are many web sites dedicated to providing information about the status of the church’s mission. Spend time pursuing some of these sites:
 1. <https://www.imb.org/>
 2. <https://www.imb.org/people-and-places/>
 3. <https://operationworld.org/>
 4. <https://joshuaproject.net/>
 5. There are many more organizational sites. See <https://ministrywatch.com/50-largest-missions-and-bible-translation-organizations/> for a partial list.
- ii. Select an unreached people group or a particular country and commit to pray for them daily for the rest of 2023.

g. Saturday –Are You on God’s Mission?

- i. Read 2 Corinthians 5:20a.
- ii. Are you being a faithful ambassador?

4. Application:

- a. The importance of sharing the gospel with the lost cannot be over emphasized. Those who do not hear and accept, by faith, God’s offer will experience the fate described in Isaiah 66:24. As we enter the Christmas holiday season make it your goal to share the gift of God’s Gospel with someone daily.
- b. Missionaries need our prayer and financial support to continue the sacrificial service they provide the lost. Give generously to the Lottie Moon offering and to missions throughout the year.

5. Prayer Points:

- a. **A**doration – 1 Peter 4:16
- b. **C**onfession – James 5:16
- c. **T**hanksgiving – 1 Thessalonians 5:18
- d. **S**upplications – James 4:2-3
 - i. Pray that God will open the door for you to share with at least one person during this week.
 - ii. Pray for Paula Lowery as she starts chemo this week.