

Time and time again the Bible predicts that there will come a day when God will be honored and worshipped by the entire universe. For example, when Paul wrote his letter to the Philippians, he said, “that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth” (Phil. 2:10).

Have you ever stopped to ask yourself just exactly how is that going to happen? How is God going to cause everyone in the entire world to bow before Him? We live in a world that is filled with false religions that actually blaspheme Him and His Son. We live in a world that mocks God and hates God. So how is it that God will bring every person in the world to a point when they are bowing before Him? We get the answer to that in part from Psalm 66.

We don't exactly know who wrote this Psalm because the superscription does not tell us. It is possible it was written by David because it does sit in a context that features many Davidic Psalms.

We do learn from the superscription that it was a Psalm written for the choir director, which means it was to be communicated publicly and we also learn it was a song, which means it was to be sung. It is also stated that it is a Psalm, which means it is a carefully constructed poem that obviously is to be sung. Furthermore, there are three “selahs” in the Psalm (66:4, 7, 15) which means we are to stop and carefully think about what this is teaching. Even though we don't know who wrote the Psalm, we do see the theme of the Psalm:

GOD IS TO BE AND WILL BE WORSHIPPED AND PRAISED BY EVERY ONE IN THE WORLD AND THE WHOLE WORLD WILL ULTIMATELY STAND IN AWE OF WHAT GOD HAS DONE.

Now the essence of this Psalm is that one may stand in awe of God now or one day God will ultimately force one to stand in awe of Him. That day will be during the Millennium. In fact, one commentator gave a title to this Psalm “More About The Millennium” (John Phillips, *Psalm*, p. 526). There are four main admonitions that comprise this Psalm:

ADMONITION #1 – The admonition to verbally praise God. **66:1-4**

Notice the emphasis on verbally exalting God in this text. People are to shout (**66:1a**); people are to sing (**66:2a**) and people are to say (**66:3a**). In other words, there will come a day when the one thing that people will be talking and singing about will be the greatness and the majesty of God. People should be and will be talking about God's awesome power.

There will come a day when all people in the earth will shout joyfully to God. There will come a day when all people will sing to the glory of God and will praise His glorious name. There will come a day when people will say how awesome God is.

According to **verse 3**, even the enemies of God and Israel will attempt to obey because they will recognize His sovereign power.

One commentator said there will not be much fight left in any Gentile nation after Armageddon. Of course “feigning obedience” will not fool God. The nations will all be judged and just because one pretended to obey does not mean he is right with God.

As **verse 4** says, all the earth will one day worship God and sing praises to God and His name. This is not an option to respond to the Gospel, this is a statement of fact. There will come a day when everyone in the world will worship God. Selah—stop and think about that for a moment.

Now the specific time when this will happen worldwide will be in the Millennium after the Great Tribulation. The entire world will be brought to its knees. This will be the prelude to worldwide worship.

One thing we do see from these verses is that our job right now is to talk about God. It is our responsibility to exalt God. We should be using our speech in a God-honoring way.

ADMONITION #2 – The admonition to consider the awesome work of God. **66:5-7**

Now the Psalm lists some things that God has done for His people, specifically Israel. He has done some awesome things. One of the first things that will be observed after the Tribulation is the judgment of the nations (Matthew 25). He will pronounce a judgment on the “sons of men.” All will stand in awe of this. One of the things that we need to be talking about is the great sovereign power of the great glorious God:

Awesome work #1 - God parted the Red Sea. **66:6a**

Israel left Egypt and God parted the sea for Israel to escape. The purpose of this act was to display the awesome power of God. Now think for a moment about what happened at that sea episode. Israel was saved and the Egyptians were destroyed and God is to be praised because of this awesome work.

Awesome work #2 - God parted the Jordan River. **66:6b**

Joshua led Israel into the Promised Land by God drying up the Jordan, and by drying up the Jordan, Israel crossed into the Promised Land and slaughtered the Amorites and the Canaanites.

Awesome work #3 - God rules everything by His might forever. **66:7a**

This is a statement of fact. God is always ruling at all times and in all things. He always has the final say in everything.

Awesome work #4 - God watches the nations at all times. **66:7b**

Here is a key verse that does teach us God watches all governments in the world. God monitors all governments of the world and observes what they are doing. He specifically watches their actions and attitudes in regard to Israel.

Awesome work #5 - God does not let the rebellious exalt themselves. **66:7c**

The goal of many nations is to exalt themselves above Israel. This is the goal of Iran, Iraq, and Egypt, just to name a few. God will not ever let that happen. God will always end up destroying those nations who try to exalt themselves above Him and above His Word and people.

ADMONITION #3 – The admonition for all people to praise God. **66:8-15**

Not only should Israel praise God, but all people should also sound forth His praises. Why? Because God is sovereignly at work, even in the worst times of our lives, He is sovereignly at work developing us for His glory.

Reason #1 - Because God keeps us in life. **66:9a**

God had protected Israel and kept Israel throughout her entire existence. He has done the same with us.

Just think about this fact—your life, your existence is totally and sovereignly controlled by God. Paul said in Colossians 1:16-17 that Jesus Christ was involved in creating all things and He is the one who holds all things together, including our very life.

Reason #2 - Because God does not allow us to slip away. **66:9b**

We have all stood on some slippery slopes that could have caused us to slip right away into eternity, but God has not allowed us to slip away. The real security we have for everything is not a doctor or medicine; it is our God.

Reason #3 - Because God does refine us to make us pure. **66:10**

The Great Tribulation will be the ultimate refining furnace for Israel. But God will put her in that furnace and she will come out pure. One reason why God permits us to go through difficulties is to refine us.

Reason #4 - Because God leads us from desolation to abundance. **66:11-12**

The word “abundance” in **verse 12** is a rare word. It only occurs here and in Psalm 23:5 where David says, “my cup runneth over.” The point of this is that God takes His people through low times and brings them to an abundant level of blessing in which their cup runs over. For the people of God, there is always purpose for hardship—God is preparing us for blessing.

Reason #5 - Because God leads to His place of worship. **66:13-15**

It is impossible to praise God and worship God unless we are willing to go to His place of worship.

A. Real worship requires a proper place. **66:13a**

B. Real worship requires proper offerings. **66:13b, 15**

C. Real worship requires we are faithful to our word. **66:13c-14**

God does not demand promises or vows, but if we make them we had better keep them. Those who follow through and do what they promised are destined for great blessings.

ADMONITION #4 – The admonition for all who fear God to gather to listen. **66:16-20**

Any person who fears God needs to hear the personal testimony of what God has done for one right with Him, namely, He has listened to the prayer of His faithful people.

Look carefully at **verse 18—God will not answer the prayers of one who has wickedness in his heart**. If you know there is something about yourself that makes you guilty before God when you pray, He will not hear you until you get it resolved. If God has convicted us of some sin and we continue to cherish the sin, indulge in the sin and not confess the sin, God will not hear our prayer.

Now verses 19-20 makes it clear that God will answer the one who does not have wickedness in his heart. Notice at the end of verse 20, God is a merciful God.

One of the great evidences that we are right with God is that God answers our prayers.

PARTING THOUGHTS

1. God's people should verbally testify of God's greatness.
2. What God has done for Israel in the past is cause to praise God in the present.
3. God is sovereignly watching and monitoring the proud and rebellious.
4. Everything God permits in our lives is designed to refine us and lead us to blessing.
5. True worship that pleases God stems from lives that please God.