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Psalm 66

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



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Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Psalm 66.

Topics.

- God's awesome d power are so great all the earth worships him.
- God turned the sea into dry land; they passed through on foot.
- You, O God, have tested us; you have tried us as silver is tried.
- I will perform my vows to you, which I promised when I was in trouble.
- If I had cherished iniquity in my heart, God would not have listened.
- The Commonwealth of Israel.
- The glory of the spiritual temple God is building in Christ.

FOR INFORMATION: concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: "Map Locations and People of the Bible," and the title: "Bible Dictionary" on Website Menu.

INTRODUCTION

Psalms are songs and prayers offered to God by the nation Israel, they cover the range of human emotion, expressing praise, faith, victory, sorrow, despair, depression, frustration and the troubled heart of a mourner. They contrast the righteous with the wicked, and include the wisdom and the treasure of God's word. Psalms were written at the beginning of the 15th century BC and probably collected in their final form in the 3rd century.

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BOOK TWO (PSALM 42-72)

PSALM 66:1-4

To the Choirmaster. A Song. A Psalm.

God's Awesome Power are so Great all the Earth Worships Him.

- **Psalm 66:1-4:** Shout for joy to God, all the earth; ²sing the glory of his name; give to him glorious praise! ³Say to God, "How awesome are your deeds! So great is your power that your enemies come cringing to you. ⁴All the earth worships you and sings praises to you; they sing praises to your name." *Selah*

David in this Psalm is celebrating God's awesome power and the great victories and triumphs of Israel and calls all the earth worships and acknowledge how awesome God's power is over his enemies. The ultimate fulfilment of these verses we be when the Lord returns in glory as, King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:11-16) to rule and reign from God's Holy City Jerusalem (on Mount Zion God's Holy Mountain) to establish God's Kingdom on earth during his glorious millennial reign. The dead in Christ (Old and New Testament) and the faithful, who are alive, will be gathered together in the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4-6) to rule and reign as kings and priests with the Lord over those nations who are left outside the Holy City of God. Christ the King united with his people will not only bring peace to the Middle East, but establish God's Kingdom of steadfast love, faithfulness, righteousness, joy and peace throughout the world and the glory of God will cover the earth. Jesus will do justice to the poor and

oppressed, he will be a faithful and compassionate King forever. He will not allow anyone to strike terror in the earth or use lies and deception to enlarge their own wealth and power. The land will abundantly produce and even the deserts will flourish. The animals will not feed on each other and even the lamb will be able to lie down with the wolf and everyone will eat of their own hands because all that they plant will produce. All nations the LORD has made will come and worship before the Lord Jesus Christ. They will glorify God's Name, proclaiming the LORD is great and does wondrous things and that He alone is God.

The book of Revelation states:

- Jesus Christ, the faithful witness who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood has made us kings and priests unto God and his Father is coming in glory and every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him and all kindreds of the earth (Revelation 1:5-7).

In Revelation chapter five we are told that:

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he redeemed a people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation and made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Revelation 5:9-10).

The great prophet Isaiah wrote:

- They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. (Isaiah 11:9).

At the end of this glorious Kingdom age God descends to earth on a Great White Throne the sea, death and hades (the grave) give up the dead. They stand before God and are judged according to what is written in certain heavenly books according to what they have done. Death and those counted unworthy are cast into the Lake of Fire a symbol of eternal destruction (i.e., total extinction) (also called the, Second Death) (Rev. 20:11-15). Christ hands the Kingdom over to his heavenly Father and God is ALL in ALL and ETERNITY begins in all its fullness and majestic royal glory. For further information see titles:

- Kingdom of God (ON WEBSITE MENU).
- The Second Resurrection or Great White Throne Judgment.

In, Resurrection (ON WEBSITE MENU).

PSALM 66:5-7

God turned the Sea into Dry Land; they passed through on Foot.

- **Psalm 66:5-7:** Come and see what God has done: he is awesome (terrible in KJV) in his deeds toward the children of man. ⁶He turned the sea into dry land; they passed through the river on foot. There did we rejoice in him, ⁷who rules by his might forever, whose eyes keep watch on the nations—let not the rebellious exalt themselves. *Selah*

God is awesome and terrible in in his deeds: (v5) refers to the overthrow of Israel's enemies and the destruction of the Egyptians in the Red Sea showing that God has power to destroy all the enemies of his people. This is the reason the Psalmist warns the rebellious not to exalt themselves (v7)

He turned the sea into dry land: (v6) refers to the following awesome event:

- Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the LORD drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. ²²And the people of Israel went into the midst of the sea on dry ground, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. (Exodus 14:21-22).

They passed through the river on foot: (v6) refers to the following miraculous event:

- The priests bearing the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firmly on dry ground in the midst of the Jordan, and all Israel was passing over on dry ground until all the nation finished passing over the Jordan. (Joshua 3:17).
- The LORD your God dried up the waters of the Jordan for you until you passed over, as the LORD your God did to the Red Sea, which he dried up for us until we passed over, ²⁴so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the hand of the LORD is mighty, that you may fear the LORD your God forever. (Joshua 4:1-24).

On foot the Israelites passed through the Red Sea and the River Jordan on dry ground. Passing through the Red Sea delivered and protected God's people from their enemies and passing through the River Jordan gave them entry into the Promised Land. Both of these breathtaking and awesome events were an illustration of God's power, and of His ability to defend and deliver his people and combine to show the power He has over the oceans and the rivers. It is interesting to notice that crossing through the Red Sea and the River Jordan delivered Israel from their enemies and gave them entry into the Promised Land, figuratively both these events can be view in the following two ways:

1. The entire nation of Israel being baptised in water.
2. God holding up His people as they walk through the sea of this world (the populations of the earth) without the waters of afflictions (troubles and hardships and grief and sorrow) overflowing them and carrying them as it were on dry land, till they come safely through the turbulence of the sea to the sandy shores of eternal bliss and happiness.

There did we rejoice in him (v6) refers to the following two events:

1. After Israel passed through the Red sea, Moses and the people of Israel and Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women went out after her with tambourines and dancing and Miriam sang to them: "Sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea." (See Exodus 15:1-20 for the full song)
2. After Israel passed through the River Jordan and entered the Promised Land Israel took twelve stones out of the Jordan River and set up a memorial according to the word of the LORD so that all the peoples of the earth would know that the hand of the LORD dried up the waters of the Jordan until Israel passed over, as He did to the Red Sea so that the populations of the world would know God's power is mighty and that Israel would fear the LORD their God forever. Clearly there would have been great rejoicing when the people of Israel set foot in the Promised Land. (See Joshua chapter four for the full story).

PSALM 66:8-12

You, O God, have Tested us; You have Tried us as Silver is Tried.

- **Psalm 66:8-12:** Bless our God, O peoples; let the sound of his praise be heard, ⁹who has kept our soul among the living and has not let our feet slip. ¹⁰For you, O God, have tested us; you have tried us as silver is tried. ¹¹You brought us into the net; you laid a crushing burden on our backs; ¹²you let men ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water; yet you have brought us out to a place of abundance.

Being tried and tested is a principle that applies to God's people throughout the Old and New Testament. Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, said that those who have been born again to a living hope through the

resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for them are by God's power being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time and for this they are to rejoice and then he wrote:

- In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, ⁷so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honour at the revelation of Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 1:3-7).

Peter goes on to say that believers were not ransomed with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish who was foreknown before the foundation of the world and was made manifest in the last times for our sake. (1 Peter 1:18-20). The following verses show that the United Kingdom of Israel has always been God's special and unique nation unlike any other nation. God said:

- Israel was his son who he called out of Egypt and he loved them when they were a child (Hosea 11:1).
- He gave birth to Israel and carried them from the womb even to their old age. (Isaiah 46:3-4).
- Israel is his allotted heritage (Deut. 32:9) and the apple of his eye (Deut. 32:10).
- Israel is a people holy to him (Deut. 7:6) and his treasured possession (Deut. 14:2).

The LORD has not spoken this way with any other nation, but God has not only spoken of Israel differently, but always dealt with them differently to any other nation:

- To Israel God gave the Ten Commandments and showed his great power. (Exodus 20:1-17).
- To Israel God declared his word, statutes and his rules. (Rom. 9:4)
- To Israel God gave the prophets, the worship and the promises. (Rom. 3:4)
- To Israel belonged the covenant, the adoption, the patriarchs and the glory. (Rom. 3:5)
- To Israel the oracles of God were entrusted. (Rom. 3:2)
- The people of Israel are the offspring of Abraham the father of faith. (Rom. 9:7)
- From Israel's race came the Christ the Saviour of the world. (Rom. 9:5)

Added to these God said:

- Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine (Exod. 19:5).
- The LORD has declared today that you are a people for his treasured possession, as he has promised you, and that you are to keep all his commandments (Deut. 26:18).

The Psalmist wrote:

- God declared his word to Jacob, his statutes and rules to Israel. He has not dealt thus with any other nation; they do not know his rules. Praise the LORD! (Psalm 147:19-20).

The LORD has not given any other nations such great privileges. These are the many reasons the Jews (especially the religious leaders of Jesus generation) considered themselves to be the holy race with God and the Gentile nations to be the unclean race without God. Yet despite all this, God, tested them and tried them as silver is tried in a fire. Sometimes trials and testings come upon us because we are living in a manner that brings dishonour to God and a bad testimony to the name of the Lord

Jesus Christ. Other times trials and testings will come upon us through the struggles and hardships and sorrows and grief that living in our corrupted fallen body and in this sinful fallen world brings upon us. God will use these moments as a test of the genuineness of our faith since they have the potential to turn us bitter and resentful against him or cause us to hold fast to our faith as Job and Habakkuk expressed in the following verses.

Job, suffered great affliction, but during it all his attitude was:

- Though he slays me, yet will I trust in him (Job 13:15).

Habakkuk, felt weak and feeble because of the enemies who were coming to invade his land, but though he trembled at the thought of this his attitude was:

- Though the fig tree should not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls, ¹⁸yet I will rejoice in the LORD; I will take joy in the God of my salvation. ¹⁹GOD, the Lord, is my strength; he makes my feet like the deer's; he makes me tread on my high places. (Hab. 3:17-19).

Job and Habakkuk overcame their trials by making God their greatest love and their best thought and the passion of their heart and mind and rested in the knowledge that if everything failed in this life they would be raised to be with the Lord in eternal glory where everlasting happiness dwells and in this life rest in the confidence and faith that God was with them by his Spirit, His love and His grace.

NOTE: it is true that Israel has been and still is a special nation to God, but since Christ death and resurrection salvation for both Jews and Gentiles is in the Lord Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, Israel remains a clear sign of where we are in prophecy concerning Christ's return. It could be said that they are the thermometer of God's prophecy much like the mercury on a natural thermometer measures the heat of the day and moves up the vertical red line warning us of impending danger when the heat of the sun is reaching temperatures that are dangerous for the good health of the skin and our well-being.

Likewise Israel can be seen as the mercury of Bible prophecy in the sense that world events that come upon the nation of Israel (especially Jerusalem) are signs that give us some insight as to how close we are to that glorious breathtaking and world changing day when the Lord Jesus Christ returns in glory. But God's focus during our present age for eternal salvation is upon creating a new nation in Christ made up of Jews and Gentiles. This new nation is also called a new creation in Christ, the body of Christ, the Bride of Christ, the church and the Kingdom of God. For further information concerning this new nation God is building in Christ see the title: "The Commonwealth of Israel," at the end of this chapter.

PSALM 66:13-15

I will Perform My Vows to You, which I Promised when in Trouble.

- **Psalm 66:13-15:** I will come into your house with burnt offerings; I will perform my vows to you, ¹⁴that which my lips uttered and my mouth promised when I was in trouble. ¹⁵I will offer to you burnt offerings of fattened animals, with the smoke of the sacrifice of rams; I will make an offering of bulls and goats. *Selah*

David's words, "Which I promised when I was in trouble," (v14) no doubt ring a bell in the mind of many since it is common for human nature to promise something to escape trouble and hardship, but in many cases those who have made such a promise tend to forget them once the crisis has passed. David's crisis is over and now he tells the LORD he will keep

the promise he made. The promise was to offer a great sacrifice to the LORD which would also carry the idea of faithfully following the LORD and keeping His statutes and laws and testifying of all the goodness God has done for him that he calls all who fear the LORD to hear in the following verse.

PSALM 66:17

Hear, all who Fear God, I will Tell what He has Done for My Soul.

- **Psalm 66:16-17:** Come and hear, all you who fear God, and I will tell what he has done for my soul. ¹⁷I cried to him with my mouth, and high praise was on my tongue.

The fear of the LORD has the following two aspects:

- 1 An eternal aspect: wisdom teaches that mankind is separated from God because of sin and without God a person has no hope of eternal life and will be judged accordingly. The fear of the LORD in this context is wisdom because it motivates a person to seek God and eternal life.
- 2 An aspect for the present moment: the fear of the LORD in the present moment motivates mankind to obey God's Ten Commandments which are all designed to protect the innocent from harm, physically, financially, sexually, verbally, emotionally and spiritually. The fear of the LORD in this context is also wisdom because if everyone feared the LORD humanity would live in harmony with each other. Sadly, there is very little fear of the LORD in the world today and so we see rampant rebellion, violence, crime and wars in most countries.

The fear of God and Christians: those in Christ look to the bloodstained cross of Calvary and understand and experience Christ's great love and God's grace in their hearts and minds and no longer act from fear, but from love in the same way that a man in love with a woman does not do things to please her from fear, but from the love dwelling in his heart. Likewise, it is with the faithful who belong to the Lord's global family.

PSALM 66:18-20

If I Cherished Iniquity in My Heart, God would Not Listen.

- **Psalm 66:18-20:** If I had cherished iniquity in my heart, the Lord would not have listened. ¹⁹But truly God has listened; he has attended to the voice of my prayer. ²⁰Blessed be God, because he has not rejected my prayer or removed his steadfast love from me!

The words, "If I had cherished iniquity in my heart," carry the idea of being indifferent to how our inward attitudes affect God. If we are content to harbour such things as malice, adulterous thoughts, hatred, lust for revenge, bitterness and resentment etc., in our heart and mind God will not listen to our prayer. Perhaps there may be certain circumstances that would justify such attitudes, but these things are of the flesh and not the Spirit and the Spirit and the Steadfast love of God cannot dwell within such darkness. David clearly understood this principle and it is certain he not only confessed all the sinful attitudes dwelling within, but also hated that they did. The apostle John not only understood the limitations of human nature because of the corrupted fallen body we live in that we inherited from our earthy father Adam, but was also aware of the sinful dysfunctions and aberrations that dwell within the flesh and understanding sin, human nature and the flesh comforts all the faithful in Christ with the following words:

- If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. (1 John 1:8-10)

Acknowledging and confessing sin carries with it the idea of being sorry and burdened before God because of it, as opposed to being indifferent. It is not just the words that are involved, but the repentance and sorrow of the heart before God over the sin.

Using God's grace and the motivation of the heart: some might say, "If we can sin and repent and be forgiven why not do as we please since repentance covers." The answer to this is simple, we may fool man, but we cannot fool God, he perceives the honest motivation of the heart and will judge accordingly. It is almost certain those who deliberately use God's grace as an excuse to sin will find themselves standing in the group Jesus speaks of in the following verses:

- Not everyone who says to me, "Lord, Lord," will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven." (Matt. 7:21).
- Why do you call me "Lord, Lord," and not do what I tell you? (Luke 6:46).

THE COMMONWEALTH OF ISRAEL

It is important to understand that the promised seed of Abraham and David is Christ, all the promises to Israel are now fulfilled in Christ therefore they are not limited to Israel only, but extend and embrace all those who belong to Christ. This is because God is now creating one new nation in Christ made up of both Jew and Gentiles. (Gentiles are everyone who is not a Hebrew or Jew). This means that Jews and Gentiles become one new nation in Christ (also called a new man, a new creation, the church, the body of Christ and the Kingdom of God).

The Apostle Paul said:

- Remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called "the uncircumcision" by what is called the circumcision (Jews), which is made in the flesh by hands—¹²remember that you (Gentiles) were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the *COMMONWEALTH OF ISRAEL* and *STRANGERS* to the *COVENANTS* of *PROMISE*, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³But now in Christ Jesus you (Gentiles) who once were far off (from God) have been brought near by the blood of Christ. ¹⁴For he himself is our (Jews and Gentiles) peace, who has made us both *ONE* and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility ¹⁵by abolishing the law of commandments and ordinances, that he (Jesus) might create in himself *ONE NEW MAN* (or Nation) in place of the two (Jews and Gentiles), so making peace, ¹⁶and might reconcile us (Jews and Gentiles) both to God in *ONE BODY* through the cross, thereby killing the hostility (between the Jews and Gentiles). ¹⁷And he (Jesus) came and preached peace to you (Gentiles) who were far off (from God) and peace to those who were near (Jews). ¹⁸For through him (Jesus) we both (Jews and Gentiles) have access in *ONE SPIRIT* to the Father. ¹⁹So then you (Gentiles) are *NO LONGER* strangers and aliens, but you are *FELLOW CITIZENS* with the *SAINTS* (the Jews) and members of the *HOUSEHOLD* of God, ²⁰built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone ²¹in whom the *WHOLE STRUCTURE* being joined together (Jews and Gentiles) grows into a holy temple in the Lord. ²²In him you (Jews and Gentiles) also are being built together into a *DWELLING PLACE* for *GOD* by the Spirit (Ephes. 2:11-22).

Gentiles were separated from Christ, alienated from the, Commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus they have been brought to God by the blood of Christ. Jesus has made Jews and Gentiles both one by abolishing the law of commandments and ordinances so that Jesus might create in himself one new man (nation) in place of the two (Jews and Gentiles). In Jesus both Jews and Gentiles are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. Christ is the head of this new nation and its Jewish and Gentile citizens are now equal in status before God since in Christ we are all brothers and sisters in the same eternal family that God is now establishing in the Lord Jesus Christ throughout all nations of the world. The practical application of what this means to those

who belong to Christ is that all the future and eternal promises God made to Israel also apply to them. The book of Revelation states:

- When Christ returns in glory every eye will see him, even those who pierced him and all the tribes of the earth (Rev. 1:7).

And in Revelation chapter five we are told that:

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation (i.e., Jews and Gentiles) and he has made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Rev. 5:9-10).

THE GLORY OF THE SPIRITUAL TEMPLE GOD IS BUILDING IN CHRIST

Jews and Gentiles are being united together as one body in Christ to be a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. Believing Jews and Gentiles are being prepared by the prophets and apostle's teachings and by the influence of Christ and the Holy Spirit to become a majestic and glorious sacred temple in which God dwells for all eternity. When this majestic building is completed there will be nothing so worthy of reverence since God dwells in it; so ancient since the patriarchs and prophets laboured in building it; so solid since love cements it together; so closely united and indivisible since Christ is the corner stone; so exalted since it reaches as high as heaven and to God himself; so full of wisdom since its specifications are the word of God; so full of light since the Holy Spirit dispels every dark corner; so spacious since it is spread over the whole earth; so invincible and indestructible since it is being built by God, by Christ, by the Holy Spirit and by the influence of God's eternal word; so divine since it is a living, vibrant, dynamic temple inhabited by the Holy Spirit, and so universal since all its unique stones though spread throughout the world are compacted together in Christ.

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God is the master builder of this majestic and glorious temple; Christ is the corner stone; faithful believers are the proper materials; the prophets and apostles are its foundation and the Gospel and love its pillars. Christ is the door and faith is the entrance into it. It is a spiritual building and through, faith and grace this living building is growing into an eternal house fit for the most Holy God to dwell in. It's beauty and radiance will surpass all temples that have ever gone before it since it will be adorned with a vast variety of rich colour made up of Jews and Gentiles of every age, country, sex, and condition: the mightiest of kings, the most renowned lawgivers, the most profound philosophers, the most eminent scholars and all those of whom the world was not worthy have formed this building (author unknown). Peter wrote:

- Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame (1 Pet. 2:6).

Every faithful brother and sister in Christ are represented as living stones that God is using to build this spiritual, majestic temple of eternal glory which will be manifested in splendour for all to see when:

- The Lord himself descends from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ are raised then we who are alive are caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thess. 4:15-18).

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.
