

Israel's Hymnal  
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### PSALM SIXTY-SIX

[Pss 66:1] Make a joyful noise unto God, all the earth:  
 [Pss 66:2] Sing forth the glory of his name: Make his praise glorious.  
 [Pss 66:3] Say unto God, How terrible are thy works! Through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies submit themselves unto thee.  
 [Pss 66:4] All the earth shall worship thee, And shall sing unto thee; They shall sing to thy name. Selah  
 [Pss 66:5] Come, and see the works of God; [He is] terrible in his doing toward the children of men.  
 [Pss 66:6] He turned the sea into dry land; They went through the river on foot: There did we rejoice in him.  
 [Pss 66:7] He ruleth by his might for ever; His eyes observe the nations: Let not the rebellious exalt themselves. Selah  
 [Pss 66:8] Oh bless our God, ye peoples, And make the voice of his praise to be heard;  
 [Pss 66:9] Who holdeth our soul in life, And suffereth not our feet to be moved.  
 [Pss 66:10] For thou, O God, hast proved us: Thou hast tried us, as silver is tried.  
 [Pss 66:11] Thou broughtest us into the net; Thou layedst a sore burden upon our loins.  
 [Pss 66:12] Thou didst cause men to ride over our heads; We went through fire and through water; But thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place.  
 [Pss 66:13] I will come into thy house with burnt-offerings; I will pay thee my vows,  
 [Pss 66:14] Which my lips uttered, And my mouth spake, when I was in distress.  
 [Pss 66:15] I will offer unto thee burnt-offerings of fatlings, With the incense of rams; I will offer bullocks with goats. Selah  
 [Pss 66:16] Come, and hear, all ye that fear God, And I will declare what he hath done for my soul.  
 [Pss 66:17] I cried unto him with my mouth, And he was extolled with my tongue.  
 [Pss 66:18] If I regard iniquity in my heart, The Lord will not hear:  
 [Pss 66:19] But verily God hath heard; He hath attended to the voice of my prayer.  
 [Pss 66:20] Blessed be God, Who hath not turned away my prayer, Nor his lovingkindness from me.

### ISRAEL IN HER GETHSEMANE

- I. The revival in the Tribulation (vss. 1-4).
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Again let me call attention to the fact that the Psalms are the poetical version of the messages of Moses and the Prophets. In order therefore for one to understand these poems, one must have a fairly thorough and accurate knowledge of the messages that have come to us through Moses and the Prophets. If a poem is written today by anyone--provided it is real poetry--it is only suggestive and can be fully appreciated only when one understands the facts lying back behind the composition of the poem and the things to which reference is made within the composition. The same principle obtains throughout the Scriptures when applied to the Psalms.

#### I. The revival in the tribulation

"Make a joyful noise unto God, all the earth:  
Sing forth the glory of his name:  
Make his praise glorious.  
Say unto God, How terrible are thy works!  
Through the greatness of thy power shall thine  
enemies submit themselves unto thee.  
All the earth shall worship thee,  
And shall sing unto thee;  
They shall sing to thy name." Selah. (vss. 1-4)

From these verses it is clear that someone is calling upon the nations of the world to give glory to God and to sing His praises (vss. 1,2). That the psalmist saw the time of the Tribulation is evident from the fact that He declares, "How terrible are thy works!" The works of God which the writer sees are terrific and are recognized both by the inspired writer and by those for whom he writes. God's terrible work toward the children of men will be manifested only at the time of the great Tribulation. It is true that He wiped out the human family by the Flood in Noah's day, but never since that time has He dealt with mankind on a universal scale as is here set forth. In comparison with the judgments of the Tribulation all other calamities or catastrophes that have overtaken any nation or group of nations pale into insignificance. Since these verses foreshadow universal judgment, we are logical in believing that the psalmist was carried forward and was depicting to us the judgments of the day of Jehovah. Moreover, it is evident that at the end of this period of judgment the people who survive this ordeal will accept God and turn to Him. Many of them will be sincere and earnest, but there will be those who will render feigned obedience to Him, as we see presently. In view of the entire context it is clear that immediately following these judgments we are told by the psalmist the great, glorious era will dawn.

What light have we on this great theme of revival? Some excellent brethren are telling us that we may expect a nationwide or even an international revival at the present time if we will but pray to God for such an awakening. Do we have any promise in the Scriptures to this effect? As I read the Word, I note the fact that this age will end in apostasy, that men will depart from the truth and turn unto fables; that many will have itching ears and will not endure sound doctrine; and that perilous times will come in the closing days of this dispensation. Moreover, our Lord compared the closing days of this age to those immediately preceding the Flood. Humanity sank to the lowest level then. Because of that fact, God sent the universal Flood which blotted out the whole race with the exception of Noah and those who entered into the ark

with him. In view of the clear predictions concerning the condition which will exist at the end of this age, I cannot believe that there can be a revival now, no matter how earnestly we may pray for it. The Lord Jesus Christ and the scriptural writers saw accurately what would be and have told us that these conditions will exist. We therefore have no right to believe that the picture will be changed because we sincerely pray for a different situation.

On the other hand, the Scriptures tell us about a world-wide sweeping revival that will bring multiplied millions of people to a saving knowledge of the truth. When does that occur? If we will study, for instance, Isaiah, chapter 24, carefully, we shall see that the first 20 verses set forth in vivid graphic terms the horrors of the great Tribulation. But in verse 14-16a we see a mighty turning to God in the midst of the horrors of this terrible day of Jehovah: "these shall lift up their voice, they shall shout; for the majesty of Jehovah they cry aloud from the sea. Wherefore glorify ye Jehovah in the east, even the name of Jehovah, the God of Israel, in the isles of the sea. From the uttermost part of the earth have we heard songs: Glory to the righteous" (Isa. 24:14-16a).

This revival breaks out in a country west of Palestine. From there it goes over to the Holy Land, from there as a center it spreads out all over the world. Notwithstanding the distress and sorrow of that time, there will be songs of jubilation and praise the content or gist of which is "Glory to the righteous."

This same thing we see in the seventh chapter of the Book of Revelation. An examination of this chapter shows that there will be 144,000 Jews, 12,000 from each of the twelve tribes of Israel. Immediately after we see this vision of the Jewish servants of God, we see a mighty turning to God on the part of multitudes from every tribe, tongue, and language. These come out of the great Tribulation and wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb. When all of these facts are taken into consideration, one comes to the conclusion that these 144,000 Jewish servants are the evangelists who bring about this mighty revival in the Tribulation Period. There is no escape from this conclusion. The Word of God must be given to these people now. We must sow the seed in all Israel. When this seed is watered by the judgments of the great Tribulation, then will arise these 144,000 Jewish evangelists who will conduct this mighty revival in the beginning of the Tribulation especially, though it does extend all the way through it to the very end.

Having seen what is foretold in the prophetic word we may now turn back to Psalm 66 and view it in the light of these prophetic utterances. The sacred writer calls upon the people of earth to praise God and to render worship to Him. This call to universal worship and praise will be carried out literally by these 144,000 Jewish evangelists of whom we have just gotten a glimpse. These evangelists will likewise call the people's attention to the terrible works of God that will be manifest in all the world. When we study the specific judgments that are to fall during the Tribulation as they are narrated in Revelation, chapters 6, 8, 9, and 16, we can understand what is meant by the exhortation: "Say unto God, How terrible are thy works! Through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies submit themselves unto thee." At the conclusion of the Tribulation all the world will worship God and sing praise unto His name.

## II. Israel at the end of the tribulation

"Come, and see the works of God;  
 He is terrible in his doing toward the children of men.  
 He turned the sea into dry land;  
 They went through the river on foot:  
 There did we rejoice in him.  
 He ruleth by his might for ever;  
 His eyes observe the nations;  
 Let not the rebellious exalt themselves." Selah. (vss. 5-7)

In verse 5 of this quotation we see that the psalmist issues a call to the peoples of the earth again to observe the works of God--to recognize the invisible, mighty, omnipotent hand of the Almighty in the events that are transpiring. Moreover, the psalmist calls attention to the fact that the Almighty is terrible in His doings--in His treatment of "the children of men." It is indeed a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God--those who are unprepared to meet God.

Verse 6 refers to this fact that God has turned the sea into dry land and that the people of God have gone through the river on foot. Some would identify this reference as an echo of the deliverance from Egyptian bondage when Moses by the power of God opened up the Red Sea and Israel passed through on dry land. While that historic event may have furnished the suggestion for the imagery, it cannot be the specific thing referred to in this verse. Israel at the Exodus passed through the Red Sea; but this passage refers to their passing through the river--two different things. It is quite likely that this same event is referred to in Isaiah 11:15, where reference is made to the Lord's destroying the tongue of the Egyptian sea and waving his hand over the river, the Euphrates. There is a possible reference to this found in Isaiah 42:15 which undoubtedly speaks of Israel's final restoration to the land of the fathers. It is altogether possible that Revelation 16:12 refers to the same event.

The psalmist speaks of the opening up of the river and Israel's passage through it as if it is already past, that is, past so far as the viewpoint of this prophecy is concerned. Since God will open up these ways for Israel's return at the end of the Tribulation, we may with confidence believe that this is a vision of Israel at the very end or practically at the end of that period of distress.

Israel will have at that time had her eyes open and will recognize that her God is the true God of the universe and that it is in Him that all people live, move, and have their continual being. It is He who rules with His might for ever and who observes all the nations. "Man proposes, but God disposes."

This section ends with the following exhortation to the rebellious: "Let not the rebellious exalt themselves." The correlative thought of this is that they should bow in humble submission to God at that time.

### III. Israel in the beginning of the millennium

"Oh bless our God, ye peoples,  
 And make the voice of his praise to be heard;  
 Who holdeth our soul in life,  
 And suffereth not our feet to be removed.  
 For thou, O God hast proved us:  
 Thou hast tried us, as silver is tried.  
 Thou broughtest us into the net;  
 Thou layedst a sore burden upon our loins.  
 Thou didst cause men to ride over our heads;  
 We went through fire and water;  
 But thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place.  
 I will come into thy house with burnt-offerings;  
 I will pay thee my vows,  
 Which my lips uttered,  
 And my mouth spake, when I was in distress,  
 I will offer unto thee burnt-offerings of fatlings,  
 With the incense of rams;  
 I will offer bullocks with goats." Selah. (vss. 8-15)

A glance at these verse shows us that the Tribulation is viewed in this passage as having passed and Israel is seen here as looking back upon the horrors of the night from which he has just emerged. These facts show that this is a vision of the remnant of Israel that survives the great Tribulation, after our Lord has returned and is there present to bless His people. In verse 8 the psalmist calls upon the peoples of the earth to bless "our God." God revealed Himself to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; then to Moses and Israel at the time of the Exodus. He therefore calls Himself "God of Israel." It is quite significant that He does not call Himself the God of any other nation. Why does He thus choose this title? Undoubtedly it is because of the fact that He created the Jewish nation to be the channel through which His revelation and blessing would flow out to the entire world. Israel is the chosen nation, to represent God to the peoples of earth. Because of these facts the Lord calls Himself the "God of Israel" and Israel speaks of Him as "our God."

Those Jews who survive the Tribulation are the ones who, when they are given the truth concerning their Messiah and the salvation which He wrought for them at Calvary, repent of their sins and make the confession of the nation's sin. When they do this and plead for Him to return, He will do so. (See Hosea 5:14-6:3).

This remnant of Israel will confess that it is Messiah "Who holdeth our soul in life, And suffereth not our feet to be moved." They will recognize the fact that it is He who has all through the centuries protected them and has brought them to that blessed moment at the beginning of the great Kingdom Age.

According to verse 10 they will say to their Messiah: "... Thou, O God, hast proved us: Thou hast tried us, as silver is tried." The Lord has chosen Israel in the furnace of affliction. He has never as yet tried her as silver is refined, but will do so in the future (Isa. 48:10). This same fact is set forth in Malachi 3:1-6. The

Tribulation will be the fire into which the nation will be thrown and by which all the dross will be purged from her.

Looking back at her past trials, the converted remnant will say to the Lord that He brought them into the net and did lay a sore burden upon them. This of course will refer to the fiery trials through which they will pass during the Tribulation.

According to verse 12 the remnant of the nation will recognize the fact that it is God, their Messiah, who caused nations to triumph over them temporarily and who guided them through the fiery trials and brought them out into a large, wide, "wealthy" place--the liberty and the freedom of the great Millennial Age.

When Israel is in the darkest, deepest valley of the Tribulation, she will make a vow to her God. This is seen for instance in Psalm 65:1 as well as in verse 13 of Psalm 66. There can be no doubt that in connection with the confession of the national sin Israel will make a vow. When the Tribulation is past, the remnant will remember that vow and will declare publicly that they will fulfill it. In connection with the paying of these vows, there will be the offering up of burnt offerings, as we see in verses 13 and 15. A study of the matter of offerings during the Millennium is quite an interesting one. Ezekiel, in chapter 40-48, gives us a picture of the land of Israel, the city of Jerusalem, and the Temple with its elaborate ritual as they will be in the great Millennial Age. There we are told that various offerings and sacrifices will be made. From the fourteenth chapter of Zechariah we know that the feast of tabernacles will be observed. From our Lord's language at the last supper, we see that He will observe the passover supper in the kingdom when He returns. Will all of the offerings that were authorized by the Lord at Sinai be reinaugurated and offered again? To this question no one can give a positive answer. We can only say in the light of the scanty data which we have that some of these offerings will be resumed. They, when they were inaugurated, were typical, looking forward, pointing to the realities which we have in Christ. In the Millennial Age they will have a retrospective look, pointing back to Calvary and the atonement which the Lord Jesus Christ made for those who believe in Him and accept Him. Though we may not understand all the facts concerning these future offerings, we by faith can accept them and wait for the Lord to give us further light.

In verse 14 the psalmist declared that he will, in making these offerings, be carrying out the promises and the pledges that he made to the Lord when he was in distress. From our own experiences and from observation, we see that man is prone to wait until he is brought to his extremity before he surrenders to God. When he is in difficulty, very frequently he turns to God, making promises, vows, and pledges. All too frequently, when the danger has past and the distress has been removed, we forget those vows and pledges. But remember, God never does. He knows and understands, and He expects men and women to keep their vows and their pledges.

#### IV. Special message for the people of God today

"Come, and hear, all ye that fear God,  
 And I will declare what he hath done for my soul.  
 I cried unto him with my mouth,  
 And he was extolled with my tongue.  
 If I regard iniquity in my heart,

The Lord will not hear,  
But verily God hath heard;  
He hath attended to the voice of my prayer.  
Blessed be God,  
Who hath not turned away my prayer,  
Nor his lovingkindness from me. " (vss. 16-20)

The inspired writer calls upon all who fear to come to listen to his testimony regarding what the Lord had done for his soul. Those who are spoken of as being fearers of God are those who believe in God and in the Lord Jesus Christ and who have given their hearts and life's to Him. In other words they are the born-again ones. All such people are invited by the psalmist to listen to his testimony regarding the experiences which he had had with the Lord. In this connection let me say that it warms the heart, strengthens the faith clarifies the vision to hear the genuine testimony of people who have had an experience with God. Let us keep our experiences up-to-date by walking with the Lord daily. The Lord is very eager to keep working for us. The soul is the important thing. Of course, we are not to defile our bodies with sin, but the spiritual realities are the eternal ones. The one who neglects his soul is making the fatal mistake of life. To bestow one's interest and labors upon the material things of life is to miss the real purpose which God had in placing us here.

In verse 17 the writer tells us that he cried unto God with his mouth and extolled the Almighty with his tongue. In other words, he rendered genuine, true worship, praise, and adoration to the Lord. But before continuing his story, he tells us in verse 18, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear." God despises and hates formalism, hypocrisy, and cant. He wants sincerity, truth, genuineness, love. The Lord sees everything. He knows every motive that prompts each action. He does not look at the outward appearance, but rather upon the heart. If there are hypocrisy, and deceit, no matter how long and loudly we may pray, the Lord will not hear.

But in verse 19 the psalmist declares that God had heard him and had attended unto his prayer, that is, the Lord granted his petition. He therefore concludes in verse 20 with these words: "Blessed be God, Who hath not turned away my prayer, Nor his lovingkindness from me." God does hear and answer prayer. If one has faith as small as that of a mustard seed--but if it is genuine--it can remove mountains of difficulty. God, as George Mueller used to say, delights to exercise the faith of his children. He is interested in everything that pertains to them. Everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. To everyone who knocks, the door is open. The fulfillment of these promises of course, is contingent upon one's being in fellowship with the Lord and asking according to his will.