

Appeasing the Lord's anger.  
Isaiah 66:15-17.

I. The Lord's indignation to His enemies.

A. Isaiah turns his attention here away from the glory of the Lord's redeemed.

1. He had spoken of Zion's peace like a river Vs. 12.
2. Of the glory of the Gentiles flowing to her like a stream. Vs. 12.
3. Of her comfort like a mother's comfort Vs. 13.
4. Of her heart's rejoicing. Vs. 14
5. Of her bones flourishing like grass. Vs. 14.
6. Of the Lord's hand being made known to His enemies. Vs. 14.

B. Now he turns his attention to the Lord's enemies.

1. He says that the Lord's hand will be known to His enemies. End of vs.14.
2. The Lord will come with fire and with chariots, and like a whirlwind.  
Like an invading enemy; like an oncoming raging wildfire; these are images of inescapable judgment. Vs. 15.
3. The Lord is said to do so "To render His anger with fury, and His rebuke with flames of fire." Vs. 15.  
The word "Render" carries the idea of appeasing. The Lord "renders," or "gives in to," or "vents" His anger in order to satisfy it, or to appease it.
4. This is not a temper tantrum of the Lord. His justice calls for His anger to be unleashed. It has to be done at some point, or sin will run rampant.
5. His patience; His longsuffering, and His mercy have held back the tidal wave

of

His just wrath, but, as in the days of Noah, at the right time, God's wrath will be given free reign.

6. In that day by fire and by sword "the Lord will judge all flesh, and the slain of the Lord will be many."

Application:

We too live in the shadow of the unleashing of the Lord's just wrath.

In Matt. 24:37-44 the Lord Jesus tells us that the nature of our lives on this side of the second coming is like unto life prior to the flood of Noah's days.

So it was for Sodom and Gomorrah.

Peter makes the application in 1 Peter 3:10-12 of the Lord coming as a thief in the Night.

"Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness."

Look around you in the world today.

1. Are people discounting the unleashing of the Lord's just anger?
2. Do people presume on the Lord's goodness and patience?
3. Do people make too much of their own abilities in terms of being masters of their own destinies?

John Bunyan calls this a "living in the city of destruction" in his "Pilgrim's Progress."

Jonathan Edwards calls it a "walking over the pit of hell on a rotten covering" in his sermon, "Sinners in the hands of an angry God."

The reality is that we are living downstream from the dam of God's patience and mercy,

behind which the floodwaters of His judgment are building up. At the right time God's patience and mercy will give way to a just unleashing of His anger, and then "the slain of the Lord shall be many."

## II. Who are these slain of the Lord?

- A. Vs. 17 describes "the slain of the Lord."
- B. They are said to be those who sanctify themselves and purify themselves.
  - 1. These are words ordinarily used to describe people setting themselves apart to the Lord.
  - 2. Here they are used to describe people setting themselves apart to serve idols.
  - 3. Man can not help but to be religious. He will do his devotions somewhere and toward someone or something.
  - 4. Man will make himself a servant to someone or something.
  - 5. The question then is: "What is the object of your devotion?" That question will ultimately be answered not by your creed but by your life. What do you devote your life to and why?
- C. These people purified themselves and sanctified themselves to go to the gardens, and to an idol that was set up in the midst under a sacred tree.  
Consider here the imitation of the first garden-temple; in the midst of which was set up the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and the tree of life; the blessing and the curse, and a proper regard (worship) was to be had for both.
- D. Eating swine's flesh and the abomination of the mouse.
  - 1. Eating these things in religious ritual, like the peace offerings or the Lord's supper.
  - 2. Swine's flesh; the epitome of uncleanness.
  - 3. The abomination of the mouse. The Egyptian God of destruction which had to be pacified. The Philistines had the rat for this god. See 1 Sam. 6:4 where the Philistines make 5 golden rats to send with the ark, back to Israel, to pacify the anger of the God of Israel.
  - 4. Ironically these very rituals meant to hold back destruction will unleash god's just wrath on them.

### Application:

Being religious is not enough. We have to be rightly related to the Lord and walk in His ways.

## III. How do I avoid the just wrath of God?

- A. The answer is not given in our text, but happily the broader context of scripture does give it.
- B. To this end the Lord Jesus Christ came into the world, that He might undergo the tidal wave of god's judgment for us. "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed." Isaiah 53:5.
- C. God worked a great exchange for us in Christ: "He who knew no sin, was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of god in Him. 2 Cor. 5:21.