

GA: Churches rise/fall—flourish? —secret? How do they sustain energy, blessing, influence? Church lasting impact transcending pastors/changing congregations?

SI: Grateful all who part of this church—past/present. None of us is the reason **SS** is what it is, has been what it has been & will be what it will be. Living eternal **Θ** goes to **SS**. He's always here—He comes when you come. Source of our life— influence—message—power for ministry—motivates our worship.

- No human explanation—strategy—method—style—**Θ** goes here.

ORT: Does that sound presumptuous? Arrogant? I want to show you the kind of place that **Θ** Himself says that He will go to. **66:1-2** (661).

SUM: **Θ** is holy—He saves, delivers & comforts those who **turn to Him**— contra can only hope for misery, chaos, unrest.

CXT: World is full of churches—all sizes. Cathedrals to honor **Θ**. **Θ** doesn't go to all those churches. Maybe not most—He never shows up. Massive fortunes have been spent to build ornately designed buildings as a house for **Θ**.

- Most glorious structure ever built by man for **Θ**'s honor was designed by precise specs by **Θ** Himself (architect/decorator for Solomon's temple).

1 Kg 8 *the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD.* —not all of **Θ** (He is too immense). It was the manifestation of His unique presence.

1 Kg 8:27 *will **Θ** indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven & the highest heaven cannot contain You, how much less this house which I have built!* It could not.

1 Kg 8:57 *May the LORD our **Θ** **be w/us**...may He not leave us or forsake us, may He incline our hearts to Himself. Let your heart therefore be wholly devoted to the LORD our **Θ**, to **walk in His statutes & keep His commandments, as at this day.** **Θ**'s manifest presence is contingent.*

- 592 **Ezek 8**—586 B—516 Z—20 Herod—70 AD Romans flattened.
- **Θ** is not impressed w/buildings, even buildings He designs.

CIS: **Θ** chooses to dwell in the most unremarkable place.

Trans: Why the destruction? —they rejected **Θ**'s Word & failed to obey Him. **Isa 66.** **Θ** is not going to live in a building because His name is on it—even if He designed it. His glorious person fills infinity. He is the omnipresent One. He can't be contained in any house. He needs no temple—cathedral—or church. He fills eternity. Those who think they do Him a favor by building a building, offer Him nothing He wants. At best it is a symbol & a stewardship.

PNP: 2 facts about where **Θ** dwells.

1st Fact—The heavens cannot contain ☉.

- Because of ☉’s majesty there is no one who can build a house for Him.

66:1-2a Thus says Yahweh, “Heaven is My throne, & the earth is the footstool of My feet. Where then is a house you could build for Me? & where is a place that I may rest? **2a** For My hand made all these things, Thus all these things came into being,” declares Yahweh.

- **v1** Do you think your building is going to make you right w/Me? **Prob**
- What in the world do you think you could build that would please Me when you do not listen to Me or My Word?
- **v2a** Do you think I care/need material things? I own heaven & earth.
- ☉ is not interested in a building; He is interested in your heart.

Trans: As Stephen, 1st martyr, was being pelted by stones in **Acts 7:48** (quoted **Isa 66**). *However, the Most High does not dwell in houses made by human hands; as the prophet says: ‘Heaven is My throne, & earth is the footstool of My feet; what kind of house will you build for Me?’ says the Lord, ‘Or what place is there for My rest? Was it not My hand which made all these things?’*

- ☉ has never been satisfied w/a building & He is not looking for one.

2nd Fact—The human heart can.

2b “But to this one I will look **regard/show favor/bless**, to him who is humble & contrite of spirit, & who trembles at My word.

- **W**hat is of real value to ☉ is not a worship building, but a humble, contrite spirit & heart that quakes at His Word.
- **I**srael is proof that the geography of one’s backside does not guarantee ☉’s unique presence—what matters is where ☉ says He will dwell.
- ☉ is looking for a place to live—a place to inhabit—a place to make His home—a place suitable for Him, a place to rest.
- **N**ot looking for a big place—a tiny common place—a human heart.
- **v2c** Great ☉ of the universe fills heaven & earth w/His presence.
- **Poor** = w/o independent means. **Mt 5:3 poor**, spiritually bankrupt.
- **Contrite spirit** = crippled in spirit (Mephibosheth **2 Sam**), w/o the ability to seek or come to the Lord.
- He values people who are humble & contrite (**Isa 57:15**).

For thus says the One high & lifted up Who dwells forever, whose name is Holy, “I dwell on a high & holy place, & also w/the crushed & lowly of spirit.

- **T**he rituals of worship can never take the place of a humble heart.

Ps 51:16-17 *For You do not delight in sacrifice, otherwise I would give it; You are not pleased w/burnt offering. The sacrifices of ☉ are a broken spirit; a broken & a contrite heart, O ☉, You will not despise.*

- Outer ritual is all worthless unless ☉ is enshrined in a human heart.
- **v2d tremble** (*chared*) to so reverence ☉'s Word that one has a trembling fear of it. To respect what ☉ says & fear to disobey it.
- How many people do you know who *tremble* at ☉'s Word? Do you?

Jordan's church member selling home so mother could move in.

- To fear the Word of the Lord is to fear the Lord of the Word:

Ps 119:120 *My flesh trembles in fear of You; I am afraid of Your laws.*

- Neilsen 28 hrs. of TV/wk.—17 ½ hrs. on social media/wk.
- Wouldn't it be something if every church had such a reverence for the Word of ☉ that they wanted to be there every time it was taught?
- Wouldn't it be something if when convicted, we obeyed & trembled?
- People who are honored by ☉ are those who take His Word seriously.

(CHS) *They tremble at the searching power of ☉'s Word. Do you never come into this place & sit down in the pew, & say, 'Lord, grant that thy Word may search me & try me, that I may not be deceived'? Certain people must always have sweets & comforts; but ☉'s wise children do not wish for these in undue measure. Daily bread we ask for, not daily sugar.*

- A trembler grasps the sovereign authority of ☉'s Word—is in awe of ☉'s truth—obeys ☉'s truth. A trembler hangs on every Word.

John Calvin *All the reverence we owe to ☉ must be paid to His Word.*

- What makes a church flourish? —humble, contrite, tremblers—that is the unremarkable place where ☉ chooses to dwell.
- ☉ goes to this church because humble, contrite, tremblers go here.

CEP: Do you see yourself as spiritually bankrupt? Crippled by the effects of sin? Do you tremble at ☉'s Word?

It is that that brought you to faith in X! It is that that once you are saved you never get over—if you do you have a problem. The trembler lives in a state of thanksgiving—you were bankrupt but now you are a child of the King—you were a lame beggar crippled by sin but now you sit at ☉'s table – a new creation. Your trembling attitude toward the Word began w/conviction about sin, righteousness, & of judgment but now you tremble at the Word of the One you love so much you would never want to hurt Him.

G: **1 Jn 4:19** *We love because He first loved us.*