

Sunday, March 29, 2026 am

TREMBLING AT THE WORD OF GOD

Isaiah 66:1-2

Isaiah was a prophet sent to Israel and Judah around 725 BC. He warned both of God's coming judgment because of their persistent and idolatrous rebellion. But as with many of the prophets, also preached repentance. In this lesson I would like to focus on one statement he made. It is found in Isaiah 66:1-2, *Thus says the LORD: "Heaven is My throne, And earth is My footstool. Where is the house that you will build Me? And where is the place of My rest? For all those things My hand has made, And all those things exist," Says the LORD. "But on this one will I look: On him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, And who trembles at My word.*

YHWH declared that He was seeking the one who: 1) was of a poor and contrite spirit – he was humble; and 2) He trembled at His word. Today I want to focus on that second statement. What does it mean to tremble at the word of God?

It is no secret that we live in a society that increasingly fails to respect God's word.

- 1) Some outright reject God and His word. They want nothing to do with God, Jesus or His people.
- 2) Liberal theologians, while professing belief in God, fail to view God's word as anything more than a mere book of suggestions that might help us today. They view it as incomplete, corrupted and outdated. They might even question its inspiration.
- 3) A third group believes the Bible to be the inspired word of God. They might study it and know, but when it comes to applying it to their lives, they are not fully devoted to it. When we read of the "thorny ground" (Matthew 13:22), the cares of this world and materialism choke out the word. They do NOT tremble at His word.

What does it mean to tremble at the word of God? Let us consider this for a few minutes.

I. Trembling at God's word

- a. The idea of trembling means to shake with anxiety and fear. Most of us have experienced this at one time or another. Something startles you, or you are facing something with great uncertainty.
- b. In scripture, we see several examples of this:
 - i. Exodus 19:16, at Mt. Sinai, when God's voice thundered to Israel, the people trembled. Hebrews 12:18-21 notes that even Moses trembled on this occasion.
 - ii. 1 Samuel 4:13, when Eli was High Priest and Israel was battling against the Philistines, Israel to the ark of the covenant with them to battle. Eli's heart trembled for the ark of God. WHEN the ark was captured, it was the mention of the ark that caused him to fall back and break his neck. He died.
 - iii. Acts 9:6 – Saul, on the road to Damascus trembled when the Lord appeared to him.
 - iv. Acts 16:29, after an earthquake in Philippi, the jailer trembling fell down before Paul and Silas and asked, "What must I do to be saved?"
 - v. Acts 24:24-25 – Felix trembled as Paul preached to him about righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come.
- c. We too need to tremble at God's word. We need to continually remind ourselves that what God says is not mere suggestions. The Bible is not a self-help book, or a psychology manual. It is not be read as a common novel. It is the very word of God speaking to us – 2 Timothy 3:16-17 – the word "inspired" means "God breathed". Hebrews 4:12 describes the word of God as living and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword. 1 Peter 4:11 notes that if any speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God (as if God Himself were uttering it).

II. When we tremble at His word

a. *We will approach it with humility.*

- i. In our text, the one who approaches God has a contrite heart. Matthew 5:3 begins the sermon on the mount, “*Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*” It is this humility that helps us to understand our place before Him.
- ii. Psalm 34:18, *The LORD is near to those who have a broken heart, And saves such as have a contrite spirit.*

b. *We will treat His word with the reverence it deserves.*

- i. Again, be reminded that this is the word of God!
- ii. Nehemiah 8:5, as the Law was opened before the people, they stood.
- iii. Romans 1:24-25, when we look at so many who reject and rebel against God, it begins because they have “*exchanged the truth of God for the life, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator.*”
- iv. If what we are holding is God’s word, or even just a copy of God’s word, we ought to give it the respect it deserves.

c. *We will seek to learn its intended message*

- i. 2 Timothy 2:15 – we will put forth diligent effort to be present ourselves approved. And we will rightly divide it as the word of truth.
- ii. 1 Thessalonians 2:13, Paul commended the Thessalonians because they received the word *as truth, the word of God which also effectively works in you.*
- iii. Ephesians 5:17 – understand what the will of the Lord is.

d. *We will seek to apply what we have learned.*

- i. It is never enough to simply KNOW what God’s word says, we have to live it.
- ii. James 1:22-25 makes this clear. We continue in it.
- iii. Psalm 119:100 - *I understand more than the ancients, Because I keep Your precepts.*

e. *We will let it transform us into what God wants us to be*

- i. We want God’s will to mold us and change us into what He wants us to be.
- ii. Romans 12:2 – we will let it transform us by the renewing of our minds.
- iii. 1 Corinthians 6:11 – such were some of you.
- iv. 1 Peter 4:4-5 – people will notice that you have changed.

f. *We will realize that it is the standard that will judge us one day.*

- i. John 12:48 – Jesus noted that His words will judge us in the last day.
- ii. Revelation 20:12 describes all mankind being judged by what was written. Clearly, God’s word would be included in the “books” that were opened. (Old law, New law, etc.)

g. *Because we tremble at His word we will NOT:*

- i. Look for loopholes - Like the lawyer of Luke 10:29 who asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” or the Pharisees who set aside God’s commands to bind their traditions – Matthew 15:1-9, esp. vs. 6.
- ii. Twist its meaning – 2 Peter 3:16 speaks of those who twisted the message of Paul to their own destruction. Revelation 22:18-19 – do not add to it, nor take away from it. Proverbs 30:6, *Do not add to His words, Lest He rebuke you, and you be found a liar.*
- iii. Pick and choose which parts we want to accept – James 2:10 notes that if we keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, we are guilty. Matthew 19:22 – the rich young ruler went away sorrowful because he did not want to accept the whole counsel that Jesus taught him.

It is my hope that in this lesson we are reminded that we must take God's word very seriously. We cannot approach God OR His word flippantly. There is too much at stake, both in this life and as we head toward eternity.

What about you? What does His word mean to you? Are you keeping it as you ought to? If not, THEN you ought to be trembling. But if you are obedient to His word, then you need not to fear Him or it. Think about it!