

God's Gaze (Isaiah 66:2b)

We live in a culture where most people aspire for attention and affirmation. We promote ourselves and strive to build a platform. In short, we yearn to be looked upon.

But how often do we consider God's gaze? Do we yearn for His attention and approval?

Seeking approval can seem selfish, but Scripture encourages us to care most about God's approval.

What type of person attracts God's attention? Whom does God gaze upon?

In Isa 66:2b, the LORD declares:

“But to this one I will look, To him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at My word.”

God owns heaven as His throne and earth as His footstool. He cannot be contained by any temple. Yet this infinitely great God chooses to fix His attention on humble, broken people who tremble at His Word. It's a breathtaking contrast.

Judah longed for God to look upon them with compassion (Isa 63:15). Isaiah now reveals the kind of people God delights to look upon. “But” introduces a contrast between the vastness of the universe God has created (66:1–2a) and His interest in the people He favors. The LORD looks upon those who exhibit three characteristics.

First, God looks to people who are “humble.” The “humble” originally referred to the lowest levels of society, who were ignored or disregarded by the powerful and the wealthy. It then became a term for any who willingly take the lowest place before God and rely solely upon Him.

The Hebrew word translated “contrite” is used of Mephibosheth's crippled feet (2 Sam 4:4; 9:3). Isaiah takes that image of physical brokenness and applies it to the inner person. He isn't describing broken feet but broken hearts—people who recognize their sin, their weakness, and their complete dependence on God.

The English word “contrite” doesn't fully capture the richness of the Hebrew term. The Hebrew word doesn't denote an attitude of sorrow but emotional brokenness. “Contrite” means “crushed” or “broken.” The phrase “of spirit” speaks of an inner response of the heart and mind. Such ones are aware of their sin and inability to be righteous before God. They know they cannot make it on their own but need help.

A parallel passage draws this out: “For thus says the high and exalted One Who lives forever, whose name is Holy, ‘I dwell *on* a high and holy place, And *also* with the contrite and lowly of spirit In order to revive the spirit of the lowly And to revive the heart of the contrite’” (Isa 57:15).

Third, God looks to people who tremble at His Word. The Hebrew verb often describes someone shaking with fear. However, here it indicates how people respond when facing God's awesome judgment. “Trembles” speaks of a sensitive, concerned longing to respond to God. “My word” also refers to God's word of judgment (cf. Ezra 9:4 and 10:3).

Isa 66:2b reveals the right response to any and every portion of God's Word. However, in context, it informs us how we should respond to God's judgment.

We adopt a lowly posture before our exalted LORD. He is a just Judge. Like Abraham, we maintain, “Shall not the Judge of all the earth deal justly?” (Gen 18:25)

We become broken over God’s judgment on sin. His thoughts are not our thoughts, nor are your ways My ways. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are His ways higher than our ways and His thoughts than our thoughts (Isa 55:8–9).

Finally, we tremble before God declares judgment. Jesus said it best, “Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who can destroy both soul and body in hell” (Matt 10:28).

The characteristics of humility, brokenness, and trembling will never be in vogue. But those who possess such qualities attract God’s gaze.

This quest for God’s gaze is the reason Isa 66:2b is one of my life verses. I’ve quoted it to myself and others perhaps more than any other. Why? Because deep down, we all yearn for approval. So, may you and I become people who attract God’s gaze.

Timeless Truth: God’s gaze rests on those who humbly submit to His Word.