

Sent: Wednesday, September 28, 2022 3:19 PM  
Subject: Last Nite's MOB Study on Isaiah 2

"And many people shall come, and say: 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD (Yahweh), to the house of the God of Jacob, that He may teach us His ways and that we may walk in His paths!' For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem!" (Isaiah 2:3)

In Isaiah 2, Isaiah, the prophet of God, gives a further account of what he saw, in a vision from God, concerning Judah and Jerusalem--and it's a prophetic picture of Zion (Israel) in a glorious future messianic kingdom, "in the last days"--we believe envisioning (unbeknownst to Isaiah) the 1,000-year millennium, when Christ will return (in His second advent) to reign as the Conquering King and set up His kingdom on earth! With people from all the nations coming "to the house of the God of Jacob," on the "mountain of the Lord," that they might learn His ways and "walk in His paths"! Wow!

J. Alec Motyer, who has written a commentary on the prophecy of Isaiah, describes it as Isaiah's "vision of Jerusalem as the center of world pilgrimage, revelation, and peace, expressing poetically the Abrahamic state of Israel as the elect of God, chosen as the means of universal blessing"--thus fulfilling both the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants!

It will be a time of disarmament and world peace, as "swords will be hammered into plowshares, and spears into pruning hooks," as nations "never again will learn of war"! Motyer sees the word choice of agricultural implements as symbolic of a return to the Garden of Eden with the "curse" removed, the dominion of the serpent ended, and "paradise restored"!

The prophet Micah, who was a contemporary of Isaiah, prophesied (in Micah 4:3-4) that "nations will not lift up sword against nation, and never again will they train for war! Also that "each person will sit under his vine, and under his fig tree, with no one to make them afraid, for the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken." (Interesting that Jesus would make reference to this passage, in John 1:48, when calling his disciple, Nathanael, "an Israelite, indeed, in whom is no guile"--after first spotting him "under the fig tree")!

Jesus would also later foretell His disciples of His "second coming" (in Matthew 24:25-31) which He said would take place "immediately after the tribulation of those days when the sun would be darkened...and the Son of Man would be coming on the clouds..."! Revelation 19:11 gives a similar prophecy of His coming, on the clouds, in power and great glory, as "King of Kings and Lord of Lords!" Can't help but want to burst out singing the contemporary song (you've heard our choir sing) which begins with: "These are the days of Elijah, declaring the Word of the Lord!" (Just as well could have substituted the prophet, Isaiah!) Then it goes on: "Behold He comes, riding on the clouds! Shining like the sun, at the trumpet call! Lift your voice, it's the year of Jubilee! Out of Zion's hill salvation comes!" And then: "There's no God like Jehovah, there's no God like Jehovah...!" (Sung over and over!) And then back to, "Behold He comes, riding on the clouds...!" (Why not sing along!)

Well, Isaiah probably didn't sing the song, but he gave a big exhortation to "the house of Jacob" (in Isaiah 2:5), pleading with them to change their ways and "come and walk in the light of the Lord"--and particularly in view of what he just prophesied and saw coming to Zion, with people from all nations desiring to walk in the ways of the Lord, "in the last day"! Do it now, Israel, Isaiah seemed to be thinking! Why not do now what people from all the nations will do then? (And that challenge would just as well apply to us, today!)

Then, in verse 6, Isaiah directs His words directly to God! Sounds, at first, like a "reprimand"! "For You (Yahweh) have abandoned Your people, the house of Jacob!" Wow! (It's not a reprimand, as it turns out, but only recognition of the sad reality that Israel had first abandoned God and that, from a human standpoint, there was no way for a holy God could accept such a sinful people! Or was there?)

Isaiah then makes the case (think courtroom setting!) for why God must reject "the house of Jacob"--and it's not a pretty picture! And the tone of the passage takes a dive! God must abandon Israel because Israel has abandoned Him and is "filled with influences from the East" (Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon), "living like the Philistines, striking bargains with the children of foreigners, relying on horses and chariots, and practicing idolatry"! Motyer notes that verses 6-8 focus on things other nations pride themselves on: broad-minded tolerance, financial reserves, military strength, and false religion! (Sound a lot like our world culture today?)

And with what result? Verse 12 states that "the Lord of hosts will have a 'day of reckoning' against everyone who is proud and lofty...that he may be abased"! Interesting that "even the cedars of Lebanon and oaks of Bashan" will be affected! (Sounds like an environmental effect and "climate change"!)

And Isaiah 2:11 and 17 say that "the Lord alone will be exalted in that day"--when men flee the wrath of God and discover the worthlessness of their idols and the consequences of their sin! And the whole earth "trembles"! (Speaking of the coming Tribulation, which Wierbe is "that period of time when God will send judgment to the nations and purify Israel in preparation for the coming of the King to reign in Jerusalem"! Sounds like we've come full circle!)

Motyer notes that "when human beings depart from the Lord--no matter what they depart to--they progressively lose their true humanity! Only in the Lord does humankind remain human!"

Isaiah, the prophet, closes the chapter with his second exhortation! "Stop regarding man, whose breath of life is in his nostrils; for why should he be esteemed?" (The Amplified Old Testament version puts it this way: "Cease to trust in weak, frail, and dying man, whose breath is in his nostrils (for so short a time); in what sense can he be counted as having intrinsic worth?" Trust only in God!

Ephesians 2:15 seems to sum it up well for us: "Therefore be careful how you walk; not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil!"

On to Isaiah 3-4! May God be with you in the week ahead!

- Lowell