

WALK IN THE LIGHT OF THE LORD

2 This is what Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. 2In the last days the mountain of Jehovah's temple will be established as chief among the mountains and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow to it. 3Many peoples will come and say, Come, let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths—for the law will go out from Zion, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem. 4He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes among many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation shall not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war any more. 5O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of Jehovah.

6You have forsaken your people, the house of Jacob, because they are full of the customs of the East and practice divination like the Philistines. They clasp hands with the children of foreigners, [making covenants with them]. 7Their land is full of silver and gold, there is no end to their treasures. Their land also is full of [war] horses, neither is there any numbering of their chariots. 8And their land is full of idols. They bow down to the work of their own hands, [they bow down] to what their fingers have made. 9The common man bows down, and the man of high position humbles himself—therefore do not forgive them.

10Go among the rocks, and hide yourself in the dust, from the terror of Jehovah and from the glory of his majesty. 11The arrogant looks of man will be brought low, and the lofty pride of men will be humbled, and Jehovah alone will be exalted on that day. 12Jehovah of hosts has a day in store for all that is proud and arrogant, for all that is exalted—and they will be humbled. 13 [Jehovah of hosts has a day in store] for all the cedars of Lebanon that are tall and lofty, and for all the oaks of Bashan; 14for all the towering mountains, and all the high hills; 15for every lofty tower, and every fortified wall; 16for all the merchant ships that sail to Tarshish, and every stately vessel. 17The arrogance of man shall be brought low, and the pride of man shall be humbled; and Jehovah alone shall be exalted on that day—18and the idols will totally disappear. 19Men will flee to the caves in the rocks and to the holes in the ground from the terror of Jehovah and from the glory of his majesty, when he rises to mightily shake the earth. 20On that day men will throw away to the rodents and to the bats their idols of silver and their idols of gold they made to worship, 21in order to flee to the caverns in the rocks and to the overhanging crags from the terror of Jehovah and from the glory of his majesty, when he rises to mightily shake the earth. (Isa. 2:1-21)

Introduction

At the end of a radio commercial for a motel chain, a voice reassuringly says, “We’ll leave the light on for you.”

Perhaps you can remember your mother saying the same thing, “I’ll be sure to leave the light on for you.” Maybe you were out late with friends, or you were working the late shift at the factory, or you were coming home late from a night class. No matter

what time of night it was, you could always be sure to find the porch light burning brightly. Its warm and soft beams conveyed the message: This is where you belong; this is where someone loves you and is waiting for you; this is home. That porch light was a welcome sight, and you always looked forward to coming home to it and to the love and fellowship it represented.

Would you ever think of leaving that love and fellowship? Would you ever think of turning your back on that light in order to wander away into the darkness? Such a thought is inconceivable. But that is exactly what the people of Israel were doing in the days of Isaiah.

This passage of Scripture alerts us to the sad fact that those who possess the great religious privilege of knowing the LORD and having access to His presence, are prone to neglect that privilege and depart from Him. Rather than neglecting that great spiritual privilege, let us be careful to *“walk in the light of the LORD.”*

I. Walk in the Light of the LORD, ...as Do the Newly Converted (Isa. 2:1-5)

In verse 2 the LORD gives Isaiah a revelation of what will take place in the future, *“in the last days.”* According to the New Testament, *“the last days”* (or, *“the latter days”*) began with the birth of Christ and culminate with His Return in glory, note Hebrews 1:1-2, *“In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, ²but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son.”*

In the last days *“all nations shall flow to [the mountain of the Jehovah’s temple].”* The Gentile nations, like a mighty river, are pictured as miraculously flowing **upward** to the mountain of God. Here is a picture of God’s miraculous work of bringing the Gentile nations to faith in Christ and into the kingdom of God, which is especially the work of the Holy Spirit in this present New Testament era.

In verse 3 we are transported from the time of the prophet Isaiah into the future to see and hear this miraculous work of God as it takes place among the Gentile nations. *“Come, let us go up to ... the house of the God of Jacob”*—here is the desire to come to the LORD, and to have others join with them in coming. Do we find in our heart that same desire to worship the LORD; to come into His presence, and to meet in fellowship with His people? Do we understand the difference between entertainment (passively allowing your emotions to be stimulated) and worship (actively engaging your spirit with God)? Do we have the desire to see others come to Christ? Can we identify with the words of the hymn writer: “We long to see Your churches full, so that all the chosen race may, with one voice and heart and soul, sing Your redeeming grace?” Then we hear the nations go on to say, *“He will teach us His ways, and we will walk in His paths”*—here is the desire to know the LORD, and the commitment to walk with Him in fellowship and obedience.

In verse 5, as he witnesses this future scene of the Gentile nations coming to the LORD, Isaiah calls upon his own people, Israel, *“Come, let us walk in the light of Jehovah!”* Isaiah is calling upon his own people to imitate these new converts in their zeal to know God and serve Him! It is ironic that the people of God must be admonished to imitate the **godly** example of the heathen converts; and, as we shall see, be exhorted to stop imitating the **ungodly** example of their pagan neighbors (vs. 6b-8.)

Let us walk in the light of the LORD, as do the newly converted. Note Acts 13:46,48a,52, a passage describing the response of the Gentiles to the good news of the gospel: *“Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly, and said, ... ‘we now turn to the Gentiles’ ... ⁴⁸When the Gentiles heard this they were glad, and honored the word of God ... ⁵²And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.* Contrast the above passage with the words of our Lord addressed to the church in Ephesus: *“I have this against you: You have left your first love. ⁵Therefore, remember from where you have fallen, and repent”* (Rev. 2:4-5.)

II. Walk in the Light of the LORD, ...rather than in the Ways of the World (Isa. 2:5-9)

In verse 6a Israel is described as being filled with *“the customs of the east”*—a reference to the pagan customs and practices imported from the East; the very place Abraham had been called to forsake in order to follow the LORD into the Promised Land of Canaan. The succeeding verses further describe the conduct, outlook and lifestyle of Judah.

They *“practice divination like the Philistines.”* Israel had come to look to soothsayers for guidance instead of looking to the *Lord* their God and His Word. Note Isaiah 8:19, where the LORD will instruct Isaiah how to respond to such people: *“When men ask you to consult mediums and spiritists, who whisper and mutter, ask them, ‘Should not a people consult their God?’”* Present day T.V. commercials urge viewers to consult a psychic to gain knowledge of the future for personal gain. As Christians, we are to consult the Word of God to gain knowledge of His will for His glory and our good.

“They clasp hands with the children of foreigners, [making covenants with them].” They were forming binding relationships and covenants with those who were strangers to the LORD and His covenant. By way of example, consider what the LORD says concerning the Christian’s choice of a marriage partner,

*Do not be yoked together with unbelievers; for what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?
¹⁵What harmony is there between Christ and Belial [i.e.; the devil]? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? (2 Cor. 6:14-15)*

“Their land is full of silver and gold, there is no end to their treasures.” At this particular time in its history, Israel was a nation that was experiencing a superabundance of prosperity, and that prosperity was turning them into materialists who loved the things of this present world and was suffocating their spiritual life. In the days of Uzziah and his son, Jotham, the nation of Judah experienced a period of great power and glory and prosperity. It was the Silver Age of Judah; although it could not attain unto the Golden Age under Solomon, the reign of Uzziah and Jotham certainly rivaled those days of splendor. But the outward splendor and prosperity was itself rivaled by spiritual degeneration and decay; the worship of the LORD was reduced to merely an outward formality.

“Their land also is full of [war] horses, neither is there any numbering of their chariots.” Judah had come to place their confidence in military might; what is described here is the ancient version of a vast build up of armaments. Like Old Testament Judah, do we place our confidence for security in the nation’s military technology? Do we believe that our armaments and/or geographic position make us invulnerable to enemy attack? And with that sense of security, do you concentrate on the present pursuit of wealth and recreation, and entertain the confidence that the present state of affairs shall continue indefinitely into the future?

“Their land is full of idols.” Israel had failed to destroy the idols of the pagan nations who possessed the land before them, as they had been commanded to do:

Be careful not to make a treaty with those who live in the land where you are going, or they will be a snare among you. ¹³Break down their altars, smash their sacred stones and cut down their Asherah poles. ¹⁴Do not worship any other god, for Jehovah, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God. (Ex. 34:12-14.)

Rather than obey the LORD’ s command, Israel embraced the pagan religion of their neighbors. Consider the present spiritual state of our own society. Many today are being lured into the ancient pagan mysticism of New Age religion, and it is becoming the publicly dominant religion of the day. There is also present a much more subtle “Christianized” idolatry, one that accepts a caricature of God as man’s divine servant, in place of the living God of the Scriptures. As one Christian writer expresses it:

I find myself thinking that every aspect of life should be as easy as using an automatic teller machine. When it isn’t, I can easily become frustrated. In addition, there is the subtle assumption that God is somehow committed to making my life convenient, pleasant, and protected. (David McCasland, *POWER*, 5/3/92, p.8)

Let us walk in the light of the LORD, rather than in the ways of the world. As one commentator stated it: “To walk [in the light of the Lord] is to order the course

of one's entire life so that it will be in conformity with that light [of God's revelation]" (E.J. Young, *Commentary on Isaiah*, Vol. I, p.115.) Let us make the Psalmist's testimony our own: "*Your word is a lamp for my feet, and a light on my path*" (Psl. 119:105.)

III. Walk in the Light of the LORD, ...because there is Coming a Day of Accountability (Isa. 2:9-21)

Verse 12 foretells of the coming Day of the LORD of hosts, a day of reckoning and a day of accountability. It is emphasized that on that Day the LORD of hosts will especially set Himself against the pride and arrogance of man:

Jehovah of hosts has a day in store for all that is proud and arrogant, for all that is exalted—and they will be humbled. (vs. 12)

The arrogance of man shall be brought low, and the pride of man shall be humbled; and Jehovah alone shall be exalted on that day. (vs. 17)

Verses 13-16 describe that Day as a great storm—like a universal tornado or hurricane—that will sweep away everything that stands upon the earth. Like a terrible storm, the Day of the LORD of hosts shall come upon "*all the cedars of Lebanon that are tall and lofty*"—trees that were admired for their beauty and refreshing scent. It will come upon "*all the oaks of Bashan*"—trees that were looked upon as being strong and impervious to any ordinary storm of nature. It will come upon "*all the towering mountains*"—the majestic, snow-capped peaks mentioned here are perhaps also representative of man's own personal aspirations. It will come upon "*all the high hills*"—the hills rising up from the plains, the foothills of the majestic mountains. It will come upon "*every lofty tower, and every fortified wall*"—the imagery now switches to that which man builds to warn him of the approaching enemy and to defend him from that enemy, all this shall be utterly useless to defend him against his God on that day of judgment. The great storm of God's Final Judgment shall come upon "*all the merchant ships that sail to Tarshish*"—ships that carried the imported goods that enabled the people to experience "the good life;" the storm of God's coming judgment will capsize man's great economic enterprise and end all his endeavors to enjoy a materialistic, godless paradise on earth.

This passage further describes the characteristics of that great Day. There shall be the revelation of "*the terror of Jehovah*" and "*the glory of His majesty*" (vs. 19,21.) On that Day "*the idols will totally disappear*" (vs. 18;) "*men will throw away to the rodents and to the bats their idols of silver and their idols of gold*" (vs. 20.) On that Day "*Jehovah alone shall be exalted*" (vs. 17.)

Let us walk in the light of the LORD, because there is coming a day of accountability in which the LORD shall reveal Himself as God over all.

Conclusion

The LORD has graciously made available to us His light and life, and with all His heart He desires for us to walk with Him in holy and loving fellowship. The LORD has graciously made available to us all the spiritual resources of His grace and His Holy Spirit to enable us and assist us in walking in His light. Instead of neglecting—to the eternal peril of our own souls—the great spiritual privileges of knowing the LORD and living in His light and fellowship, let us be sure to heed the exhortation of Scripture: *“Come, let us walk in the light of the LORD!”*