

Appendix to Lesson 2:

A Consideration of Isaiah 2:1-4

This is what Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem (vs. 1.)

Isaiah will now make known the vision from God concerning the future of Zion; the glorious work that God will do for Judah and through Judah. Note: In the midst of discipline and chastening (1:2-9) and impending judgment upon the nation (1:20,24-ff.), there is a word of hope for the people of God.

The time of the fulfillment of this vision is designated as *“the last days”* (vs. 2.) According to the New Testament, *“the last days”* (or, *“the latter days”*) began with the birth of Christ and reach their climax with His return in glory:

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 (Heb. 1:1-2)

[Christ] was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake. (1 Pet. 1:20)

Thus, the attention of God's people is focused on the future, and this same perspective is continued in the New Testament, note Philippians 3:20, *“But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ.”* What will God do for Judah in the last days?

According to verses 2b, ***“the mountain of Jehovah's temple will be established as chief among the mountains.”*** The kingdom of God shall be revealed to be permanent, durable, unshakable, and everlasting—it will be *“established as chief among the mountains.”* Concerning the kingdom of God, it is said of Abraham that he was looking forward to the city ***“with foundations, whose architect and builder is God”*** (Heb. 11:10.) Furthermore, the LORD's temple ***“shall be exalted above the hills.”*** The kingdom of God shall have the pre-eminence--Christ has already been exalted to that position at the right hand of God, and at His coming God's kingdom shall be revealed in all of its pre-eminent glory.

The text goes on to declare, ***“all nations shall flow to it.”*** The picture presented here is that of the Gentile nations, like a mighty river, flowing **up to** the mountain of God. The picture portrays the miraculous work of God in bringing the Gentiles to saving faith in Jesus the Messiah. Note Revelation 5:9-10,

... they sing a new song, saying, “You are worthy to take the scroll and break the seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. ¹⁰You have made them

into a kingdom and priests for our God, and they shall reign over the earth.”
(Rev. 5:9-10)

We are now transported into the future to see and hear the miraculous work of God among the nations (vs. 3a): ***“Many peoples will come and say, ‘Come, let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob.’”*** There here is the desire to come to the LORD, and a desire to have others join with them. There is, furthermore, a desire for instruction, and the desire to know God, and a desire to walk with Him in obedience and fellowship: ***“he will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths.”***

What is the cause of this great “migration” of the nations unto the LORD? From verse 3b we learn that ***“the law*** (or, ***“the instruction,”*** the Hebrew word, תּוֹרָה) ***will go out from Zion, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem.”*** Here is a reference to the going forth of the gospel following Pentecost, note Luke 24:46-47. Following His resurrection, the Lord Jesus declared to His disciples, ***“This is what is written, ‘The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.’”***

In verse 4 there is depicted the LORD’s peaceful rule over the nations: ***“He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes among many peoples”***—the LORD is the Great King before whom the peoples come for arbitration and the settling of their disputes. ***“They will beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks”***—warfare will give way to peaceful co-existence among neighbors, each tending his own plot of land. ***“Nation shall not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war any more.”*** In light of Isaiah 2:12-21, which speaks of the final judgment of God, and many other such passages in both the Old and the New Testaments, this present verse cannot be taken as a reference to universal world peace. It is, rather, a pictorial description of the peace and unity that is found within the body of Christ and that shall be fully realized in the kingdom of God as the redeemed of every nation live together in the peace and blessing of God, note Ephesians 2:14-18,

[Christ] is our peace, he is the one who made the two [i.e.; believing Jew and believing Gentile] become one and who destroyed the dividing wall which served as a barrier. With his flesh he destroyed the source of enmity ¹⁵by abolishing the law [that consisted] of commandments in [the form of] regulations. [He did so] in order that in himself he might create the two into one new man, thereby making peace; ¹⁶and that he might reconcile the two—in one body—unto God by the cross, having put the enmity to death by it. ¹⁷When he came, “he preached [the message of] peace” to you “who were far away [i.e.; the Gentiles] and peace to those who were near [i.e.; the Jews],” ¹⁸for through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit. (Eph. 2:14-18)