

government, kingdom or church which is the house of God. It is not a prophecy foretelling the future of carnal nations. Those from every nation who flow into the house of God, come under the dominion of King Jesus and submit to His governing of them "shall not lift up sword against" those from formerly enemy nations who have found peace in Christ Himself through His blood. The enmity between them has been abolished. "They shall not learn war anymore." They are instructed: "if it be possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men" (Ro. 12:18); "pursue the things which make for peace" (Ro. 14:19); endeavor "to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:3); "Be at peace among yourselves" (1 Thess. 5:13); "pursue

peace with all..." (Heb. 12:14) and "seek peace and pursue it" (1 Peter 3:11). We need not look to the future for what is referred to as "the peaceable kingdom. It is here and has been here in fulfillment of Isaiah 2:1 - 5 since the Day of Pentecost.

In the conclusion of Isaiah's prophecy the house of Israel is urged to "walk in the light of the LORD." On the Day of Pentecost the apostle Peter made the appeal: "...let all the house of Israel know assuredly (or believe confidently) that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36). This is a plea for them to accept Christ as their king; submit to His dominion; be governed by His word - His law; dwell in His house; be at peace

and "walk in the light of the LORD." It was "this Jesus" who in John 12:46 had said, "I am come a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness." "This Jesus" also is the one who said, "I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6). Consider also Matthew 7:13 & 14 and choose Jesus - the light, the way of truth which leads to life. "Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" (John 1:17). ~

By Fred Shewmaker
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The Mountain of the Lord's House

"The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. 2 Now it shall come to pass in the latter days That the mountain of the LORD'S house Shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And all nations shall flow into it. 3 Many people shall come and say, 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths.' For out of Zion shall go forth the law. And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. 4 He shall judge between the nations, And rebuke many people; They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore. 5 O house of Jacob, come and let us walk in the light of the LORD." (See also Micah 4:1-5).

There are two ideas usually advanced regarding the reason these two passages are almost identical. One is that both prophets quote from an earlier source. The other is that one of the prophets took it from the other. However, some would have

Isaiah taking it from Micah, others would have Micah taking it from Isaiah and still others are not certain who took it from whom, but one took it from the other. I prefer Peter's explanation of the giving of prophecy: "...prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (1 Peter 1:21). Thus Isaiah and Micah prophesied that which the Holy Spirit moved each of them to prophecy. Why should that be thought strange when we consider Matthew, Mark, Luke and John repeatedly wrote about the same things?

Isaiah is straight forward regarding the thrust of the vision. What he saw was concerning Judah and Jerusalem. What he saw was not for the present nor near future, but rather "it shall come to pass in the latter days." This is the only occurrence of the expression "latter days" in the prophecy of Isaiah. However, it is not the only place it occurs in the Old Testament. After defining the Hebrew word involved as meaning: "in the end of the days," THE NEW BROWN-DRIVER-BRIGGS -GESENIUS HEBREW-ENGLISH LEXICON makes this comment:

"a prophetic phrase denoting the final period of the history so far as the speaker's perspective reaches; the sense thus varies with the context, but it often is the ideal or Messianic future." It seems to be generally agreed that Isaiah used it in reference to the Messianic age.

Many interpret "the mountain of the LORD'S house Shall be established on the top of the mountains" as a reference to the prominence upon which the temple was built in Jerusalem. However, in prophecy symbols generally have the same meaning although they may be applied to a variety of things. In the prophecy concerning Babylon in Jeremiah 51:25 the prophet wrote, "'Behold I am against you O destroying mountain, who destroys the earth,' says the LORD." 'And I will stretch out My hand against you, Roll you down from the rocks, And make you a burnt mountain.'" A mountain as a prophetic symbol indicates either a kingdom or a government which amounts to the same thing due to the fact that a kingdom is a form of government.

Thus it seems proper to under-

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stand the meaning of Isaiah 2:2 is that the government of the house of the LORD shall have preeminence over all levels of human governments. This harmonizes with Daniel 2:44 which tells us about a kingdom which God will set up that never shall be destroyed and will break in pieces and consume the world kingdoms of the prophecy and shall stand forever. It also harmonizes with the depiction of Jesus as King of kings and Lord of lords (Revelation 19:16).

The mountain considered is "the mountain of the LORD'S house." Although it would be natural for one to imagine that Isaiah would think of the physical temple in Jerusalem, it should be kept in mind that the prophets did not always understand the things they prophesied (1 Peter 1:10 & 11). The New Testament gives another identity to "the LORD'S house." In 1 Timothy 3:15 the apostle Paul wrote, "I write so you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God,...." Now consider the fact that the church is equated with the kingdom. In Luke 22:29 & 30 Jesus told His apostles, "...I bestow upon you a kingdom, just as My Father bestowed one upon Me, that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom,...." Paul wrote the church at Corinth (1 Cor. 1:2) then in chapter 10 verses 14 - 21 warned them against idolatry and fellowship with demons, stating in verse 21 "you cannot partake of the Lord's table and the table of demons." Thus showing that the Lord's table is in the church and therefore the Lord's Kingdom. Of course this simply shows that those in the church are the citi-

zens governed by the King of the Kingdom. In Isaiah 2:2 "The mountain of the LORD'S house" refers to the government of the church which now is the LORD'S house - the house of God.

"And all nations shall flow to it." After His resurrection Jesus, having received all authority, commissioned His apostles to go make disciples of all the nations (Mt. 28:19). In Acts 1:8 Jesus told them, "...you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Chapter 2 of Acts records the Holy Spirit coming upon them and from that point through the book of Jude we have a record of the fulfilling of the Commission which Jesus gave. The invitation of Jesus is: "Come to Me, all..." (Mt. 11:28 - 30). When the apostle Peter went to the house of Cornelius, he said, "...in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him" (Acts 10:35). And in Colossians 1:23 the apostle Paul wrote that the gospel "was preached to every creature under heaven...."

The fulfilling of the "many people" section of Isaiah 2:3 can be seen in the New Testament record of the establishment of the church on the Day of Pentecost in Jerusalem and then its growth and development as the disciples of Jesus, being scattered from Jerusalem by persecution, went everywhere preaching the gospel - the word of truth (Eph. 1:13). "Philip went down to the city of Samaria" (Acts 8:5). Philip baptized the Ethiopian nobleman "and he went on his way" home (Acts 8:39). Thus the gospel be-

came known in Ethiopia. Then we learn of a disciple at Damascus (Acts 9:10). In Acts 9:31 we read about "churches throughout all Judea, Galilee and Samaria." We then read about saints "in Lydda" (Acts 9:32). Next we are told of those in Sharon turning "to the Lord" (Acts 9:35). In Acts 9:36 - 38 we learn of disciples at Joppa. In Acts 10 and 11 we learn about the gospel being taken to the Gentile Cornelius. In Acts 11:19 we are told about those scattered by the persecution going to Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch "preaching the word." "...The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch" (Acts 11:26). In Acts 13:5 we read about Barnabas and Saul preaching at Salamis, Cyprus. The record continues to reveal the spread of the gospel as far as Rome and even Paul contemplating of going into Spain. Paul's contemplation of Spain does not necessarily mean that the gospel had not gone there. There were saints at Rome before Paul went there (Ro. 1:7 & 13). Indeed many from the various nations were flowing into the church.

The last part of verse 3 is a parallelism: "For out of Zion shall go forth the law. And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem." The elements of this parallelism are reversed. The beginning of the first line corresponds with the end of the second line, "Zion" and "Jerusalem" mean the same. And the end of the first line corresponds with the beginning of the second line, "the law" and "word of the LORD" mean the same. The law by which those who lived before Moses did not go forth from Zion nor from Jerusalem. Neither did the law of the LORD given through Moses go forth

from Zion or from Jerusalem, but from Sinai. Therefore Isaiah prophesied regarding a new law. The prophet Jeremiah also prophesied regarding a new law in chapter 31 verses 31 - 34. There the prophecy is of a new covenant. However, in that prophecy is the statement, "I will put my law in their minds, and write it in their hearts." That this prophecy has been fulfilled may be observed in Hebrews chapters 8 and 10. In the allegory regarding a desire to be under the law which is found in Galatians 4:21 - 31 plainly shows that the bondwoman and freewoman are symbolic of two covenants. The covenant from Mount Sinai symbolized by the bondwoman, but Jerusalem above which is the mother of us all is symbolized by the freewoman because we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free.

In Hebrews 12:18 - 24 we are informed that we have not come to Mount Sinai (vv. 18 - 21), but unto Mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn ones and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant. Observe the things mentioned both in Isaiah 2 and here. The fulfilling of the prophecy "out of Zion shall go forth the law. And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem" actually began at literal physical Jerusalem. However, the things which we have considered indicate that the prophecy was not referring to physical Jerusalem, but rather "the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem."

Previously we noticed the spreading of the word of the Lord when those scattered by the per-

secution went everywhere preaching it. Now notice in Romans 10:17 that faith is by hearing the word of God. Then consider 1 Thessalonians 1:8 where Paul wrote, "...from you the word of the Lord has sounded forth, not only in Macedonia, but in every place. Your faith toward God has gone out,...." The law which is the word of the LORD did not originate with the firstborn ones - the church, but the church is the pillar and ground of the truth (1 Tim. 3:15). Individually and collectively the firstborn ones have a responsibility to support the truth taught by Jesus Christ and those whom He authorized to speak for Him. In John 13:20 Jesus said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me." And the apostle Peter wrote, "If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God." In fulfilling the responsibility to support the truth each one needs to remember that a curse has been pronounced on anyone who preaches a perversion of the gospel (Gal. 1:6 - 9) which is the word of truth (Eph. 1:13).

Isaiah 2:4 "He shall judge between the nations and rebuke many people." It does not appear to be an coincidence that this immediately follows "out of Zion shall go forth the law. And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem." It is indeed the word of God that will judge us "in the last day" (Jn. 12:48 - 50) and "we will be judged by the law of liberty" (Jas 2:12). Although these verses are often applied to the final judgment, it should be remembered that when Jesus spoke of "the last day," He, like

Isaiah, was speaking before the time of "the last day." We are judged by the word of the LORD and the law of liberty according to whether or not we do what His word, His law requires. In Matthew 7:24 - 27 those who hear and do what Jesus has said will be judged to be wise and those who do not do what He has said will be judged foolish. After the Day of Pentecost, all who obey Him are judged recipients of "eternal salvation" (Heb. 5:8 & 9). "...In every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him" (Acts 10:35). That righteousness is revealed in the gospel (Romans 1:16 & 17). In that the Lord who day by day adds to the number those who are being saved (Acts 2:47), it is necessary to draw the conclusion that since Pentecost mankind has been in the last days and the judging of the nations has been and is taking place.

Certainly the New Testament rebukes many people. It rebukes every sinner and all have sinned (Romans 3:23). When a sinner in any nation takes to heart the rebuke of the word of God, repents and determines to "walk in His paths" and is brought near by the blood of Christ; Christ Himself is our peace who has made both one and broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity ... so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace (Eph. 2:13 - 15). This is symbolized by beating swords into plow shears and spears into pruning hooks.

By this time it should be obvious that the prophecy of Isaiah 2:1 - 5 is not about physical things, but rather about the future spiritual