

WALKING IN THE LIGHT OF THE LORD

Isa. 2 (Text: v. 5)

Introduction:

1. Aaron Burr had the ability and the opportunity to rise high in the political life of his country. Historians say that his ambition, coupled with his inability to meet opposition, was his ruination. Following an illustrious career in the Continental Army, he became one of the leading lawyers in the state of New York.
 - a. At one time he was a candidate for the presidency of the United States, but he lost only after a tie vote led to the House of Representatives' electing Jefferson, instead, leaving Burr as Vice President.
 - b. After killing Alexander Hamilton, his arch enemy, in a duel, Burr's reputation plummeted.
2. Ambition led him to the southwest where apparently he hoped to raise his own army and conquer Texas, perhaps establishing a republic with himself at its head.
 - a. For this venture he was brought to trial. Though he was acquitted, his reputation was ruined and he lived the rest of his life a lonely, defeated man.
 - b. The root of the selfish ambition which Aaron Burr can be traced to an event that occurred while he was a student at Princeton, where his father and his grandfather, the great Jonathan Edwards, had both been president.
3. During this time, the entire college was shaken by a great revival. Burr shut himself in his room, saying that before the night was over he would decide the matter of his relationship to God.
4. Tradition says that late that night, the students living near him heard him raise his windows and exclaim aloud, "Good-bye, God!" This was indeed the turning point of his life. In our time, the words of Aaron Burr have, grown into a sweeping chorus as the multitudes continue to bid farewell to God and His holiness.

I. Made Joyous By the Promises of the Future (Isa. 2:1-4).

A. The exaltation of the church.

1. Isaiah 2:1-4 presents the most beautiful and poetic descriptions of the future of the redeemed to be found anywhere in the Scripture.
 - a. It is quite apparent that the future exaltation of the Church is found in these words: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it" (Isa. 2:2).
 - b. The Temple was built on Mount Moriah and was referred to by the phrase, "The Mountain of the Lord's House." This is undoubtedly a prophecy, in germinal form, of the future exaltation that is to belong to the Church of the redeemed.
2. The time of fulfillment is "the latter days"—see Dan. 2:28; Acts 2:17; 3:24; 1 Pet. 1:20.
3. The Church is destined to rise up like a veritable mountain so that all eyes shall see it and

none will be able to ignore it.

- a. The Church may struggle amidst trials during its earthly sojourn.
- b. It may be at the point of despair because of loneliness experienced in a world filled with ungodliness, but it has a destined glory that no force will be able to deny.

B. *Converts.*

1. We often hear the expression, "It's a small world." Though it is a small world, it is far from being a unified world. However, the Scriptures affirm that the time is coming when multitudes will come from all nations and all walks of life to worship God: "And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem" (Isa. 2:3).
2. Jesus Himself spoke along these lines as He said, "And many shall come from the east and the west and sit down in the kingdom of God" (Matt. 8:10-12).
3. He was describing a world-wide pilgrimage that includes men of all races in the Kingdom of God.

C. *The peace of God's eternity.*

1. Man has always hungered for peace and yet has never been able to achieve it.
 - a. The Bible makes this promise: "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 any more" (Isa. 2:4).
 - b. Something about this promise quickens the heart of every man who reads it. However, we need to realize that Jesus added something of a footnote to it that helps us understand the nature of the promise: Matt. 10:34-39 with John 18:36.
2. In other words, He is saying that the kingdom is spiritual in nature, not that all wars will cease, or that He literally will bring the kind of peace that his disciples will know to the whole world. His kingdom will not be a kingdom that will rise up against other kingdoms of the world. He will bring peace to the world to the extent that He is able to win the hearts of men.

II. Avoids the Pitfalls of a Barren Prosperity (Isa. 2:6-9).

Isaiah 2:6-9 speaks of a barren prosperity. One might well call it a prosperous poverty. We are urged to walk in the light of God lest we stumble into the hidden pitfalls that a barren prosperity holds for us. The people of Isaiah's time, like people of our own, seem to have filled their lives with other things. He describes them by saying that God has forsaken them because "they be replenished from the east." In other words, they are filled up with other things. When a motel is full, the "No Vacancy" sign is hung out. This means there is room for no one else. There are many people today who, if they were honest, would put a "No Vacancy" sign around their neck because they have filled their life, with its every waking moment, with their own fancies and activities so that there is no

room at all for God.

A. *The prosperity.*

1. The people are pictured as being filled with what the east has to offer.
2. Of course, the east was the direction whence came the caravans and tradesmen bringing goods, riches, and foreign ways of life. Isaiah describes the land as being "full of silver and gold . . . full of horses . . . full of idols" (Isa. 2:7, 8).

B. *The barrenness.*

1. It seems strange that barrenness is often brought on by prosperity, but history records the proof of the sequence. Thus this barrenness was not brought on by drought or famine or financial depression, but rather by abundance.
2. The most fearful part of the barrenness comes from the fact that *God has turned His back on the people*: "Therefore thou hast forsaken thy people the house of Jacob, because they replenished from the east" (Isa. 2:6). It is a costly prosperity that achieves the wealth of the world while losing the treasures of heaven. Man is in great peril when he forsakes God, but he is without hope when God forsakes him.
3. Another result of a prosperous poverty is that of *living by superstition instead of by faith in the will of God*. Part of what the people are full of are the "soothsayers like the Philistines" (Isa. 2:6).
 - a. From the east have come the astrologers and the fortune-tellers who practice the same Superstitious magic known by the Philistines. Again and again the Old Testament warns the people of God that these kinds of people are to be looked upon as enemies.
 - b. Deuteronomy 18:10-12 states firmly: "There shall not be found among you anyone . . . that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord."
 - c. There is only One who is able to guide our destinies and that is the heavenly Father Himself. To attribute such force to anyone else is to depart from the faith. There is no more frightful way to live life than to live under superstition.
4. The barrenness is further evidenced in that *the people live without forgiveness*: "And the mean (lowly) man bowed down, and the great man humbleth himself: therefore forgive them not" (Isa. 2:9).
 - a. This describes a kind of universal apostasy wherein the lowly, as well as the rich, bow down before' the trinkets of prosperity and worship them. Because of this, they live without a knowledge of God's forgiveness. Life can be full of many things, but it will always remain void of peace and genuine happiness as long as life is void of God's forgiveness.
 - b. Parker says that the solemn bell of history tolls, "In Adam all die," while the silver trumpets of the sky call us to the message of the gospel: "In Christ shall all be made alive."
 - c. J. Edgar Hoover, in speaking of man's attempt to live on his own in such a way that he becomes God-forsaken, said that it amounts to a kind of "camouflaged suicide."

Only God is able to lead us through life and keep us from the dangerous pitfalls of a barren prosperity.

III. Delivers From Certain Judgment (Isa. 2:12-17).

A. When the world dies.

1. Everywhere in the Bible we are reminded that the world is to perish. The Bible tells us this will be brought about by the instrumentality of God and that in that moment we shall all be summoned to the final judgment.
2. Thus when heaven is rolled up like a scroll and we see the perishing of all things, we shall know in all fullness what is meant by the Day of the Lord.

B. When God shakes all things.

1. The Scripture vividly tells us that the death of the world is to come about by God's shaking of a dying world until all earthly things be released from its deathly grasp. Isaiah says, "And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth" (Isa. 2:19).
2. The writer of Hebrews joins this same theme as he says that God has promised, "Saying, yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven" (Heb. 12:26). The Day of the Lord will be a time when men find themselves shaken loose from the material abundance for which they have sold their very souls.

C. When men have waited too ' long.

1. God is pictured in the Scriptures as being patient and longsuffering, but He is also pictured as One who has t limit to His patience. There comes a time when a man has taken one step too far and has passed the point of no return.
2. The tragic aspect of the Day of the Lord is that it will find men who have waited too long to throw their idols away and to accept the living God: "In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats" (Isa. 2:20).
3. In that day it will be too late to throw away that which has brought about their downfall. This pictures men as being cursed by what they possess, because they have been possessed by their possessions.

D. When self-sufficiency perishes.

1. There is coming a time when all men will realize that man is nothing apart from God: "Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils: For wherein is he to be accounted of?" (Isa. 2:22).
2. Where is the bank account that is able to buy off the trumpet of heaven that shall mark the end of time, and the power of God that shall bring every man to account?
3. We..try to prepare for every emergency of life, but there comes a final emergency for which there is no preparation other than a faith in God. Man, who is so prone to trust in himself, needs to be reminded that his life is no more certain than the breath which is in his nostrils—it can cease at any moment.

Conclusion.

1. Someday life's portrait will be given its last brush mark and will stand forever.
2. In 1937, Evangeline Booth, the daughter of the founder of the Salvation Army, returned to the United States after three years of extensive travel. When asked by an interviewer, "What is amiss with the world?" she quickly answered, "There is just one thing wrong with the world and it is this: the world is trying to get along without God — and it can't be done."

— Author unknown