

THE MILLENNIUM FORECAST

The Book of Isaiah

Text

Isaiah 2:1-22

Topic

While warning Judah of God's impending judgment, Isaiah jumps to the future Millennial Kingdom when the nations will beat their swords into plows.

Title

"Make Plows, Not War"

Rosie the Riveter was the poster girl for women who worked in factories during the war to end all wars.

In January 1942 President Franklin D. Roosevelt ordered the establishment of the War Production Board. Its purpose was to convert the factories of peacetime industries into manufacturing plants for weapons and military equipment.

After the war, the factories retooled to peacetime manufacturing. Rosie went home.

God had the idea centuries before Roosevelt.

There are two verses in the Bible that discuss manufacturing changes during war and peace:

- Joel 3:10 - "Beat your plowshares into swords And your pruning hooks into spears."
- Isaiah 2:4 - "They shall beat their swords into plowshares, And their spears into pruning hooks."

Joel wasn't talking about conflicts and wars through the centuries. He was talking about a specific, future war. It will be fought by mankind against God. He went on to say,

Joe 3:11 "Assemble and come, all you nations, And gather together all around. Cause Your mighty ones to go down there, O LORD.

Joe 3:12 "Let the nations be wakened, and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; For there I will sit to judge all the surrounding nations.

Joe 3:13 Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, go down; For the winepress is full, The vats overflow - For their wickedness *is* great.

Joe 3:14 Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision.

Joe 3:15 The sun and moon will grow dark, And the stars will diminish their brightness.

Joe 3:16 The LORD also will roar from Zion, And utter His voice from Jerusalem; The heavens and earth will shake; But the LORD will be a shelter for His people, And the strength of the children of Israel.

This "valley of decision," or of "Jehoshaphat," is the location for the Battle of Armageddon. The nations of the world will gather there in combat. Suddenly the sky breaks open to reveal Jesus Christ and His heavenly armies. The nations will join forces against the Lord.

It isn't much of a fight. Jesus saves the human race from annihilating themselves. He establishes the promised Kingdom of God on Earth. Then, and only then, with the Lord present and ruling, can the factories for the last time retool to making "plowshares" and "pruning hooks."

I'll organize my comments around two points: **#1 Your Future Can Be One Of Hope,** or **#2 Your Future Can Be One Of Hiding.**

#1 - Your Future Can Be Full Of Hope (v1-5)

It is generally held that the Old Testament prophets did not fully understand what they were prophesying.

Prophets did not always live to see their prophecies fulfilled. Most were without honor in their home towns. Stephen, the first martyr of the Church Age, said to the religious leaders, "Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute?" (Acts 7:52).

Speaking of all believers up to the time it was written, the Book of Hebrews reminds us, "And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise" (11:39).

If you and I are not raptured, we will die without receiving the promise.

By "the promise," we mean the return of Jesus. No worries. If we die before the Lord comes, to be absent from our bodies is to be immediately present with Him. When He does return, the dead in Christ will be raised first, and then living believers raptured.

Will we obtain a good testimony through faith? In other words, Will we live by faith trusting God that all His promises are true, whether we see them fulfilled in our lifetime or not? "We know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose" (Romans 8:28).

You are not going to see "all things" until you are in Heaven. Everything doesn't always fall neatly into place. It doesn't need to. We walk by faith. One church leader said, "*The word hope I take for faith; and indeed hope is nothing else but the constancy of faith.*"

Isa 2:1 The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

Isaiah described his experience as "the word [he] saw." I like the sound of that.

We are privileged to sometimes 'see' the word. For example, if you lead a person to Christ, or witness it, you see the word in its promised power.

The northern kingdom of Israel would soon be overrun by the merciless Assyrian army. Isaiah was ministering in the south, in the kingdom of Judah, and in Jerusalem. Isa 2:2 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 to it.

"The latter days," in this passage, are the time when the things mentioned in these verses occur. It is after the Lord returns to rule over the Kingdom of God on Earth. We mostly refer to it as the Millennium because, in the Book of the Revelation, we are told over and over again that it lasts 1000 years. It is the period of time between Jesus Christ's Second Coming, and the creation of new heavens and a new Earth.

"The Lord's house" on Earth will be a Temple in Jerusalem. The Millennial Temple occupies the last nine chapters of Ezekiel.

Jerusalem is an uphill climb to an elevation of nearly 2500ft. That isn't really very high, so how is it above other mountains, and exalted in the hills?

1. One way is in its authority. It may not be the tallest peak, but it is home to the greatest Person.
2. *It may be the tallest peak at that time.* In the Great Tribulation there will be "a great earthquake, such a mighty and great earthquake as had not occurred since men were on the earth. Then every island fled away, **and the mountains were not found**" (Revelation 16:18&20).

When Jesus returns, there are living human beings on the Earth, both believers and unbelievers who have survived the Great Tribulation. In a judgment we call The Sheep and the Goats, believers are separated from unbelievers.

- Unbelievers are sent to the place of temporary punishment to await final judgment.
- Believers enter into the Kingdom in their human bodies, begin to re-populate the earth, and are the nations of the Earth.

We label as 'Millennials' anyone born between 1981 and 1996. The true 'Millennials' are those in the Millennium.

Isaiah likens this traffic into Jerusalem to a river's "flow." We could say that humans from every nation, tribe, tongue, and people will be constantly streaming into Jerusalem. It will be the number one streaming service on Earth.

Isa 2:3 Many people shall come and say, "Come, and 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.

You've heard the expression, "There's a new Sheriff in town." It means that things are going to be handled differently. The "many people" who go to be taught His ways may be a reference to delegations from all the nations of the Millennial Earth. They came to know Jesus during the Great Tribulation. Their Christian experience will be very different from any other generation. They had little time, and almost no

resources, to learn about Jesus. What they did know very well is persecution. Jesus will need to teach them the "path."

Isa 2:4 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.

"Rebuke" could be translated *decide* or *convince* or *convict*. Jesus will arbitrate between the nations, making final binding decisions, and enforce them.

I hate to be the one to deliver such terrible news, but there will be a ban on assault rifles.

Ever since Adam and Eve sinned, human beings have learned violence:

- Al Capone is credited with saying, "You can get much further with a kind word and a gun than you can with a kind word alone."
- Michael Corleone said, "If anything in this life is certain, if history has taught us anything, it is that you can kill anyone."

It makes sense when you recall that Jesus called the devil a "murderer from the beginning" (John 8:44). He is a homicidal maniac.

Jesus is no pacifist. He will gently shepherd the inhabitants of Earth, but when necessary His rod will be one of iron resolve. Jesus will demand obedience to doing what is right, with severe consequences for wrong behavior.

We should note that these first four verses are also the first four verses of chapter four in the Book of Micah. Critics argue about who said it first, Isaiah or Micah. The answer, of course, is that God said it first. His repetition ought to peak our interest.

Isa 2:5 O house of Jacob, come and let us walk In the light of the LORD.

This world is darkness. Spiritual darkness. Ahead is the brilliantly lit New Jerusalem. Walk towards its light.

Sadly, Judah would refuse, and go after idols, trusting in other nations rather than the Lord. They would go dark.

Believers sometimes go dark. All of a sudden you realize that you haven't seen them at church, or anywhere for that matter. It doesn't always mean they're backslidden, but it could.

Athletes describe a feeling of being "in the zone." In this state, they feel invincible, as if the game slowed down, the crowd noise fell silent and they achieved an incredible focus on their mission.

The apostle Paul said, "But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead" (Philippians 3:13).

Hope in the Lord's return can help us be "in the zone." Whether we die short of His coming or live to be raptured, it doesn't matter as long as we are straining towards Heaven. Hope can shut-out all the periphery that distracts us from Jesus.

#2 - Your Future Can Be One Of Hiding (v6-22)

Do you have a Go-bag? It should be a sturdy and easy to carry backpack or duffle bag containing things you would want to have with you if you have to leave in a hurry. Zombie apocalypse, pandemic, planet overrun by apes, etc.

Prepping is not so crazy, as long as you're not a prepper. There is a line somewhere between being ready and being Rambo.

In the future Great Tribulation, when God's measured wrath is unleashed, men will try to hide in caves. But as the song says, there will be *Nowhere to run to, Nowhere to hide*. Go-bags and diesel generators are going to get you through safely.

Isa 2:6 For You have forsaken Your people, the house of Jacob, Because they are filled with eastern ways; They *are* soothsayers like the Philistines, And they are pleased with the children of foreigners.

Judah looked to the East for help:

- They adopted dark practices of Eastern religion, like soothsaying.
- They intermarried, having "children of foreigners." God isn't racist. Foreign wives, however, meant foreign religious practices. It meant idolatry.

The title of Isaiah's message was *You've got to change your "eastern ways," Judah*.

Isa 2:7 Their land is also full of silver and gold, And there is no end to their treasures;
Their land is also full of horses, And there is no end to their chariots.

Wealth and military might are a good thing until you trust in them instead of the Lord.

Isa 2:8 Their land is also full of idols; They worship the work of their own hands, That
which their own fingers have made.

Isa 2:9 People bow down, And each man humbles himself; Therefore do not forgive
them.

If you worship what you make, *you are worshipping yourself*. The idol represents what
you want, and the practices involved usually bring self-gratification.

Does Isaiah ask God not to forgive them. This can be translated, "the LORD will not
pardon them." If they refuse to repent, God cannot forgive them.

Isaiah suddenly pivots and looks past the 8th century, past our 21st century, to see the
Great Tribulation.

Isa 2:10 Enter into the rock, and hide in the dust, From the terror of the LORD And
the glory of His majesty.

In the Revelation we read, "And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men,
the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in
the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, 'Fall
on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of
the Lamb!' " (6:15-16).

Isa 2:11 The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, The haughtiness of men shall be
bowed down, And the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day.

Mankind will manifest a lofty-looks haughtiness. That style will be in. It describes
someone who looks down on others, thinking themselves superior.

We do this anytime we look only in the outward appearance of things, replacing
things that God values in a person with the world's standards.

Isa 2:12 For the day of the LORD of hosts *Shall come* upon everything proud and
lofty, Upon everything lifted up - And it shall be brought low -

“The Day of the Lord” is a reference to the entire Great Tribulation. You could look at that entire time as God’s attempt to humble lofty, haughty men.

Barry Webb writes,

Many of Isaiah’s contemporaries looked forward to the day of the LORD as the time when He would step in and destroy Israel’s enemies, just as He had done long ago in the days of Moses and Joshua. But Isaiah and the other eighth-century prophets realized that this confident expectation was grounded in arrogance rather than faith, for Israel and Judah had taken on the ways of the surrounding nations and were therefore just as deserving of judgment. In fact they were more guilty than others because of the greater privileges they had enjoyed. This is a most sobering thought, and one that we ourselves would do well to ponder.

Christians might think God will intervene to save their nation. That’s OK, but it begins with us, the church, being obedient.

Isa 2:13 Upon all the cedars of Lebanon *that are* high and lifted up, And upon all the oaks of Bashan;

Isa 2:14 Upon all the high mountains, And upon all the hills *that are* lifted up;

Isa 2:15 Upon every high tower, And upon every fortified wall;

Isa 2:16 Upon all the ships of Tarshish, And upon all the beautiful sloops.

The Day of the Lord will affect the planet: Land (v14), sea (v16), and everything men have built (v15). The world and its inhabitants will greatly suffer, and the works of man will be destroyed.

Isa 2:17 The loftiness of man shall be bowed down, And the haughtiness of men shall be brought low; The LORD alone will be exalted in that day,

Let’s call loftiness and haughtiness, pride. Pride was the devil’s downfall. It was pride that got our original parents in trouble in the Garden of Eden. To super-oversimplify the situation, God must bring us low in order to lift us up to sit with Him.

Isa 2:18 But the idols He shall utterly abolish.

No idols, no idol worship. Sometimes you need to separate yourself from the things that draw you away from the Lord. It’s not a sign of weakness but of wisdom.

Isa 2:19 They shall go into the holes of the rocks, And into the caves of the earth,
From the terror of the LORD And the glory of His majesty, When He arises to shake
the earth mightily.

We talk about the World Economic Forum in our prophecy updates. It is the organization that seeks to pull together all of the elite leaders of government and business in order to take over governing the planet. That is not my opinion; it is their stated goal.

They usually meet once a year, in Davos, Switzerland. They met this past week. They have decided they are going to build a village where WEF members can come anytime. It takes a village to take over the world.

They are going to need bunkers during the Great Tribulation. No matter how far or deep into the Earth they go, God will shake them.

Isa 2:20 In that day a man will cast away his idols of silver And his idols of gold, Which they made, *each* for himself to worship, To the moles and bats,

Isa 2:21 To go into the clefts of the rocks, And into the crags of the rugged rocks,
From the terror of the LORD And the glory of His majesty, When He arises to shake
the earth mightily.

It will be shake & bake. We read in the Revelation, "Then the fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and power was given to him to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and they blasphemed the name of God who has power over these plagues; and they did not repent and give Him glory" (16:8-9).

Isa 2:22 Sever yourselves from such a man, Whose breath *is* in his nostrils; For of what account is he?

Isaiah comes back from the future to continue addressing Judah.

"Breath in his nostrils" is a way of referring to the frailty of human life. Any breath could be your last breath. The exhortation is for Judah to stop trusting in alliances with other nations and trust instead in their covenant relationship with God.

If you are not a believer in Jesus, you are hiding from Him in plain sight. He sees you; He loves you; He died for you, taking your sins upon Himself so God could declare you righteous.

When I had a kidney stone, the doc shot me up with Demerol. It didn't take long for me to experience tunnel vision. I could only see things in the very center of my vision. Everything else was pitch black.

Tunnel vision is a metaphor we apply to describe someone who is focused on their goal, shutting out everything else.

We benefit by spiritual tunnel vision. Block out sin and the world, focus on the Lord. Look for the city whose builder and maker is God. Let faith produce hope as we wait for the appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Billy Graham once said, *"I've read the last page of the Bible. It's all going to turn out all right."*