

This is what Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem:

<sup>2</sup>In the last days

the mountain of the LORD's temple will be established  
as the highest of the mountains;  
it will be exalted above the hills,  
and all nations will stream to it.

<sup>3</sup>Many peoples will come and say,

“Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,  
to the temple of the God of Jacob.  
He will teach us his ways,  
so that we may walk in his paths.”

The law will go out from Zion,  
the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

<sup>4</sup>He will judge between the nations  
and will settle disputes for many peoples.

They will beat their swords into plowshares  
and their spears into pruning hooks.  
Nation will not take up sword against nation,  
nor will they train for war anymore.

<sup>5</sup>Come, descendants of Jacob,  
let us walk in the light of the LORD. (Isaiah 2:1-5)

### **Come, Let Us Go Up to the Mountain of the Lord**

On the surface it may have looked like things were going fine for God's people. They did all of the right stuff in that they brought their sacrifices to God and burned the incense like they were supposed to. They followed the appointed holidays and gave their offerings too. But they were a sinful nation, a people loaded with guilt and given to corruption. Instead of defending life, they are murderers. Corruption and injustice ran rampant from the leaders as they looked to line their own pockets rather than defend the defenseless. And for it they were facing God's judgment. God would look like the enemy as he would allow the country to be ruined, burned with fire, attacked, ravaged, and laid waste by other nations. God would not ignore their scarlet red sins. The Lord would turn his hand against his own people and bring destruction on them so they would be broken. Many would perish. There would be no one to quench the fire.

Facing God's just judgment and living in a world where peace was not being found, the prophet Isaiah sees this word concerning Judah and Jerusalem. Mount Zion, that is, the city of Jerusalem and more specifically here the temple of the

Lord, is established as the chief of the mountains and raised above all the other hills. He sees people from many nations flowing like a river towards it with people encouraging each other and more to go up to this mountain. Why? Because there the King will teach them his ways. From there the King would lead them to walk in his paths. They will learn what God's will is and their lives will reflect it. They will take this word that they have learned with them and go out. From this mountain the King judges the nations and brings peace all over the earth. There will be no need for sword, spear, or training in the art of war. So, they will hammer those things into something useful: plowshares and pruning hooks, stuff for planting and harvesting. The King will bring complete and total peace between the nations and between her people. So, the people encourage each other: Come, let us walk in the light of the Lord.

This is God's continued call to you his people today. His mountain is not the physical location of Israel and Jerusalem today where the Temple Mount currently sits. He isn't calling us to reestablish a nation on this earth from where he will reign. No, he brings us to where God promises to be found: his Word, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper. Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord.

Like the people of Judah of old at times it can seem like everything is going just fine on the surface. But we know better, even if we are careful to not divulge too much when asked how we are doing, and we respond, "Pretty good." We see injustice in the world while the bad seem to get by with it and succeed but the so-called innocent suffer. We hear babies diagnosed with brain cancer and wonder how is the fair? The elderly get older and deteriorate more while the family wonders, "Why hasn't God taken her home yet?" Sin and its temptations never go away but continue to pester and annoy promising relief while never fully satisfying but leaving you always wanting more. So often we feel paralyzed and stuck not knowing what we should do. Even the excitement of something new in the future brings with it its own worries and concerns. We wonder, when is this all going to be taken care of? And so often with the wondering comes the doubting that the "when" is already taken care of, it's in God's hands and for him alone to know. What will give us the peace we crave is found on the mountain of the Lord.

But we are so easily distracted and, quite frankly, try to climb the wrong mountain. We work so hard and give so much energy trying to reach the peak of success listening to others who say your career should look like this, your family and friends like that, and your life should have this stuff in it. We strive to reach the peak of life goals and dreams by this point with the promise that once and if you have, you've "made it." There's the promised peak of having life figured out, with

enough saved up and experiences enjoyed. And as long as you do the right stuff in the right way, you hope to have some peace of mind.

That's really what we are looking for, isn't it? Peace. Peace that I've worked hard enough and it was actually worth all of that effort. Peace that I've done enough right things. Oh, you know there's always more to do, but you just want a little peace that you can understand and measure in some way. But that's such a fragile peace. It quickly shatters to pieces when those personal securities fall away—your health, your wealth, those relationships disappoint and those close to you hurt you the most. The next failure and the honest fact that your best wasn't good enough knocks down that peace you had worked so hard to attain. The worry of tomorrow and anxiety of what's next, the turmoil of this world and exasperation of sin robs us of those peaceful moments we work so hard to have.

We tell ourselves if we just knew when this peace would come, it would help. But you know how knowing when you will arrive at your destination doesn't actually make the trip go any more quickly or smoothly. The Lord doesn't tell us exactly when, only that he is coming soon. The Lord told his Old Testament Israel to look ahead and trust this would happen. We have the benefit of looking behind trusting it did happen and that more is to come. Mount Zion the physical location is not that impressive of a mountain especially compared to the Rockies of Colorado. In fact, it's not even the highest point in Israel or most impressive in that region. But it is chief of the mountains and exalted above the hills because of what God accomplished on it.

On Mount Zion we see our king coming to us gentle and riding on a donkey. He is the Son of David who comes in the name of the Lord. He comes to save his people and the nations, to bring peace on earth and with God in the highest heaven. It will be on a smaller hill outside of the city of Jerusalem where your King wins the ultimate victory for you. On the surface it's looks anything but fine as he is sentenced under the rule of a foreign nation. He looks anything but a bringer of peace as he is nailed to the cross and becomes a curse for us. It was anything but peaceful as he is rejected by the ones he came to save and forsaken by God. But hidden in the cross and person of Jesus Christ God's glory is revealed. Satan's work is destroyed by the one who comes from David's line. Your freedom from slavery to sin paid for with the sinless blood pouring from his veins. The King over all, including time, worked all things so that when the time had fully come, he set down his life to save the world to pick it up again so that we might be declared right with God. This same risen and ascended Jesus has been given the name above every name that every knee shall bow in heaven and on earth to declare him King of kings and Lord of lords.

And so people from every tribe, nation, and culture flood to this mountain where Jesus hangs between heaven and earth to win us peace with God. We go to his cross where he teaches us his ways so that we might walk in his paths. There the King teaches us that salvation is found in no one else. We learn his ways that your pleasing God and being right with him won't come from you doing or being better. It's entirely based on the undeserved love that Jesus gives and forgiveness he won for you.

As we receive his love he freely gives, how else are we to respond but to walk in his paths? How else should we respond but to share his love as we love and serve each other? How else should we respond but to rejoice that in Jesus we already have peace that surpasses understanding. There is no need to be anxious. You've been washed with water and the word. You are God's child. If God is for us, who can be against us? There's no need to be anxious about tomorrow; it will come as it will. You can't add a second to your life with your worrying and trying to figure out when. Instead, come up to the mountain of the Lord. Here the King gives you rest as he comes to you. Here is where he wants to be found. Be here in God's house with God's people where we encourage one another: it's good to be here gladly learning and being taught by our King. Come up to the mountain of the Lord where he invites you to take and eat and take and drink a feast with him that is a foretaste of the banquet that awaits you with him. And then he tells you: depart in peace.

Come up to the mountain of the Lord. Your king will return to judge the living and the dead. And when he returns, then we will have the peace he promises where swords, spears, and training in war will be useless. There will be no more war or fear of war. There will be no more fighting between each other and disagreements or frustrations that threaten that peace. It surpasses understanding; we can't even imagine what it will be like because it is so foreign from what we have right now.

Until then, come, let us walk in the light of the Lord. With sins forgiven and baptized in his name, turn from sin to the life he promises is already yours. Go out from our own Zion here with the word of the Lord spoken into our ears and onto our hearts. Share it with our friends and family with the lives we live and words we speak so they too might know this peace that is ours in Jesus. Who needs to be encouraged to be here? You know them. Who needs to hear that invitation again? God has equipped you today with his word to invite them. Your king is coming! Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord. Amen.