

When the Kings Come Marching In: Isaiah and the New Jerusalem by Richard Mouw;
Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids Michigan, 1983. Softcover, 96 pp.

What is the relationship between Christ and culture? In this brief but fine study, Dr. Mouw draws some important principles from Isaiah 60 for the transformation of culture. He shows how this chapter as well as the parallel passages in Revelation 21 and 22 have profound significance for today. Four main features of the celestial city are singled out for our consideration;

- (1) "the wealth of the nations" is gathered into the city;
- (2) the "kings of the earth" march into the city;
- (3) people from many nations are drawn to the city;
- (4) light pervades the city.

In exploring the implications of these features, Dr. Mouw concludes that Christians, in their pilgrimage to the celestial city, must work together in developing a Christian perspective towards technology, political authority, business, art, science, and race relationships. Solutions must be sought for today's burning social questions. He says, "when we invite the manufacturers of weapons to devote themselves to making instruments of peace, we are seeking the city in whose midst swords will be beaten into plough-shares, when we propose programs of actively preparing for the day when the new song of the Lamb will fill the earth. In a very special and profound way, we prepare for life in the City when we work actively to bring about healing and obedience within the community of the people of God."

Dr. Mouw suggests, that the diverse cultural contributions of all the peoples and nations that have existed on the earth will be progressively unfolded and developed in the new heaven and earth. All of human culture will be taken up into the kingdom of God in the end times. Mr. Mouw says of our Lord, "The Lamb is the lamp of the City who will draw all of the works of culture, and all rulers and peoples, to himself."

Dr. Mouw's views raise some interesting questions. What has happened to the principle of the antithesis? Are we called to stand in solidarity with non-Christians in the struggle for equality, social justice and liberation? Or should we call the world to repentance, to turn to Christ the Redeemer – The way, The Truth and The life (John 14:6)? Dr. Mouw seems to have opted for an optimistic view of history. He apparently stands in the tradition of Niebuhr.

We are indebted to him for this Biblical study which also shows knowledge of past and current trends in culture. May it stimulate further exploration of Scripture and dialogue on this crucial subject.

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