

The People Who in Darkness Walked



The prophet Isaiah got a glimpse of the Light out over the horizon, and immediately began to speak words of expectancy and promise. People can live on a promise for a long time before that promise is actually fulfilled. The promise and the fulfillment are a set. They are attached to each other. Because of that, Isaiah could sing centuries before Bethlehem's star, "For unto us a child is born." It makes perfect sense in God's "eternal now."

Walking in darkness is a humbling experience, no matter how well we know our surroundings. Walking in darkness, we are at the mercy of our memory, our sense of touch, our sense of hearing, even our sense of smell. When we are dependent only on our senses we seem small and isolated. In such circumstances, even the faintest light allows us to use our sense of sight and gives us hope.

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. Isaiah saw it and we have seen it. The Light in the manger gave Isaiah something to preach about and gives us something to sing about. We ooh and ahh around the manger as we do around any crib. But in this case we also chuckle a bit. Darkness is conquered by a baby. Death, however large and looming it may make itself appear, is conquered by the smallest installment of life; one breath to a suffocating person, one swallow to a person dying of thirst, one little light to all of humanity walking in darkness.

We walk now in the Light. There are no more excuses for dark agendas, dark relationships, dark actions and reactions. We walk in the Light and all our thoughts and actions are exposed. So too, in a happier vein, God's truth is not hidden; God's grace and peace are seen in all of their stark vulnerability. That is what will "bring to earth the peace of Heaven."

The people who in darkness walked can now see where they are going. Sight brings with it great responsibility. We can see the wrong path. We can see the right path. We can see injustice. We can see abuse. Our response is exposed in full light. We see also that the baby of Bethlehem, now fully grown, walks beside us. That's good news, in person.

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