

Messianic Prophecies in Isaiah #10: The Messiah as “Light of the Gentiles”

Ps. 4:6 – “... LORD, lift up the light of thy countenance upon us.”

The Messiah as the Light of Gentiles

Isa. 9:2 – “The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.”

Isa. 42:1-7 – (my servant, my spirit upon him, shall not cry nor cause voice to be heard, doesn’t break bruised reed or quench smoking flax, etc.) v. 6 – ‘... and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; To open the blind eyes ...”

Isa. 49:6 – “And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.”

Isa. 60:1-3 – “Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.”

The NT clearly applies these prophecies to Jesus.

Mt. 4:14-16 quotes Isa. 9:1-2

Ac. 13:47 – (when Paul turned to the Gentiles) “For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.” (quote of Isa. 49:6)

Jn. 1:4, 9 – “In him was life; and the life was the light of men. ... That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.”

Jn. 8:12 – “Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.”

Most of these references are using the word “light”, not in a physical sense, but as an enlightening or opening of the understanding. The whole world is in darkness, and doesn’t even know it. They can see visible light, but are blind to truth and spiritual life. But in Christ the veil of spiritual deadness and ignorance is taken away and we can “see” – that is, truly understand and recognize truth.

Before we are converted, we are spiritually dead, and not only blind to truth, but ignorant of it.

Eph. 4:17-18 – “... walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart”

2 Cor. 4:3-4 – “But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine upon them.”

What do we see when we come into the light?

1. Our sin.

Isa. 6:1-5 – Isaiah had a vision of God in glory upon the throne, surrounded by the seraphim, and what was his response? v. 5 – “Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.”

2. Truth

Jn. 14:6 – “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”

2 Cor. 3:14-16 – “But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart. Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away.”

3. The Redemption that is in Christ

Heb. 2:9 – “But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.”

4. God’s glory

2 Cor. 4:6 – “For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”

5. How to walk in the light according to God’s will and for his glory

Ps. 119:105 – “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”

1 Jn. 2:8 – “Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth.”

But this light is also real in a physical sense (perceptible to eyes).

Ordinarily we do not see this, but when people have seen Jesus in vision or in person, like John in the book of Revelation, or Paul when caught up to heaven, or Peter, James, and John on the mount of transfiguration, or Daniel seeing the Son of man coming to the throne of the Ancient of days (Daniel 7), or Moses with the burning bush, or Saul on the road to Damascus, they see him in indescribably glorious light. The closest description is a comparison to the sun (Ac. 26:13, Rev. 1:13-16).

Heb. 1:3 – “Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person ...” That is to say, the eternal Son of God is himself the very brightness of God’s glory! When the Son took on flesh, that glory was hidden, and he appeared as any other man, but now he is again clothed in glory.

When God condescends to personally reveal himself here on earth, it is localized in one spot. e.g., the burning bush, the pillar of fire, the glory in the tabernacle of on Mt. Sinai where Moses’ face even shined for awhile, just from being in God’s presence. Also in 1 K. 8:10-11 at the dedication of Solomon’s temple. The priests could not stand to minister, because the cloud of God’s glory filled the house. When Moses finished setting up the Tabernacle in the wilderness, even he could not enter. Ex. 40:34-35 – “Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.”

God must limit such manifestations, because “no man can see my face and live.” But in the new heavens and the new earth, God’s presence will illuminate everything, not just one spot. When we have our resurrected, glorified bodies, and have spiritual eyes to see, we will be able to live in that glory. There won’t even be a sun or moon, merely the presence of God will enlighten everything. I don’t believe there will even be shadows. A shadow is darkness caused by something being in the way of a light source, but God’s omnipresence will cause everything to be enlightened by his glory. Something can be hidden from the sun, but not from God’s omnipresent glory. He isn’t a single point of light, like the sun or a light bulb - his presence permeates everything, and will fill every point with light.

Rev. 21:22-23 – “And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.”

Eph. 5:14 – “Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.” 5:8 – “For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the LORD: walk as children of light:”