Isaiah - Commentaries by Edward B. Dennett

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Isaiah 60:1

At the end of Isaiah 59 it is said that the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and upon that is based the exhortation given, "Arise, shine; for thy light" (the Redeemer) "is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." The light now possessed in the Person of the Redeemer, dwelling in Zion, is to be displayed. Notice, too, that this is in contrast to the state of the whole earth. "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." Jerusalem, illuminated with the light of the glory of the Lord, shines in the midst of the dense moral darkness around. It was so with the Lord Himself at His first coming. "In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." John 1:4,5. So also with the believer, as the Apostle writes: "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light" (or, "for the shining forth") "of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." 2 Cor. 4:6.

Another thing may be observed. When the light shines, whether through Jerusalem or through the believer (as indeed it was also through our blessed Lord and Savior), it is for a testimony-a powerful testimony-to Him who has enkindled it and whose glory is the light. We thus read in our chapter, "And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." v. 3. (Compare Rev. 21:23,24.) The Gentiles behold and are attracted to the glory that has dawned upon the earth; and "the city of the Lord, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel," becomes thus the center of universal blessing, the source of all being indicated in the words, "The Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory." v. 19. In dwelling upon this blessed scene, it is well to remind ourselves that God in His grace has set believers, in anticipation of that day, as lights in the midst of the darkness, and if this treasure-the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ-is possessed in earthen vessels, it is that the excellency of the power which causes it to shine forth may be of God, and not of us. Christ in glory is always the light in the New Testament, and when our light shines, it is simply the exhibition of Christ in the life.