

sees this prophecy fulfilled in Jesus' dwelling in Galilee.

V. 2. *The people . . . in darkness*; a description true of all the world when Christ came, but especially true of those dwelling in these Northern regions, who were despised among the Jews, John 1:46; 7:52. *The land of the shadow of death*. The sad condition of Israel under the yoke of a foreign bondage is likened to the darkness of the lower world. *Have seen a great light*. These words point to Jesus, who was to be, not only the "Glory of . . . Israel," but also "a Light to lighten the Gentiles," Luke 2:32. It was fitting, therefore, that He should begin His work on the borders of the Gentile world.

V. 3. *Thou hast multiplied the nation*. Israel would increase (compare, ch. 26:15; 66:8; Zech. 14:10). Christ's kingdom would grow in like manner until it should no longer be limited to the Jews, but should spread over the whole world. *Thou hast increased their joy* (Rev. Ver.), The Hebrew equivalents for "not" and "their" (or "his") are alike in sound and differ very little in spelling, and one may have been substituted for the other in transcribing. There is always joy where the Saviour is received into the heart and home (see Acts 8:8). Three points are to be noted about this joy: (1) *Joy before thee*; that is, joy which depends upon God as its source. (2) *Joy in harvest*; as at the Feast of Tabernacles, Ex. 23:16. (3) *Divide the spoil*. It is the joy of victors after the battle.

II. A Vision of Peace, 4, 5.

Vs. 4, 5. *Thou hast broken*; that is, the power of the Assyrians. This pictures the deliverance from the great oppressor, sin (compare Mark 2:10, 11). *Yoke of his burden*; the yoke which burdened him. The yoke is an emblem of slavery, Gen. 27:40. The foreigner has had Israel yoked like an animal. Jehovah now will sever the yoke from off their neck (compare Gal. 5:1, etc.). *Staff of his shoulder*; the staff used to beat him. *Rod of his oppressor* (driver). Compare Ex. 5:6, 14. Every instrument of slavery is to be destroyed. *As in the day*; that is, day of battle. *Of Midian*; when Gideon overthrew the Midianites (see Judg., chs. 6 to 8).

Read v. 5 as in the Rev. Ver. The military boots and cloaks and other warlike accoutrements shall be destroyed. "War has rolled away forever over that northern horizon and all the relics of war are swept together into the fire." (Dr. G. A. Smith.) (Compare ch. 11:1-10; also ch. 2:4.)

III. A Vision of Christ, 6, 7.

Vs. 6, 7. *Unto us a child is born*. "This is the greatest (blessing) that the writer can hope for, and, in his joy over its fulfilment, he includes himself ('unto us')." (Marti.) He has given us a picture that none save Jesus has ever completely fulfilled. *A son is given*. Jesus was Son of God and Son of man. *Government . . . upon his shoulder*. The reference may be to the royal mantle, the emblem of authority. *Wonderful, Counsellor*; or "Wonder-Counsellor," "a wonder, or the most wonderful, among counsellors is He"—a necessary quality in a grand Ruler (see Col. 2:3). *The mighty God*; or "Hero-God," that is, a God among heroes, a God endued with a power not found in human heroes (compare Ps. 45:6; Heb. 1:8). *The everlasting Father*; or "Father of Eternity," that is, One who continually acts as a tender and pitiful Father to His people (compare Ps. 103:13). *The Prince of Peace*. He is the Bringer of peace (compare ch. 2:2-4; 11:4; Mic. 5:5; Zech. 9:10; John 14:27, and see the song of the angels, Luke 2:14). *Increase . . . no end*. The Messiah's kingdom is to increase until it includes the whole world (compare Matt. 28:19, 20; Eph. 1:20-23). *Zeal of the Lord of hosts*. God's own honor is bound up with this matter. He must therefore help His people and establish His kingdom (compare Zech. 1:14; 8:2; also Hymn 262, v. 4, Book of Praise).

Light from the East

HIS NAME—In primitive times men got their names from some bodily peculiarity, and when the name was once coined it was used indiscriminately. This custom is still common in places where there are many persons of the same name. Later, men began to be called by some trait of their character, either good or bad. The Simple, The Silent, The Cruel, The Terrible, The Good, have been added to historic names, and have