

from Luke's Gospel shows us how Christ rules in the hearts of his followers.

I. The King Promised, Isa. 9 : 2-7.

Vs. 2, 3. *The people that walked in darkness.* Ch. 8 : 21 describes a time of great darkness in Israel. The terrible Assyrians had invaded the land, and the people were sunk in despair and affliction. But v. 1 of ch. 9 (see Rev. Ver.) declares that the darkness will pass away, giving place to the light of peace and joy. *Have seen*; the past tense, because the prophet sees all this as already accomplished. *A great light*; a prophecy which received its complete fulfilment when Christ came. For he is "the light of the world," John 8 : 12. *Thou hast multiplied the nation*; a picture of the growth of God's kingdom, once limited to the Jews, but now embracing peoples of all lands. *Not increased the joy.* The Hebrew words for "not" and "to it" are pronounced alike, and so sometimes confused. But it is clear that this should read, "To it thou hast increased the joy." *Before thee*; as at the Jewish festivals (see Deut. 12 : 7).

Vs. 4, 5. In these two verses the destruction of the oppressor is pictured. *The staff of his shoulder*; the staff with which his back was scourged. The reference is to Israel. *The rod of his oppressor.* We are reminded of the taskmasters in Egypt. *The day of Midian.* "Day" in Arabic often means "day of battle." The phrase here means the day when the dominion of the Midianites was broken (see Judg., ch. 7). *For every battle . . . fuel of fire.* All the accoutrements of the warrior are to be burned in the fire. War itself will be burned up and a kingdom of peace established.

The greatest cause for Israel's joy is to be the birth of the Messiah, who is to rule so righteously. The perfect tense is used, since the prophet regards himself as standing already in vision in the times of the Messiah.

V. 6. *Unto us*; those who survive the judgment previously described. *His name shall be called.* The name of the Messiah is to consist of a series of titles of honor, such, for example, as were given to the kings of Egypt and Babylon. The names given to the Messiah in this passage express the characteristics of his government. *Wonderful, Counsellor.*

It probably gives the sense better to compound these titles, thus: "Wonder-Counsellor." (See Isa. 28 : 29.) *The mighty God*; better, "Hero-God." Wisdom and strength are two fundamental necessities for a successful king. The remaining two titles suggest that the Messiah's rule is to be fatherly and peaceful.

V. 7 tells us of the spread and stability of the Messiah's kingdom. *To order it*; the Messiah's throne does not depend so much upon force as upon judgment and righteousness.

II. The King Ruling, Luke 9 : 49-62.

V. 49. *Answered*; not necessarily implying a previous question. John's saying was perhaps suggested by the "in my name" of v. 48. *Casting out devils.* Many amongst the Jews professed to be able to exorcise, or cast out evil spirits, Matt. 12 : 27. *In thy name.* This exorcist used the very name of Jesus, thereby calling on our Lord's authority. *Followeth not.* John's protest arose out of loyalty, but it was a narrow loyalty.

V. 50. *Not against . . . for us.* For the other side of this truth see Matt. 12 : 30. (Compare Phil. 1 : 18.) There can be no such thing as neutrality towards the cause of Christ.

Vs. 51, 52. *Time was come*; literally, "days were being completed;" Rev. Ver., "well-nigh come." *Received up*; to heaven, Acts 1 : 2. *Set his face*; in spite of his knowledge of the fate before him and the remonstrances of his friends. *Messengers*; two or more of his disciples. *Before his face*; a Hebrew expression, "before his presence:" before he came himself. *Village of the Samaritans*; near the border. Galileans going to the feasts at Jerusalem often passed through Samaria. *Make ready*; to find lodgings for the night.

Vs. 53, 54. *Did not receive.* The Greek implies immediate rejection. *Because . . . to Jerusalem.* The Samaritans' treatment of Jesus did not arise out of personal opposition to himself, but was a protest against the Jewish custom of visiting the temple at Jerusalem, John 4 : 20. *James and John*; in an outburst of temper. Perhaps they were the messengers; well called "sons of thunder," Mark 3 : 17. *Command fire*; to avenge the Samaritan insult. *Even as Elias did*; 2 Kgs.