

EYES NEED LIGHT TO SEE!

Today's Text: Isaiah Chap. 60

Extracts:

Arise, shine; for your light has come! And the glory of the Lord is risen upon you... The sun shall no longer be your light by day, nor for brightness shall the moon give light to you; but the Lord will be to you an everlasting light, and your God your glory. Your sun shall no longer go down, nor shall your moon withdraw itself; for the Lord will be your everlasting light, and the days of your mourning shall be ended [Is. 60: 1, 19-20]

Sundar Singh (1889-1929) came from a famous Sikh family in Northern India.¹ His mother was a devout Hindu and her ambition was for her son to become a Sadhu, that is, an itinerant holy man who dedicates his life to the service of God through poverty, self-denial, solitude and holiness. Sadhus are venerated in Asia. However, following his mother's death when he was only 14 years old, he became disoriented and wanted to take his life. That was when Jesus dramatically appeared to him and turned him into a Sadhu for Christ. He took his new faith to numerous towns and villages in India and into the dangerous mountain regions of Tibet.

While he was on one of such missions up in the mountains, there was a heavy rain that refused to stop. It was getting dark and he was wet, cold and tired. At last, he found a derelict hut and went inside, thanking God for a roof over his head. Everywhere was dark and he simply dropped on the floor and fell asleep. By the time he woke up the following morning, there was bright sunshine and he could see where he was. To his shock, he had spent the night with a huge cobra that curled itself close to him on his blanket!

Sundar had clear eyes when he went into that hut but he could not see the cobra because everywhere was dark. Eyes need light to see because out there in the dark are numerous cobras that can bite us. Satan and his forces have been called the rulers of the darkness of this world [Eph. 6: 12]. Sundar was saved from instant death because he walked in the light of God. With what light do your eyes see? In today's lesson, God is offering you His light. Can you afford to reject it?

¹ Story taken from Phyllis Thompson, *Sadhu Sundar Singh* [Carlisle, U.K.: OM Publishing, 1992]; pp. 52-53

1. The limitations of natural lights

No matter how clear they may be, *eyes cannot see objects when light is absent*. We may spend a great deal of money to improve our vision through wearing glasses or lenses or peering through powerful telescopes. However, if there is no light, we are wasting time. There is a wide variety of natural lights. There are those created by God, such as the *sun* by day and the *moon* and the *stars* by night. In addition to those ones, there are lights made by man, such as *candle, torch and electric light*.

In spite of human ambition to have light all the time, natural lights have their limitations, some of which are as follows:

a) *They are seasonal*

There is no natural light that can shine *all the time*. The sun rises and sets each new day. The moon has phases and the stars only come out at night. The candle may burn out and weak batteries make torchlight dim. We are now familiar with power outages even in the most advanced countries. Therefore, at one time or the other, we can find ourselves in the dark if we rely absolutely on natural lights. A recent research report has shown that telescopes may be worthless by the year 2050 because of pollution from aircraft exhaust trails and climate changes that will make ground-based astronomy impossible.²

Joshua and his troops faced this limitation when they went to war against five Amorite kings who had threatened to destroy the Gibeonites for reaching an accord with the invading Israelite army. At the time that Joshua arrived in Gibeon, the sun was already setting and it was getting dark. There was no way that he could do battle in the dark and the following day could be too late. So, he prayed and God answered him, and “the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and did not hasten to go down for about a whole day” [Josh. 10: 1-13]! It took God’s intervention to provide a miraculous light. Yet, it lasted for only one day and the sun returned to its seasonal routine!

b) *Natural lights limit our vision*

Since they vary in intensity and last only for a short time, natural lights can limit our vision. For example, we may become *shortsighted* when we base our vision only on what we can see while the light is still shining. We saw that during the rift between Abraham and his nephew, Lot. To stop the problem, Abram (as he was then called) offered the younger man the choice between the plains and the hills. Lot “lifted his eyes *and saw all the*

² Paul Rincon, “Telescopes ‘worthless’ by 2050,” <http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/science/nature/4755996.stm>

plain of Jordan, that it was well watered like the garden of the Lord,” and he did not hesitate to choose the plains [Gen. 13: 5-11]. What the sunlight did not show Lot were the warlords that later took him captive [Gen. 14: 1-16], and the immorality of Sodom and Gomorrah (cities on the plains), which seduced his family [Gen. 19: 1-11]. In the end, his choice, based on limited vision caused him his moral downfall, when his daughters raised sons by him after getting him drunk [vv. 30-38].

Limited vision can also *mislead* us. For example, because we see the sun rise each morning and set each evening, we have been misled to accept as truth that the sun rises and sets. They even teach it in science classes! Astrologers and those who compute the horoscopes that some people read every morning in the newspapers to plan their day base their knowledge on planetary movements. The truth is that the sun neither rises nor sets. It is the earth that moves that gives the optical illusion, just as trees tend to speed past you when you sit in a moving truck.

Limited vision may also render us *blind* to reality. For example, that we cannot see the future with natural lights does not mean that it is not real. A good illustration of this can be found where Jacob (Israel) gave his final blessings to the sons of Joseph [Gen. 48: 1-14]. Manasseh was the firstborn and Ephraim was the younger. At the time, “the eyes of Israel were dim with age, so that he could not see,” but Joseph had clear vision. The old man put his left hand on the head of the elder and the right on that of the younger. Joseph, thinking that his father was wrong, being blind, tried to switch Israel’s hands. His father refused and said to Joseph, “I know, my son, I know. He also shall become a people, and he also shall be great; but *truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his descendants shall become a multitude of nations.*”

We see from the forgoing analysis that *with natural lights, we are all blind to varying degrees*. It is that limitation that has spurred a big deception industry for humans, fuelled of course by Satan posing as an angel of light [2 Cor. 11: 14]. When they thought that the sun, moon and stars were the light, they began to worship them as gods. Stargazers, palm readers, diviners and sorcerers began to make money out of the gullible. Scientists began to denounce creation and to doubt the existence of God. However, when we operate in the light of God, *nobody is blind!* That is the point of Chapter 60 in the book of Isaiah.

2. Only God’s light is permanent!

The chapter is talking about Israel (more specifically, Zion) during the coming Kingdom Age. Since believers are the children of that kingdom, the issues discussed therein apply to us. Therefore, we shall use the principles in that chapter to examine our current circumstances.

Bubbling with enthusiasm, Isaiah tells us, “arise, shine; for your light has come! And the glory of the Lord is risen upon you.” [Is. 60: 1]. What is this light?

Go back to the first chapter of the book of Genesis. On the first day, God said, “Let there be *light*,” and there was in deed light [v. 3]. That light was not from the sun or the moon or the stars, which were not created until the fourth day. When God was about to create them, He said, “Let there be *lights*” [v. 14]. Therefore, the first light is different from the natural lights.

The Psalmist says of God, “For with You is the fountain of life; *in Your light we see light*” [Ps. 36: 9]. Now, we know that “in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and *the Word was God* [through whom all things were made and] in Him was life *and the life was the light of men*” [Jn 1: 1,3, 4]. We also know that “that was the *true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world*” [v. 8]. It should therefore not surprise you that Jesus the Christ, the Word of God that became flesh, called Himself “the light of the world” and whoever follows Him “shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life” [Jn 8: 12]. Consequently, according to the chapter under study, the light of God has the following features:

a) *The light of God is everlasting*

We are told, “The sun shall no longer be your light by day, nor for brightness shall the moon give light to you; *but the Lord will be to you an everlasting light, and your God your glory*” [Is. 60: 19]. Since God Himself is the light and the glory, then the light of God is everlasting. It is not seasonal like natural lights. In the New Jerusalem that will be descended, God showed John that “the city had *no need* of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for *the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light*” [Rev. 21: 23]. Therefore, if you abide in God, you have His light and you can be assured of everlasting vision.

b) *The light of God enables us to see in the dark!*

We are assured that even though “the darkness shall cover the earth, and deep darkness the people, .. the Lord will arise over you and His glory will be *seen* upon you.” Moreover, “the Gentiles shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising” [Is. 60: 2,3]. In the physical world, we may not see the enemies lurking in the dark but they can see us. For example, the dangerous cobra saw Sundar Singh when he came into the hut and it could have bitten him to death for intruding. However, God’s light and glory was upon him and the snake slept soundly beside him!

Another way that the light manifests is when God opens your eyes to see beyond the ordinary. For example, after Paul had had a dramatic experience with Jesus Christ on the way to Damascus, he became blind

and “they led him by the hand and brought him to Damascus.” But when Jesus appeared in a vision to Ananias, one of the disciples in Damascus, and instructed him to go and lay hands on Paul, He told him, “behold, he is praying, and *in a vision he has seen a man named Ananias* coming in and putting his hand on him, so that he might receive his sight” [Acts 9: 10-12]. Ordinarily, blind persons cannot see but with the light of God, Paul saw Ananias.

c) *The light of God manifests your blessings!*

To bask in the perpetual light of God is a heavenly experience! You will shine and receive God’s glory and no longer know any darkness [Is. 60: 1, 2]. Kings and strangers will roost in your light [v. 3]. Economic prosperity, joy and peace will decorate your life [vv. 4- 10, 18].

In place of bronze, God will bring you gold .You well know that in the Olympic Games, the bronze medal is for the third -place winner and the gold for the first-place winner. When you have the light of God, you become the head and not the tail! God will regard all your people (judges, administrators, soldiers, etc.) as righteous [v. 17]. The blessings are endless.

Who is the king of glory? It is “the Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.” He is “the Lord of hosts” [Ps. 24: 8, 10]. So, the King of glory who is the source of your light shall also give you your victory in battle and turn your mourning into joy [Is. 60: 18, 19, 20].

3. Where to find the light and glory of God

We have shown above that it takes more than clear eyes to see objects. We also need light. However, natural lights are inadequate because they have limited life spans and are worse when our eyes begin to fail or go completely blind. On the other hand, the light of God lasts forever and we can see it whether we are blind or clear-sighted. We can find such glorious light by:

- ❑ Becoming born again, that is, by receiving the baptism of water and the Holy Spirit for “unless a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” [Jn 3: 3];
- ❑ Following Jesus the Light of the world. By continually looking on to Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, we are following the Light of the world.. He has assured, “he who follows Me shall not walk in darkness but have the light of life” [Jn 8: 12]. Therefore, we can no longer be blind, deceived or misled.
- ❑ Always walking by faith and not by sight. To walk by sight is to base our actions on what we can see with the naked eye but “the things which are seen are temporary [whereas] the things which are not seen are eternal”

[**2 Cor. 4: 18**]. Only people who walk by faith can please God [**Heb. 11: 6**] and are declared righteous [**Rom. 4: 4-5**].

- Constantly feeding on God's word. The word of God is the food for the spirit and you can never get constipated on it! God commanded Joshua, "This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it *day and night*, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. *For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success*" [**Josh. 1: 8**]. That is why the word of God is a lamp to our feet and a light to our paths [**Ps. 119: 105**].
- Making your body the temple of God. When you have accepted Jesus as your Lord and Saviour and become born again, your body becomes the temple of the Holy Spirit [**1 Cor. 6: 19-20**]. It becomes sanctified as the temple of the living God who then dwells in you and makes you His son or daughter [**2 Cor. 6: 16-18**].

4. Conclusion

In our daily Christian walk, we face enormous odds. On the surface, there are human enemies. In the spiritual realm, Satan and other forces of darkness are working tirelessly to frustrate us. Unfortunately, we cannot see them unless the light of God is beamed on them, and it is only in His light that we can see the light [**Ps. 36: 9**]. The Psalmist says, "though I walk through the valley of the *shadow of death*, I will fear no evil" [**Ps. 23: 4**]. *Where there is no light, there is no shadow*. The only reason that you will not be afraid of death is because God's light has revealed its evil designs and how you can avoid them.

Your eyes need light to see. Make sure it is the light of God.