

city of the LORD, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel." The various statements in the chapter make it quite clear that it is not primarily addressing a geographical area or a group of houses, but a people who may be personified as "the city of the LORD, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel." The geographical area is kept in mind and is involved in the chapter, but the primary reference is to a people rather than a place. In Isaiah's day God's true people were filled with despair as they realized that the terrible predictions of exile and suffering, made necessary by the sin of the nation as a whole, would certainly be fulfilled.

What a comfort it must have been to them to know that eventually, after all the misery and suffering of the exile and dispersion, God would save the entire nation and Jerusalem would again become a center where His glory would be wonderfully established. He would again make Zion a place of joy and happiness. Although a city is addressed, God's faithful people in Israel are really the object of discussion.

The chapter may be divided into six sections:

1. The Light of God's Glory vv. 1-2.
2. Ingathering vv. 3-4.
3. Material Prosperity vv. 5-17b.
4. External Peace and Safety vv. 17c-18.
5. The Light of God's Glory (the theme of vv. 1-2 stressed again) vv. 19-20.
6. The Permanence and Wide Extension of the Promised Blessing vv. 21-22.

We shall now examine each of these sections separately.

1. The Light of God's Glory, verses 1-2.

The chapter begins with a call to Zion to rejoice at the coming of the light of the glory of God, in sharp contrast to the thick darkness which will cover the whole earth during the trying days at the end of the present age. The two main sections of the Book of Isaiah are bound together by the presence of many common emphases. One of these is the frequent occurrence of references to the light of the knowledge and glory of God. The word "light" occurs more