

Notes:

Sermon Text

Subject

Jesus the Light of the World

Think of a glorious sunrise or sunset you have seen. No wonder some people worshipped the sun as a god. We, who are more “enlightened,” know the one, true God is not the sun but the Maker of the sun. However, we associate light with God, as did our Jewish ancestors in the faith. Bright clouds, a burning bush, and a pillar of fire were signs of God’s presence for them. The psalmist spoke of God as light: “The LORD is my light and my salvation” (Psalm 27:1); and the prophet promised, “The LORD shall be your light forever” (Isaiah 60:19). Light stood for the glory of God. Prophecies also spoke of the Messiah as light: “Your light has come, the glory of the Lord shines upon you” (Isaiah 60:1). And the prophet Simeon hailed the child Jesus as “a light for revelation to the Gentiles.”

One ceremony for the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles was the lighting of four great candelabra in the Court of Women in memory of God’s presence. While in the Court of Women on this feast, Jesus said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life” (John 8:12). These words imply that Jesus was God as well as the Messiah. Jesus repeated his claim before he cured the blind man (John 9:5).

Light is beautiful and mysterious—like God. It is one but can be separated into many colors. [It is believed that] light is made up of particles [and] waves. In addition light has many functions that makes it a good symbol for Jesus. Light helps us see things. Jesus gives us the truth about God and about life, our origin, and our destiny. Light guides us as we travel. Jesus guides us safely through life to our heavenly home. Light promotes growth and life. Jesus brings us everlasting life. Light warms and comforts. Jesus welcomes us and calms us. Light prevents crime. Jesus is goodness itself. Light dispels darkness, which stands for evil. Jesus pierces the darkness of sin and death and conquers them. All the darkness in the world cannot put out one candle flame. Jesus cannot be overcome by evil.

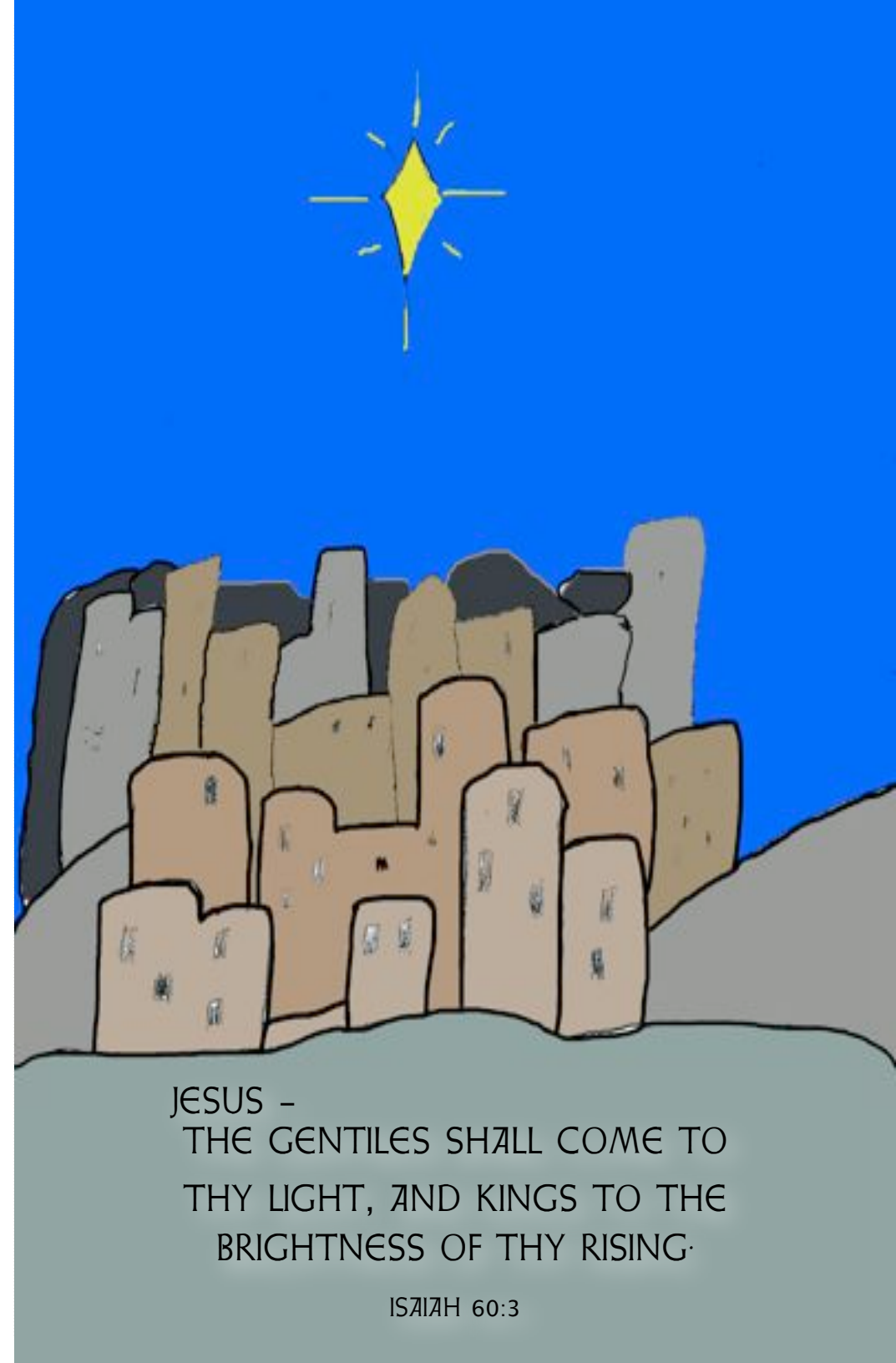
We often think of Jesus as our light. John begins his Gospel with “the true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world” (John 1:9). In the Nicene Creed, [Jesus is called] “Light from Light.” ...

A famous poem by Cardinal John Henry Newman begins, “Lead, kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom,/Lead thou me on.” We pray for enlightenment to Christ and his Spirit, who came to us in the form of fire on Pentecost. Following their lights, we look forward to eternal light in God’s kingdom where for all God’s holy ones, “Night will be no more, nor will they need light from lamp or sun, for the Lord God shall give them light” (Revelation 22:5).

Light of the world, illumine me!

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JESUS -
THE GENTILES SHALL COME TO
THY LIGHT, AND KINGS TO THE
BRIGHTNESS OF THY RISING.

ISAIAH 60:3

