



2 But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. (Mal 4:2)

2.The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. (Isaiah 9:2)

I could not allow the opportunity to pass without expounding in fuller detail on the great and wonderful metaphor artfully painted by the Finger of God in the second verse of this chapter - **The Sun of Righteousness!** I will attempt to answer in two points the questions raised by this verse: 1) why the metaphor; and 2) how does the metaphor so compellingly point to Our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ? But first, I will point out this metaphor is as complete a message of the Advent of Christ as could be scripted. The Voice of God will be silent for the next 400 years so that those of His people who were accustomed to the voices of the prophets that they, nonetheless had disregarded, will suffer a famine of hearing the Word of the Lord from the days of Malachi across four centuries until the great voice of the Archangel, Gabriel, spoke to a young virgin in Nazareth. If ever a people sat in darkness, it was Israel during this dark night of spiritual blindness and silence. But Malachi had given a gem of hope, shrouded in mystery, to those whose spirits and hearts were discerning enough to receive it and comprehend it. It was couched in a beautiful metaphor – the Sun of Righteousness!

Those writers of the sacred text to whom the wonders and Word of God were revealed found no means of revealing, in human terms, the majesty of meaning which was imparted to them. The most excellent means of showing the beauty of expression of things heavenly and divine were through the media of those things physical which were of common knowledge to the hearers. Those things physical are known as metaphors. In the case of our Lord and Savior, this technique would be comparable to the literary technique known as personification – i.e. ascribing personal qualities to inanimate objects. Our Lord is known as the Rock of our Salvation (Deut 32:15, 2 Sam 22:47, Ps 18:2, 18:46, 62:2, 89:6, et al) because of His unchangeable stability and strength. He is known as the Vine (John 15:5) from which the branches (His people) draw their life-blood and bear fruit. He is called the Rose of Sharon (SS 2:1) for his purity and beauty. He is called the Pearl of Great Price (Matthew 13:46). Our Lord is most often

made reference to in the form of heavenly lights such as the Bright Morning Star (Rev 22:16), the Day Star (2 Peter 1:19), and here as the Sun of Righteousness.

Why the metaphor of "the Sun of Righteousness" ascribed to our Lord Jesus Christ? First of all, because of His Unity of Being. You may walk outdoors on a clear and pristine night to view thousands of stars that are visible with the naked eye (many more exist than can be seen). There are millions of stars, but only one SUN. In creation, we have many mountains, rivers, trees, and deserts – but only ONE Sun. All of the living Creation depend upon the Sun for their lives. Nothing could live without the Sun, and none can live in eternity without the Sun of Righteousness. There is only One Lord, One Savior, and One mediator between God and man – our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

Secondly, our Lord is the Sun of Righteousness because of His NEARNESS to those who will receive Him. He is a God that is NEAR – Emmanuel. The Sun is the Star that is nearest to us and therefore our life source. He is one who cleaves closer than a brother. (Prov 18:24).

Thirdly, due to His magnitude and magnificence is Jesus called the Sun of Righteousness. There is no greater or brighter orb in our heaven than the Sun, or than Jesus Christ. There is no heavenly body, or being, that even comes close in comparison.

Fourthly, He is the Sun of Righteousness because of the universal benefits He offers. Just as the Sun spreads its beams of life-giving light on all alike, so does Christ shed His love and life abroad on all who will receive light.

Fifthly, because of His nature, He is the Sun of Righteousness. Jesus Christ is the Fountain of Light – the Light of the World! Creation began in darkness, but the light always follows the night. Jesus scatters away darkness before Him and darkness cannot abide His presence. He is forever the COMING Light! We may be enduring the night of our Creation Day, but the Light is about to arise as the Sun to complete the day of our eternity.

Our Lord and Savior has been Coming from eternity past to present. He is forever rising to those who have eyes to see. His coming was promised to Adam and Eve, and reaffirmed to Abraham. He came in bodily form to end the night of darkness that pervaded all of the earth. He will come in Heavenly power to end the long night of doubt, trial and strife to bring an eternal day to those who are His.

Upon whom will the Sun of Righteousness arise? ". . . **unto you that fear my name.**" His resplendent rays will break on the eastern horizon and grow continually in magnitude until no darkness at all can remain. On that Sun Rise, the Light will never set. The fear called for here is not a mortal fear of injury, but a filial fear as of a child for a loving and respected father. The kind of fear generated by love and reverence and not by apprehension of punishment. Noah labored more than one hundred years in building the Ark out of that love-based fear – not out of fear of perishing.

The world has observed a long Advent season from its inception until now. But with each brilliant revelation of Light, the Advent becomes more laden with promise and anticipation of the final Advent of Light when "**the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings.**" As we prepare our hearts for the Advent and Christmas Season, let us exercise caution that we allow no material or worldly object to come between us and that Sun of Righteousness, else our way will be dark indeed. Just as the moon may, at sundry times, eclipse the sun; so may the concerns of the world come

between us and the Light of Righteousness that is our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Our hearts and souls must REFLECT that same LIGHT before others. His Light is the only Light we can ever have.

At this coming Advent, let us appropriately look back to all that is past with remembrance, but, more importantly, let us look forward to that Light which is coming with all the powers of Heaven.