

Isaiah 24:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed,
when the LORD of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in
Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously.

Analysis

Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed (וְתִפְאַרְתָּה הַלְּבָנָה וְבָשָׂרָה) — The verbs chaphar (be ashamed, abashed) and bush (be ashamed, embarrassed) personify celestial bodies experiencing humiliation. When God's glory appears, even sun and moon—sources of light—are 'ashamed' because their light pales into insignificance. Jesus described this: 'the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light' (Matthew 24:29). **When the LORD of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem** — The verb malak (reign, be king) indicates Yahweh's direct royal rule from Zion, not through intermediaries.

And before his ancients gloriously (וְתִתְהַלֵּל קָדוֹם קָבֹד) — The zeqenim (elders/ancients) are the redeemed assembly witnessing God's kavod (glory). Revelation 4:10-11 depicts twenty-four elders before God's throne casting crowns, worshiping in glory's presence. The sun and moon's 'shame' isn't moral guilt but the inevitable dimming of derivative light before uncreated Light. As Paul writes: 'There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon... but they differ in glory' (1 Corinthians 15:41). When the Glory appears, all created glories fade. This is the Beatific Vision—seeing God face-to-face, the ultimate human fulfillment where no created thing competes for attention.

Historical Context

Zion/Jerusalem represents God's dwelling place, the temple as microcosm of heaven. Post-exilic Jews expected Messiah to reign from Jerusalem; Christians spiritualized this to the New Jerusalem (Hebrews 12:22) descending from heaven (Revelation 21:2). The 'elders' connect to Israel's seventy elders (Exodus 24:9-11) who saw God's glory on Sinai, now expanded to include all redeemed people (Revelation 5:9-10).

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does God's glory outshining sun and moon illustrate that all created beauty and light derive from Him?
2. What does it mean to see God 'gloriously' in the presence of the elders—how does corporate worship anticipate this?
3. How should the hope of beholding God's glory directly shape our current priorities and what we seek glory in?

Interlinear Text

וְקַפְרָה	בְּלִבְנֵה	וּבְזֶשֶׁת	בְּמַחְטֵה	כִּי	מֶלֶךְ
shall be confounded	Then the moon	ashamed	and the sun	H3588	shall reign
H2659	H3842	H954	H2535		H4427

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 60:19 (Glory): The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the LORD shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory.

Revelation 21:23 (Glory): And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

Isaiah 13:10 (Parallel theme): For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine.

Revelation 22:5 (Kingdom): And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.

Hebrews 12:22 (References Jerusalem): But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,

Isaiah 12:6 (Parallel theme): Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee.

Isaiah 30:26 (References Lord): Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the LORD bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound.

Micah 4:7 (Kingdom): And I will make her that halted a remnant, and her that was cast far off a strong nation: and the LORD shall reign over them in mount Zion from henceforth, even for ever.

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