



## Sermon for Saturday, December 24, 2022

### “Arise and Shine”

**SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 60:1-4** <sup>1</sup> Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. <sup>2</sup> For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you. <sup>3</sup> Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. <sup>4</sup> Lift up your eyes and look around; they all gather together, they come to you; your sons shall come from far away, and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms.

#### **Introduction: The Joy of Christmas Eve**

It's very cold, but it's a Merry Christmas Eve. May the grace and peace of the good Lord be with us. There are several accounts of the birth of Jesus in the Gospels. In Matthew 1:23, Jesus is expressed with the word Immanuel. Emmanuel means 'God is with us'. The word 'Immanuel' in Matthew gives great comfort to those who are lonely and in despair.

Also, Luke 2:10 tells the good news of angels heard by shepherds tending sheep in the field. The angel said to the shepherds; "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people." This verse declares that Jesus' coming to this earth is news of joy to all people in the world.

Furthermore, John 1:9 introduces Jesus as 'the true light'. This means that Jesus came as light to a world during darkness and despair. In this way, the words of the Gospels about the birth of Jesus tell us how great a blessing the birth of baby Jesus is.

Therefore, whatever our present circumstances may be, may this time of celebration of the birth of baby Jesus be filled with joy.

#### **Body: Arise and shine.**

Today's word is what God said to the Israelites through the prophet Isaiah when the Israelites were in a hopeless situation. At that time, Israel was in danger of being destroyed by the mighty nation of Babylon because of their sins committed before God.

However, God gave the promise of hope to the Israelites who were in despair. The promise is that the Israelites will be taken captive to Babylon but will be restored and returned to Jerusalem in due time.

In fact, many people today live in despair. The reality we face often trips us up. Economic hardship, illness, broken relationships, domestic violence, and structural oppression in society are all around us that trip us up. If we only look at the dark parts of the society we live in, the reality is very frustrating.

However, Christians must shine a light in the world during a dark reality. We need to remind the world what it means to live a human life in a dark reality. In other words, we must show the world through our lives that the life of a person created in the image of God is beautiful.



However, the power to do all of that comes from God. A Christian is someone who breaks the darkness and sees the coming light ahead of others. **Isaiah 60:1 says: “Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.”**

The phrase ‘Arise and shine’ reminds us of the calling we have forgotten.

**2 Timothy 1:9 says: “who has saved us and called us to a holy life--not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time.”** It is given to us because of God's purpose and grace, not because of our good deeds.

If we lose our vocation, we will collapse even in the face of small trials. But if we remember God's purpose and the calling given to us by grace, we will not be shaken even in despair.

But we know how fragile we are. Because we all too often experience discouragement in our lives. However, Christians are those who change despair and sadness into hope and joy through faith.

**So today's text, Isaiah 60:2 says, “For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you.”**

Dear brothers and sisters! Having faith in the Lord means not being discouraged. The Lord, the King of kings of the universe, is with us. Also, good news has been brought to us. And the light that illuminates the darkness is with us. So please don't stay in the seat of despair and wake up and shine the light.

### **Conclusion: Let's live as children of light that illuminates the darkness**

Now let's summarize today's message. God is telling us today to rise from the depths of despair and shine. It tells us to spread the light of salvation, the light of love, and the light of forgiveness of Jesus Christ to the whole world. Because of the grace of the Lord who comes as the Prince of Peace, I hope we all live as a light that illuminates darkness. Amen.

