

TIM WESEMAN

# Arise & Shine

DEVOTIONS *for* ADVENT





# *Arise, shine,*

for your light has come, and the glory  
of the Lord has risen upon you.

For behold, darkness shall cover the earth,  
and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will  
arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon  
you. And nations shall come to your light,  
and kings to the brightness of your rising.

**ISAIAH 60:1-3**

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# Introduction



## ARISE! SHINE!

That's the rousing call to God's people held captive in the darkness of their sin and returning home to find the darkness of physical destruction. God's light that has risen upon them shines through them in Jesus!

Jesus Christ, the Light of the World, calls us this Advent season to arise and shine as the Holy Spirit prepares our faith and lives for his coming.

The morning call of *Arise and Shine* is a glorious calling to those mourning in the darkness of a broken, sinful world. Your light has come! And his name is Jesus.

Advent blessings!

*Tim Wesemann*

AUTHOR

# Rising Up

*Nations shall come to your light, and kings  
to the brightness of your rising. ISAIAH 60:3*



“RISE AND SHINE” OFTEN SOLICITS A NEGATIVE REACTION. We’re groggy, fatigued and resentful of that perky morning person who calls, “Rise and shine!” Really? Ugh. Some answer, “I’m not worth anything without my coffee.” But Isaiah’s message is, “You’re worth everything to and through your Savior.”

God’s people of Israel felt unworthy and unloved. Their freedom, homes, temple and city were all decimated. But their light of salvation has come! He’s ours as well. Let’s let the healing, eternal light of salvation through Christ restore us to a new life glorifying God.

Rather than a call from an obnoxious morning person, ours is a glorious, life-giving call from mourning to hope and light, joy and freedom, forgiveness and salvation because of the Savior. He’s come for all people, all nations, so they can proclaim the praises of the Lord (Isaiah 60:6).

Arise! Shine! Your light has come!

***Lord God, we hear your call! Rouse us!  
Shine through us, so all may proclaim  
your praise. Amen.***

# Hope in the Darkness

*The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. ROMANS 13:12*



BEFORE CHRISTMAS LAST YEAR IT WAS REPORTED THAT SOMEONE STOLE A CHURCH'S TRAILER FULL OF EQUIPMENT FOR FEEDING THE HOMELESS. The pastor told a reporter, "We want to communicate that we are about light, about goodness, about Christ, about helping those who are the last, the least, the lonely, the lost. Yet here we have someone taking from those of us who are trying to help those folks. What they've done is darkness. We believe it's sinful, and yet we have hope for them too."

Thankfully, we celebrate hope's light in spite of the world's darkness. The message of Advent points us to that hope in the coming Savior, Jesus. Forgiveness. Salvation. Heaven. Faith-creating and faith-sustaining gifts. Hope for the last, the least, the lonely, the lost, the ones reading these words and everyone around them.

*Savior, your hope brings me peace  
and joy and a desire to share them  
with others. Amen.*

## Deep, Thick Darkness

*For behold, darkness shall cover the earth and thick darkness the peoples;  
but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you.*

ISAIAH 60:2



I STOOD IN AWE OF THE DARKNESS OF A SOUTH AFRICAN COUNTRY-SIDE NIGHT. As the thick darkness captured my thoughts, I could see only two artificial lights and countless God-created stars.

The contrast between utter darkness and the twinkling lights in the sky brought to mind the many references to light and dark, night and morning, sun and stars in Scripture. Their authors, pre-electric people, would have had a much greater sensitivity for and understanding of God's words regarding darkness and light than we do.

For them, the brilliance and significance of the glory of the Lord rising out of the thick darkness must have been an extremely powerful reminder of God's presence. Living in a sinful world of deep spiritual darkness, we pray the Spirit brings us to live in awe of the power, meaning and significance of his shining glory.

*Savior, lead me to live in deep awe of your  
glory, presence and promises. Amen.*

# Lights, Please

*Even the darkness is not dark to you ... for darkness is as light with you.*

PSALM 139:12



WITH EVERY BIRTHDAY MY EYES AND I INCREASINGLY APPRECIATE THE GIFT OF LIGHT. Nightlights, glowing light switches, and motion lights have become my friends as I slowly navigate dark areas.

Psalm 139 is poignant, personal and powerful. It tells how intimately the Lord knows us, having created us from conception, better than we know ourselves—our thoughts, words, histories and futures. And nothing can distract him from seeing and knowing every aspect of our lives. Even our darkness is in the light to him.

Foolishly we try to convince ourselves that God is in the dark about some of our sinful decisions. We try to hide them, hoping he won't see or seek them. It's a futile game.

So, repentant, anticipating Jesus' birth and choosing life in Jesus' light, we put away darkness and hidden sin and walk in his light and forgiveness.

***Father, I stand before you, repentant.  
Lead me daily to walk in your light.  
In Jesus' name. Amen.***

# Chiaroscuro

*The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.*

ISAIAH 9:2



THE TERM *CHIAROSCURO* DESCRIBES THE ARRANGEMENT OF LIGHT AND DARK ELEMENTS IN A WORK OF ART—*chiaro*, meaning clear or light, and *oscuro*, meaning obscure or dark. Reflect on the chiaroscuro in the creative work of The Artist. In the beginning, darkness was over the face of the deep. Then perfect light rose over Eden, followed by the darkness of sin. Graciously, then God’s light came in the form of hope through the promise of future restoration through One who would crush Satan’s power (Genesis 3:15).

As generations pass, you see sin and grace, Law and Gospel, light and darkness. Consider the chiaroscuro in God’s work, Word and people. A beautiful part of his *art* is the prophecies that point to the Savior, Redeemer and Rescuer from sin and death—Jesus. For example, Isaiah 9:1-7 produces beautiful brushstrokes of light for those walking in darkness, apart from God’s will and ways. The Light of the World, Jesus, shines hope on the canvas of your life.

*Your grace, Savior, sheds saving light  
on my life! With gratitude I pray.  
Amen.*



# God Lightens My Darkness

*For you are my lamp, O Lord, and my God lightens my darkness.*

2 SAMUEL 22:29



DAVID REMINDS US IT'S PERSONAL. The Lord God is personal. My lamp. My God ... who lightens *my* darkness.

Those words are part of a song David shared on the day the Lord delivered him from the hand of his enemies. I recommend you read the entire song (2 Samuel 22). David is thrilled, thankful and in awe of God's deliverance. It seems he can't stop singing God's praise.

The light, love and power of God rise in the dark seasons of our lives. He lightens our darkness with the lamp of his Word and presence. He powerfully delivers us from our enemies—sin, death and the devil. His love calms our fears.

Mary delivered a baby in Bethlehem, and that baby has delivered us from our enemies through his life, death and resurrection. Let's sing his praise all the way to the manger, the cross, the resurrection tomb and into eternity!

***You are my God, my lamp who lightens my darkness and delivers me from enemies that attack my life and faith. In the name of my victorious Savior. Amen.***



THIS BOOKLET'S DAILY DEVOTIONS FOR ADVENT FOCUS ON THE WAYS IN WHICH THE LIGHT OF CHRIST DAWNS UPON US THIS ADVENT SEASON and how that holy Light helps us to shine as children of the Light as we await our Savior's birth. Each week, these reflections by Tim Wesemann highlight a different aspect of the rising, reflected, healing and eternal qualities of Christ's light and how these facets enlighten our lives and help us to glow with his grace all season long.



This book, along with many other *Creative Communications for the Parish* products, is available on **amazonkindle** and **nook**.