

Arise! Shine!
Isaiah 60:1

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During Vacation Bible School this past week, Discovery on Adventure Island, the children learned to Arise, Shine with the light of God's love.

The focal Bible verse for this year's Vacation Bible School was Isaiah 60:1, "*Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you.*"

Both the words Arise and Shine, in Isaiah 60:1, are indicative of a change. The good news is that this change is a positive one.

They both denote an improved standard of life, particularly in line with God's plan as revealed through the prophet Jeremiah.

Jeremiah 29:11, "*For I know the plans I have for you,*" declares the LORD, "*plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.*"

This prophecy is in stark contrast to many of Isaiah's prophecies, given in earlier chapters, that were unpalatable to the Israelites.

They described the wrath, judgment and punishment of God that would come as a result of their decadence and their disobedience to God and His laws.

Yet, Isaiah also pronounced many blessings that would accrue to those that had a contrite and repentant heart.

Some of such pronouncements and promises of blessings, which would make the people to "*Arise, Shine*" are spelt out here in Chapter 60.

The implication for us today is that no matter how negative your past or present status may be, God can make you Arise, Shine.

Is your marriage in a mess? Are your finances failing? Is your spiritual life sliding down the hill? Are you facing darkness with respect to your career, children, schoolwork, etc?

You can Arise, Shine since, with God, all things are possible.

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But, before embarking on a strategy to make something a reality, it helps to have the conviction that the thing is achievable.

Let me share with you 4 reasons why you can Arise, Shine in the context of Isaiah 60:1.

First, it's a command. The first two words of Isaiah 60:1 are *ARISE, SHINE*.

This phrase isn't a suggestion. It isn't advice. It isn't a dream, neither is it an opinion. It's a command. A command given by God and when a command comes from God, it's perfect.

Psalm 19:7, *"The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple."*

Whatever the Word of God says, it's settled, even in heaven. Psalm 119:89, *"Your word, LORD, is eternal; it stands firm in the heavens."*

God has spoken! Arise, Shine! The devil cannot change or alter the plan of God for you as long as you cooperate with God.

Another reason why you can "*Arise, Shine*" is that it's of the Lord. The validity of any statement or command depends on the author of that statement.

The command to Arise, Shine originated from God who's able to perform His own word.

Ezekiel 12:25, *"But I the LORD will speak what I will, and it shall be fulfilled without delay. For in your days, you rebellious people, I will fulfill whatever I say, declares the Sovereign LORD."*

The LORD who commands you to Arise, Shine will make it happen.

The third reason you can Arise, Shine is that God is the Light. That's why Isaiah told the people to Arise, Shine. Their light had come, and the glory of the LORD was on them.

The light referred to in Isaiah 60:1 is Jesus Christ the Son of God. This is also verified throughout the Scriptures.

Malachi 4: 6 refers to Him as the *"Sun of Righteousness."* Jesus even described Himself twice as the *"light of the world."* So, wherever Jesus is, there's light.

As the sun radiates light onto the earth, Jesus has the capability to radiate divine rays of light to those who heed His call to get out of darkness and come to His light.

Finally, you must Arise, Shine because it's a sign of life. Only the living can Arise, Shine, the dead can't.

Isaiah 38: 18, *"For the grave cannot praise you, death cannot sing your praise; those who go down to the pit cannot hope for your faithfulness."*

As long as you're alive the potential to Arise, Shine is in you. All you have to do is praise God and you'll shine.

Psalm 67: 5-6, *“May the peoples praise you, God; may all the peoples praise you. The land yields its harvest; God, our God, blesses us.”*

God will bless anyone that praises Him. The blessings of God can make you Arise, Shine.

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While God has already made provisions for His followers to Arise, Shine, these followers must take action to actualize this plan in their individual lives.

Note that as long as the light switches in your house are in the off position, there will be darkness, especially at night.

When you turn the light switch on, and everything else is in order, there'll be a change from darkness to light.

The change occurred because you took action. So, this is what you must do to Arise, Shine:

First, you must connect with Christ. Why? Because, before any object can shine, there must be a source of light.

Jesus is the light of the world, and He declares in John 15: 5, *“Without me you can do nothing.”*

In order to shine, you must be connected with Jesus from Whom you can obtain the light that'll make you shine.

Furthermore, He gives you the power to arise as He is the custodian of all heavenly and earthly power.

This same power that made Lazarus arise after 4 days of being dead and a 12-year-old girl arise from dead can work for you, too.

But you're not dead, you're alive. Your case isn't as bad as Lazarus or the 12-year-old girl. So, connect with Jesus and receive the power to Arise, Shine.

Another action you must take to Arise, Shine is to consume God's Word. The Word of God has all the divine rays of light that you need.

The centurion knew the power in the Word of Jesus and tapped into it when he told Jesus to just "*say the word, and my servant will be healed.*"

Jesus hearkened to his request, honored his faith and the servant was immediately healed.

Jeremiah valued the word of God so much that he searched for it and made it part of his diet.

Jeremiah 15:16, "*When your words came, I ate them; they were my joy and my heart's delight, for I bear your name, LORD God Almighty.*"

Furthermore, the psalmist declared in Psalm 119:130a, "*The unfolding of your words gives light.*" He knew that if he could get the Word of God into his system, he would shine.

It's obvious that one of the strategies for achieving "*Arise, Shine*" status is to create a love for the Word of God to the point that it becomes indispensable as food is to living.

Thirdly, you must commit to God's work. The Bible says, "*faith without work is dead,*" we must be prepared to do the work of God conscientiously.

As a believer, your good work can make you Arise, Shine, especially if you follow the counsel of Jesus.

Matthew 5:16, *“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”*

While all the works that can advance God’s kingdom agenda are important and necessary, there’s one that stands out that can make you Arise, Shine.

That’s the work of witnessing. Daniel 12:3, *“Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever.”*

Do you want to Arise, Shine? Then get busy with the work of God, particularly in witnessing.

Next, you must cultivate righteous living. You must always strive to be in right standing with God in all things.

Speaking through king Solomon, the Word of God indicates that the righteous will shine brighter and brighter.

Proverbs 4:18, *“The path of the righteous is like the morning sun, shining ever brighter till the full light of day.”*

The power to live righteously was given to us by Jesus. If you use it, you’ll Arise, Shine in His name.

Lastly, in order to Arise, Shine, you must call forth God’s promises. You do this by using the power of your tongue to your advantage.

What I mean is that you should harvest God’s promises and plans by confessing and claiming them with your mouth and taking appropriate action to make them happen.

Proverbs 18:21 says, *“The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit.”*

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Conclusion

The command "Arises, Shine" wide applications and is meant to transform lives if obeyed.

Sinners can become saints, the downcast can become uplifted, failure can turn to success, weeping can be changed to joy, the rich can get richer, and the sick can be healed.

In fact, any abnormal situation is tantamount to darkness and can be reversed when the light of God comes to that situation.

Jesus, the Light of the world, is the source of solutions to all life's problems. Anyone who wants to Arise, Shine must connect with Jesus by accepting Him as their Lord and Savior.

ARISE, SHINE constitute God's divine plan and command. It's meant to transform lives for better.

When you know His Words and obey them, your arising and shining will be unstoppable in Jesus' name.