

Arise, shine

Isaiah 60:1-6

Isaiah 60 begins with the author calling the Israelites to 'Arise, shine'. They are to be given a light, which is the glory of the Lord. But they are also told that this light will be theirs, one that nations and kings will come to. In Matthew, the wise men are drawn by a shining star to Jesus, the light of the world.

This week, at the beginning of the Epiphany season, we explore what it means for us to arise and shine in our communities, and consider how we might reflect God's light, which is revealed most fully in Jesus, to those living in darkness.

Read this week's passage:



ACT



This is an ongoing challenge for all of Epiphany. New Year's resolutions are often self-focused. What would happen if we shifted our resolutions to focus on others? How could we 'Arise, shine' and bless others who may be living in darkness? Talk or think about who in your community may be in need of God's light, and how you may be able to bring light to these people. Share these ideas with your church and agree a plan of action.



Create a collage with words or pictures to depict the dark and light of the reading, and also the dark and light found in your community.

Pray



We look in the mirror every day – have you ever looked at your reflection and wondered how you could reflect God's glory into the world? Take a moment to study yourself in the mirror and consider your gifts. Pray into this question.



Find more free Roots resources
to reflect on this week's theme:

Living Scripture

'Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.' Isaiah 60:1

Have you ever watched the dawn? The sun draws the eye at first, the only bright spot in the heavy darkness. Then the sky is illuminated – streaks of orange and red bleed across the sky, but the land is still dark, appearing purple or black. Finally, as the sun rises higher, we can see all the colour and contours of the land.

What does it mean for God to rise over us? Our eyes first drawn to God's splendour, in awe we notice how 'other' and majestic God is. Then we notice God's impact in the world, Jesus' life and death transforming everything and bringing life and warmth, and finally our lives are illuminated, they make sense because of who God is, and who he's made us to be. We can make a difference in our world because God has given us life, and his light to live by.

Spend some time reflecting on the blessings in your life: breath, health, shelter, relationships, hope, creativity, beauty... and remember the transformations you've seen God bring about in your life and others. How could you share your gratitude, and these blessings with others?

First impressions



- What are your hopes as the New Year dawns?
- How could you wake up or tune in to God's plans for you in 2026?
- What light can you bring, or gifts can you share, with people who are experiencing 'darkness'?

Pray



God of all ages and all nations,
we praise your wisdom and generosity for
giving each nation different gifts,
each community,
each fellowship,
each family,
and we rejoice with you when we unite and
use them beautifully for the good of all,
and to your glory,
in Jesus' name.
Amen.

WATCH



Watch the video. When we arise and shine in the morning, what is our routine? How can we build a spiritually positive 'arise and shine' morning routine?