

Erlo Stegen:

God used the same word to Abraham when He commanded him to arise and sacrifice his child; and this hero of the faith did exactly that, in such a way that it's recorded till this day and speaks to us. He did it in complete obedience. He arose with purpose and meaning and did what God commanded him to do.

In the New Testament it uses another word but it means the same thing, to arise.

This word also refers to arising out of your depression and self-seeking and doing the will of God.

In the context of our text, Jerusalem was in utter ruins, but God spoke to them that they ought to arise. Even if your life is in such ruins as Jerusalem was, this word comes to you too to arise out of that state.

Even if you've been a prostitute and your life is finished humanly speaking, through God's power, He makes it possible to be changed and be new.

The enemies of the Lord Jesus whipped Him, beat Him, crucified Him and killed Him and buried Him, thinking to utterly destroy Him. But He entered the grave and conquered death and sin and arose from the dead!

The women were the first at the grave. Sin entered through a woman, but it was also the women who were first at the empty tomb after Jesus arose from the dead.

If God has come into your heart it is evident to everyone around you. If you have arisen it would also be obvious to yourself, even if you should grow old.

Secondly, in our text we also read that we must "shine".

A certain highly educated Greek philosopher, called Alexander, taught at the university in Crete every summer. One day at the end of class, he asked the students if they had any questions. A certain student stood up and asked him, "doctor, please tell me the meaning of life". There was a bit of a grumble in the class as the other students wanted to go home. But the professor replied that it was a good question which he wanted to answer. He said that when he was small he had a small mirror with which he reflected the sunlight in different directions and had great fun with. As he grew up, he would purposefully look for the darkest corner and use the mirror to reflect the sunlight into that corner. So he said to them, "this is a metaphor for life. In the same way Jesus is the Sun and we the mirrors that must reflect His light into the dark corners of this world to dispel the darkness".

This light must shine in your life. Jesus spoke and said, "you are the light of the world". Let your light shine before the whole world. I.e. Every Christian needs to shine.

A certain legend is told as an illustration. A match came along and met a beautifully decorated candle with many colours. This candle was used to light the house and to beautify it. In this fable the match said to the candle, "you're beautiful and decorated. I've come to set you alight". The candle replied, "no leave me alone. Do you want to burn me, wound and melt me so that I disintegrate?" The match replied, "if you don't allow me to set you alight, then my mission also remains unfulfilled and you will remain hard and cold and the house will remain dark". So the candle submitted and the house was filled with light.

Jesus said that you don't take a lantern and hide it under a bucket, but it is placed on the lamp-stand, to give light to all in the home. So too let your light shine before all men, that men may see your good works and praise your Father in heaven. Jesus continued, "the lamp of the body is the eye. If the eye is good, your whole body will be full of light, but if your eye is evil, the whole body will be full of darkness. (Matthew 5:15)

In Revelations there were seven candlesticks that represented the seven churches. We read that Jesus wrote something very shocking to the first church at Ephesus:

"Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted. Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will

come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. " (Revelation 2:1-5).

Because their flame grew dim God threatened to remove their candle stick. It is a shocking thing that God can remove your candle stick!

As a Christian does your light shine as people look at you. Is God's joy visible in you?

Jesus said that if your light does not shine He will remove your lampstand.

Let each one examine himself or herself whether they are shining? Are others glad about your life, or do you make others cry and weep with sadness as they look at you?

If you don't shine for Christ you have no future, for God Himself will remove you.

Are you still a blessing to your children even when you are old?

The shine is from God. You cannot shine out of your own. Jesus is the light.

"Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: all they gather themselves together, they come to thee: thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side. Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee." (Isaiah 60:4-5).

If you don't shine in the church where you are, maybe it's better that you are removed so that God could be among those that do shine.

This is then the question at your farm or business - is your light shining there? Is it visible to all?

If not, repent before your lamp-stand is removed and you be cast aside and removed completely.

Do you condone the sinful practices of your children? Deal with the child; if not God will deal with you and you will go with your child into destruction, unless God is gracious.