

## A Light Has Dawned

## Matthew 4:12-17

**Main Truth:** Jesus is the hope in the darkness

**John 8:12** *When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."*

**Genesis 1:1-3** The earth began as a dark place without light, formless and empty. "And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light." A true and pure light which comes from one source: the Creator

**John 1: 1-5** We live in a dark world that needs hope. When Jesus was born into this world, light came with Him. He is the light. John the Baptist points to this light that has come to bring hope in the darkness.

**John 1:6-9** Jesus begins his ministry announcing the arrival of God's Kingdom. Jesus has a mission. He has come to confront evil, disease, and death and to restore God's reign over the world.

**Matthew 4:12-13** Jesus begins his ministry in the town of Capernaum, in Galilee, which is located in the most northern region of Israel, Zebulun and Naphtali. This region was fertile, progressive, and highly populated, predominately Gentile in population.

By beginning his ministry in Galilee, Jesus fulfilled the prophecy found in Isaiah regarding the great light.

**Matthew 4:14-16** **Isaiah 9:1-2** The Savior of the world came from Heaven to Nazareth and now to Galilee. Jesus is the hope in the darkness, the light of the world, the promise of salvation for all who walk in darkness.

The Book of Matthew is written to the Jews proclaiming the Kingdom of God and declaring that Jesus is the promised Messiah, the light that they had been waiting for.

Instead of starting His ministry before the Pharisees and Jewish leaders, Jesus starts His ministry in an area that was total darkness. Jesus fulfills the prophecy of Isaiah to bring about His kind of kingdom and His kind of salvation. Not the kingdom, or messiah, envisioned by the Jewish religious leaders.

Jesus came to seek and save the lost, including the Gentiles. He came to lead the lost sheep back to the open pen, including the outcasts. He came to die for the sins of the world, including the dirty and broken. Jesus came to meet us where we are at.

Jesus is the light that has dawned and brought hope to a region of Israel that was hopeless. All of humanity sits in hopelessness without the light, so the arrival of Jesus brings hope to all.

**Isaiah 9:6-7** One of the important themes in the New Testament, specifically Matthew, is that Gentiles are to be included in the family of God. Jesus the Messiah of the world. Jesus was intentional in beginning his ministry in Capernaum, a predominantly Gentile region.

Another theme found in Matthew is to point back to Jesus being the “Son of David.”

Both of these themes connect with Isaiah’s prophecy that Jesus is about to bring a light to all as the rightful King of Kings.

**Matthew 4:17** Jesus clearly proclaims “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” In other words, “I am the promised Messiah.”

**Matthew 3:1-2** John the Baptist had said the same thing “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”

When Jesus speaks these words, they take on a different weight as his words are based on what He already had done and was going to do. He had faced Satan in the desert and He would face the cross and the grave. It was not future tense anymore the kingdom of heaven has officially arrived.

Jesus was the expected Messiah and Israel would be saved, but God’s plans were bigger and included the Gentiles as well. Not only is Jesus the light for the area of Galilee where he starts his ministry, but He is also the Light of the World.

Darkness was over the surface of our hearts and God said “Let there be light, and there was Light.

**Main Truth:** Jesus is the hope in the darkness

**Application:** Reflect the light

## **Micah 7:8-10**

*Do not gloat over me, my enemy!*

*Though I have fallen, I will rise.*

*Though I sit in darkness,*

*the Lord will be my light.*

*Because I have sinned against him,*

*I will bear the Lord's wrath,*

*until he pleads my case*

*and upholds my cause.*

*He will bring me out into the light;*

*I will see his righteousness.*

## **Small Group Discussion Questions**

### **A Light Has Dawned**

### **Matthew 4:12-17**

1. Have you ever gone somewhere where you were totally out of place on purpose or by accident. Like looking at your cell phone and walking into the wrong restroom?
2. Why did Jesus leave Nazareth and settle in Capernaum instead of continuing in his own hometown?
3. Why didn't Jesus just go directly to Jerusalem, specifically the temple, and start associating with the Pharisees and other religious leaders at the very start of his ministry?
4. Discuss how Jesus' relocation to the region of Zebulun and Naphtali fulfill the prophecy of Isaiah 9:1-2? What specifics of the prophecy does Jesus fulfilled. What does this mean for you regarding scripture and who Jesus is?
5. Why did Jesus start by going to the Gentiles who have no connection or relationship with God?
6. In what spiritual state were the inhabitants of this region ("sitting in darkness") before Jesus arrived, and how is His presence described as a "great light"?
7. Read Matthew 4:12-16 and Isaiah 9:1-7... If people in Jesus' day attributed the prophecy of Isaiah 9 to Jesus, how would they have treated Him and what would they have expected Him to do?
8. What does the phrase "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near" mean in the context of Jesus' ministry? How does Jesus' call to repentance connect to the concept of the Kingdom

of Heaven?

9. Why do you think it might be less difficult to share Jesus with someone who is unchurched than with someone who is involved in a false “Christian” church? You might want to discuss what makes certain religions a cult.
10. How can we apply the principle of reaching diverse groups, as Jesus did in Galilee, in our personal ministry or church outreach efforts today?
11. In verse 17, Jesus is calling people to repentance; turning FROM living for the kingdoms of this world and instead living for God’s Kingdom. What did your response to this call look like when you first came to faith in Jesus?

## **Personal Study Guide**

### **Jesus is the Light**

Jesus is the light of the world. He was sent into the world to cast out darkness - to point people to God, to call people to repentance for their sins, and to empower his followers to do good works that bring glory to God. As disciples of Jesus are faithful to live according to God’s standards, we too become the light of the world, pointing others to God’s greatness.

John 8:12

John 9:5

1 John 1:1-10

Psalms 119:105

Matthew 4:16

John 1:1-5

John 12:35-36

2 Corinthians 4:6

John 3:19-21

Psalms 27:1

John 1:9

Isaiah 9:2

John 11:9-10

1 Timothy 6:16

James 1:17

Matthew 15:17

Revelation 21:22-24