

# *The Advent of Jesus Christ, the Light of the World*

## Act 1, Creation: Out of the darkness, light was made

Bible 1: “In the beginning the Word—Jesus—already existed.  
The Word was with God,  
and the Word was God.  
He existed in the beginning with God.  
God created everything through him,  
and nothing was created except through him.  
The Word gave life to everything that was created,  
and his life brought light to everyone.”<sup>1</sup>

Narrator 2: *(Light all four candles)*

All: *The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it.*

Bible 2: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless and empty, and darkness covered the deep waters. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters. Then God said, ‘Let there be light,’ and there was light. And God saw that the light was good. Then he separated the light from the darkness. God called the light ‘day’ and the darkness ‘night.’ And evening passed and morning came, marking the first day.”<sup>2</sup>

Narrator 1: The first day this world was born, the moment you could say it took its first breath, was at the advent of light. Where only darkness once hovered, ominous and void, the Spirit spoke and light exploded across the expanse of nothingness. Like a hundred-million fireworks, the light shoved the darkness aside. Day and night—one marked by the fullness of life-giving rays of light; the other merely an absence, devoid of life-giving light. And at the boundary line drawn by the finger of God, a battle ensues: the fullness of light verses the emptiness of darkness.

All: *The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it.*

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<sup>1</sup> John 1:1-4

<sup>2</sup> Gen. 1:3-5

## Act 2, The Fall: Sin, born from darkness, hid the light

Narrator 2: Then came that wretched day, in which we all participate, where a choice was made. A man. A woman. A serpent. A fruit. A decision. No one is forced to love the light; no one is handcuffed to God from birth. And so we stand side-by-side with Eve and listen to the serpent's sly whisper: "Did God *really* say you'd die?"

Narrator 1: And we wonder, "Did He? What is death? I'm alive and free and why shouldn't I be? I *want*. I *deserve*. It's all about *me*."

Narrator 2: So we grab that fruit and take a big bite, and as the juice stains our chin black, we swallow darkness. We've left the light and now we understand what death is—it's separation from all that is good and life-giving and peaceful and loving. We're thrust from God's garden and as we pass through death's gates, we feel the warmth of the Son on our backs growing cooler with every step. (*Blow out all four candles*)

Bible 2: Job describes this place as "a land as dark as midnight, a land of gloom and confusion, where even the light is dark as midnight."<sup>3</sup>

All: *The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it.*

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<sup>3</sup> Job 10:22

### Act 3, Glimmers of light: Guiding in darkness, a light led the way

Narrator 2: We're wrapped up with darkness without and within. We can't even see our way home. We're wandering in the desert. Is there any hope?

All: *The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it.*

Narrator 1: Yet even as we flee and plunge farther into night, we can never run far enough to escape the memory of that life-giving light. It's etched into our bones, memorized in our cells. Something deep within still cries out for the peace, the love, the joy, and the hope of the light. So we turn and see a beacon blazing skyward. Has it been there all along? It's like a pillar of fire.

Narrator 2: And behind this sky-high fire, a dusty multitude of people march, following the light wherever it leads. Moses, Miriam, Aaron, Joshua. They're all there, looking to this guiding light. And Moses calls out to the crowd:

Bible 1: "The Lord your God is going ahead of you. He will fight for you, just as you saw him do in Egypt. And you saw how the Lord your God cared for you all along the way as you traveled through the wilderness, just as a father cares for his child. Now he has brought you to this place."<sup>4</sup>

Narrator 2: *(Relight the 1st candle)*

All: *The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it.*

Narrator 1: That sweaty, grimy entourage of Israelites followed the pillar of light all the way to a new home. They had land, food, and shelter. But still the battle raged on, darkness ever seeking to pull God's people away from His light. Rejecting Yahweh's kingship they—we—sought to rule ourselves yet again. And, oh, it went fine. For a minute or two. But blink and we'd find ourselves ensnared by our enemies and begging for mercy.

Bible 2: "Turn us again to yourself, O Lord God of Heaven's Armies. Make your face shine down upon us. Only then will we be saved."<sup>5</sup>

Narrator 2: And so, the God of heaven's radiant armies gave us more than just a moment of rescue. He gave us a promise. He promised that this battle would not rage on between light and darkness forever. One day, The Light would come. And in what would be the last words of King David:

Bible 1: "The God of Israel spoke. The Rock of Israel said to me: 'The one who rules righteously, who rules in the fear of God, is like the light of morning at sunrise, like a morning without clouds, like the gleaming of the sun on new grass after rain.'<sup>6</sup>

Narrator 2: The prophet Isaiah foretold:

Bible 2: "Out of the stump of David's family will grow a shoot—  
yes, a new Branch bearing fruit from the old root.

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<sup>4</sup> Deut. 1:30-31

<sup>5</sup> Psalm 80:19

<sup>6</sup> 2 Sam 23:3-4

And the Spirit of the Lord will rest on him—  
the Spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
the Spirit of counsel and might,  
the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.  
He will delight in obeying the Lord.  
He will not judge by appearance  
nor make a decision based on hearsay.  
He will give justice to the poor  
and make fair decisions for the exploited.  
The earth will shake at the force of his word,  
and one breath from his mouth will destroy the wicked.  
He will wear righteousness like a belt  
and truth like an undergarment.

Bible 1: In that day the wolf and the lamb will live together;  
the leopard will lie down with the baby goat.  
The calf and the yearling will be safe with the lion,  
and a little child will lead them all.  
Nothing will hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain,  
for as the waters fill the sea,  
so the earth will be filled with people who know the Lord.  
In that day the heir to David's throne  
will be a banner of salvation to all the world.  
The nations will rally to him,  
and the land where he lives will be a glorious place.”<sup>7</sup>

Narrator 1: *(Relight the 2nd candle)*

All: *The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it.*

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<sup>7</sup> Isaiah 11:1-6, 9-10

## Act 4, Jesus Christ: Into the darkness, The Light was born

Narrator 2: But this promised Ruler of Light did not come the next day. Or the next year. Or even the next century. The world sat under the domineering crush of darkness for 800 long years after Isaiah's prophecy. And we can't help but ask, "Why the long wait, God?"

Narrator 1: Why do we gaze at the stars on a moonless night? Why do we sit in silence and wait for the sunrise? Why do we admire a candle in a darkened room?

Narrator 2: Perhaps in the darkest night we most ache for the light. Perhaps we must first feel our need.

Narrator 1: Yes, and on a bleak midwinter night when the world felt the weight of its sin, in a little town called Bethlehem, a baby was born as God again said, "Let there be light."

Narrator 2: *(Relight the 3rd candle)*

All: *The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it.*

Narrator 1 & 2: Jesus the Messiah, the Light of the World, was born! He is Immanuel—God with us.

Bible 2: " 'the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light. And for those who lived in the land where death casts its shadow, a light has shined.' From then on Jesus began to preach, 'Repent of your sins and turn to God, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near.' "<sup>8</sup>

Narrator 2: The Kingdom of Heaven broke into the darkness of this sin-trapped world in the form of a crying, messing, sleeping, cooing baby. Not only that, but God himself stepped out of the perfection and glory of His light-filled throne room in order to feel the sorrow of our human existence. Could this really be God's plan? His solution to rid us of the darkness of death?

Bible 1: "Jesus said, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.'<sup>9</sup>

Narrator 1: The light of life— this is God's gift to whoever is tired of sitting under death's dark shadow, whoever turns from sin and follows Jesus, the Light of the World. Like counting down the days until we can unwrap the gifts under the Christmas tree, perhaps this greatest of gifts was worth waiting for after all.

Narrator 2: But darkness wasn't to be cast out quite so easily.

Bible 2: "Jesus replied, 'My light will shine for you just a little longer. Walk in the light while you can, so the darkness will not overtake you. Those who walk in the darkness cannot see where they are going. Put your trust in the light while there is still time; then you will become children of the light.'<sup>10</sup>

Narrator 1: But you are *the* Light, Jesus! What do you mean your light will shine only a little longer?

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<sup>8</sup> Matt 4:16-17

<sup>9</sup> John 8:12

<sup>10</sup> John 12:35-36

Narrator 2: And with the crack of whips and the driving of nails, darkness murdered The Light.

Bible 1: “After they had nailed him to the cross, the soldiers gambled for his clothes by throwing dice. Then they sat around and kept guard as he hung there. A sign was fastened above Jesus’ head, announcing the charge against him. It read: ‘This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.’ Two revolutionaries were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left.”

Bible 2: “At noon, darkness fell across the whole land until three o’clock. At about three o’clock, Jesus called out with a loud voice, ‘Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?’ which means ‘My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?’ “

Bible 1: “Then Jesus shouted out again, and he released his spirit.”<sup>11</sup>

Narrator 1: Is that it? Has God’s promise been nullified? Has The Light been extinguished?

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Narrator 2: No! He is alive! Night has passed, and with the coming of dawn The Light is resurrected. We are not abandoned to the darkness of sin! We are not prisoners of death and separated from life! Jesus Christ, the Light of the World, completely conquered all sin and death by dragging it into the tomb with Him. He rose from the grave, and now, we, too, are carriers of His Light! (*Relight the 4th candle*)

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<sup>11</sup> Matt 27:35-38, 45-46, 50

## Act 5, Future Glory: Dispelling all darkness, The Light will reign

Bible 1: “You are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God’s very own possession. As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light.”<sup>12</sup>

Bible 2: “For you are all children of the light and of the day; we don’t belong to darkness and night. But let us who live in the light be clear headed, protected by the armor of faith and love, and wearing as our helmet the confidence of our salvation. For God chose to save us through our Lord Jesus Christ, not to pour out his anger on us. Christ died for us so that, whether we are dead or alive when he returns, we can live with him forever.”<sup>13</sup>

Narrator 1: Yes! We will live with him forever when The Light returns in full brightness. Undimmed by sin around Him, unmuted by doubt and disbelief, we will, one day, see Jesus as He truly is. On that day, the final chapter yet to be written, darkness will forever be swallowed up by the all-consuming light of life. The apostle John glimpsed it in a vision and said:

Bible 1: “I saw no temple in the city, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. And the city has no need of sun or moon, for the glory of God illuminates the city, and the Lamb is its light. The nations will walk in its light, and the kings of the world will enter the city in all their glory.”<sup>14</sup>

All: *The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it.*

Narrator 2: This is the advent of Jesus Christ, the Light of the World.

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<sup>12</sup> 1 Pet. 2:9

<sup>13</sup> 1 Thess. 5:5,8-10

<sup>14</sup> Rev. 21:22-24