

# Matthew 4:12-17

- A great light shining in the darkness -

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## Introduction

### ❖ “People living in darkness.”

- This can be the darkness of oppression and persecution. It can be the darkness of impending war or violence. It can be the darkness of poverty and homelessness. It can be the darkness of sin and brokenness.
- Darkness is associated with life without hope, without future, without purpose.
- Is there light at the end of the tunnel?
- Many people have turned away from ideologies, philosophies and religions, disappointed as they are.
  - Communism promised an egalitarian society but it turned out to be a system of surveillance, persecution and oppression.
  - Capitalism offered well-being but it turned out to be a system of the very rich and the many poor, exhausting the resources of this planet.
  - Rationalism and the belief in science darkened the belief in God.

### ❖ “Have seen a great light.”

- The message of Jesus Christ is the message of salvation and reconciliation. It is the message of peace and justice. It is the message of life, healing and restoration.
- The Gospel is the living word of God, full of hope, future and purpose.
- Jesus Christ himself is the light for the world and who believes in him, “will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life” (Jn 8:12).

- ❖ The context, form and structure, theological, technical and hermeneutical notes given in this sermon outline overlap with other sermon outlines taken from the Gospel of Matthew. This makes it possible to use this sermon outline as a “stand-alone”. You can also fit this outline into a series of sermons.

## Context

- ❖ Matthew 4:12-17 is part of the initial chapters of the Gospel of Matthew, a summary of the historical background is helpful. When Jesus was preaching, teaching and healing he did this in the power of the **Spirit of God**:
- ❖ The baptism of Jesus (Mt 3:13-17):
  - Before Jesus was baptized by John, he said: “Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this **to fulfill all righteousness.**”
  - And afterwards: “As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw **the Spirit of God** descending like a dove and lighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, ‘This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.’”
    - The Sermon on the Mount teaches this **fulfilment of all righteousness.** <> “For I tell you that unless **your righteousness surpasses** that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law...” (Mt 5:20).
- ❖ The preaching of Jesus:
  - Jesus had already been preaching in the synagogues in Galilee for some time before he delivered his sermon on the mount. Matthew summarized these sermons as follows:
    - “From that time on Jesus began to preach, ‘**Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near**’” (Mt 4:17).
  - Jesus continued and took over the ministry of John the Baptist:
    - “In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the Desert of Judea and saying, ‘**Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near**’” (Mt 3:1–2).
  - And later on, when Jesus sends out his twelve disciples:
    - “As you go, preach this message: ‘**The kingdom of heaven is near**’” (Mt 10:7).
    - After Jesus had called his disciples, he preached the Sermon on the Mount. This sermon will become the basic instruction for the disciples. The sermon will be the core of their teaching (Mt 28:19).

- These two themes, repentance and the kingdom are prominent in the Sermon on the Mount.

❖ The immediate context shows the following pattern.

Matthew 3:1-12	John the Baptist: "And saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near" (Mt 3:2).
Matthew 3:13-17	The Baptism of Jesus: "At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."
Matthew 4:1-11	The temptation in the desert: "Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil (Mt 4:1). "The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread" (Mt 4:3; also 4:6). "Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him" (Mt 4:11).
<b>Matthew 4:12-17</b>	Jesus returned to Galilee. "From that time on Jesus began to preach, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near'" (Mt 4:17).
Matthew 4:18-22	Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee. He called the first four disciples. "Come, follow me!" (Mt 4:19).
Matthew 4:23-25	"Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom" (Mt 4:23). "Large crowds from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and the region across the Jordan followed him" (Mt 4:25).
Matthew 5-7 <i>(Sermon on the Mount)</i>	"Now when he saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them" (Mt 5:1, 2).
<b>Jesus commissioned his disciples:</b>	
Matthew 10:7, 8	"As you go, preach this message: 'The kingdom of heaven is near.'" (Mt 10:7).

## Form and structure

- ❖ The structure of Matthew 4:12-17:

Matthew 4:12-17	
<i>Return to Galilee</i> (verse 12)	When Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, he returned to Galilee.
<i>To Capernaum</i> (verse 13)	Leaving Nazareth, he went and lived in Capernaum, which was by the lake in the area of Zebulun and Naphtali
<i>Fulfilment</i> (verse 14-16)	— to fulfil what was said through the prophet Isaiah: "Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, the way to the sea, along the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles— the people living in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned."
<i>Jesus began to preach</i> (verse 17)	From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."

## Technical, hermeneutical and historical notes

### Galilee (Background)<sup>1</sup>

- ❖ History and Geography.
- ❖ "It referred to the entire region belonging to the tribe of Naphtali, including the eastern portion of Asher and the northern portion of Zebulun and Issachar. The demise of the Northern Kingdom, Israel (722/721 BC), brought great destruction to the Jewish population and the immigration of pagan foreigners (2 Kings 17:6); thus the name 'region of the Gentiles' came into use (Is 9:1)."
- ❖ This Gentile population was converted to Judaism under the Hasmonean king Aristobulus I (104 – 103 BC)<sup>2</sup> (Josephus, Jewish Antiquities 13.318–19). "Under Herod the Great (40-4 BC) and his son Herod Antipas, who ruled until AD. 39, Galilee enjoyed prosperous times."

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<sup>1</sup> Summary of Riesner, R. (2013, p. 297-298). *Galilee*. In J. B. Green, J. K. Brown, & N. Perrin (Eds.).

<sup>2</sup> Aristobulus I. (2022, January 10). Retrieved from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aristobulus\\_I](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aristobulus_I)

- ❖ The city of Tiberias (see map; Jn 6:23) was founded sometime around 20 AD. Herod Antipas made it the capital of his realm in Galilee and named it after the Roman Emperor Tiberius (reign AD 14 until 37). Tiberias had a large gentile population.
- ❖ Society and Religion
- ❖ The land was fertile. "Galilee was an intensively worked export area for wheat and olives, but also for wine. The fishing activity on the Sea of Galilee and the dried fish industry in the town of Magdala were of special significance (Josephus, *Jewish War* 2.608–610; 3.443–445)." Galilee was densely populated, estimates are between two and three hundred thousand. The majority of the population belonged to the lower class (tenant farmers, day labourers). "Galilee was also ideally situated on the commercial routes to take advantage of the increased trade and commerce."<sup>3</sup>
- ❖ There was a large number of synagogues (Mt 4:23; 9:35; Mk 1:39; Lk 4:14–15). Josephus refers repeatedly to the piety of the Galileans and their loyalty to the Old Testament. This is confirmed by the teachings of Jesus on the mount (Mt 5:17-48).
- ❖ Jesus and Galilee
- ❖ Before his public ministry, Jesus lived in Nazareth (Mt 2:22–23; 4:12–13; 13:54). Most of his disciples came from Galilee (Mt 4:18-25; Acts 1:11; 2:6). His ministry was concentrated in the areas of Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum on the northwest bank of the Sea of Galilee (Mt 11:1, 21-24; see map). There, he met increasing resistance and withdraw sometimes into the regions bordering Galilee (Mt 14:13, 15:21, 16:23; see also Mk 7:24, Mk 7:31 and Mk 8:27).
  - Matthew ends the description of the Galilean ministry in 18:35: "When Jesus had finished saying these things, he left Galilee and went into the region of Judea to the other side of the Jordan." xx

After his resurrection, Jesus appeared in Galilee (Jn 21; Mt 28:9, 16-20).

Jewish Christian churches were formed in Galilee immediately after the first Easter (Acts 9:31).

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<sup>3</sup> Freyne, S. (1992, Vol 2, p. 897). *Galilee: Hellenistic/Roman Galilee*. In D. N. Freedman (Ed.).

Geography



- ❖ Galilee. Nazareth (Mt 2:19-23; 4:13). Capernaum (Mt 4:13; 8:4-17; 17:24-18:35), which was his town (9:1); The towns of Galilee (Mt 11:1).

Isaiah 9:2-7

	In the past he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the future he will honour Galilee of the Gentiles, by the way of the sea, along the Jordan—
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<i>(verse 2)</i>	The people walking in darkness / have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death / a light has dawned.
<i>(verse 3-5)</i> <i>suppressed prophecy; see remark</i>	You have enlarged the nation / and increased their joy; they rejoice before you / as people rejoice at the harvest, as men rejoice / when dividing the plunder.  For as in the day of Midian's defeat, / you have shattered the yoke that burdens them, / the bar across their shoulders, / the rod of their oppressor.  Every warrior's boot used in battle / and every garment rolled in blood will be destined for burning, / will be fuel for the fire.
<i>(verse 6 -7)</i> <i>implied prophecy; see remark</i>	<b>For to us a child is born, / to us a son is given,</b> / and the government will be on his shoulders.  And he will be called / Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, / Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.  Of the increase of his government and peace / there will be no end.  He will reign on David's throne / and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it / with justice and righteousness / from that time on and forever.  The zeal of the LORD Almighty / will accomplish this.

❖ Some remarks:

- Matthew refers to Isaiah 9:1-2. The first readers/hearers were probably also familiar with the ensuing verses.
  - During the days of King Ahaz, the people living in Galilee were threatened and oppressed by the Assyrian army (Isa 8). It is reasonable to think that the first readers of this Gospel hoped for liberation from oppression based on this messianic prophecy.
  - Matthew had to suppress these messianic hopes. A Roman centurion lived in Capernaum (Mt 8:5-13). Pilate had murdered some Galileans: “Now there were some present at that time who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices” (Lk 13:1).

- The third part of Isaiah (verse 6, 7) refers **to the son**. Earlier in his Gospel, Matthew referred to Isaiah 7:14: “Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: **The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son**, and will call him Emmanuel” (Mt 1:23).
  - Compare also “Emmanuel” (Isa 7:14) with “Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace” (Isa 9:6).
  - The full meaning of “Emmanuel” and the “Mighty God” will be revealed at the end of the Gospel: “And surely I am with you (‘Emmanuel’) always, to the very end of the age (‘Mighty God’)” (Mt 28:20).
- ❖ The Gospel of Matthew refers frequently to the prophecies of Isaiah to make clear that Jesus Christ preached the good news of the kingdom:
  - Matthew 1:23 + Isaiah 7:14: “The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel”—which means, ‘God with us.’”
  - Matthew 3:3 + Isaiah 40:3: “A voice of one calling in the desert, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.’” See also Matthew 11:10 + Malachi 3:1.
  - Matthew 4:16 + Isaiah 9:2: “the people living in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.”
    - See above.
  - Matthew 8:17 + Isaiah 53:4: “He took up our infirmities and carried our diseases.”
  - Matthew 12:17-21 + Isaiah 42:1-4: “Here is my servant whom I have chosen, the one I love, in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him, and he will proclaim justice to the nations” (Isa 40:1).
  - Matthew 13:15 + Isaiah 6:10 as a warning: “For this people’s heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.” See also Matthew 15:7 + Isaiah 29:13.
  - See also Luke 4:18, 19 + Isaiah 61:1, 2: “The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” (Compare Mt 11:5.).

### Light and Darkness

- ❖ “Light and darkness are two of the oldest and most universally recognized symbols in the world.” Many cultures have some sense of “light versus darkness” as a metaphor, a symbol of good versus evil.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Hartsock, C. (2013, p. 522). *Light and Darkness*. In J. B. Green, J. K. Brown, & N. Perrin (Eds.).



## Exposition

### General

- ❖ This short narrative introduces and summarizes the first part of the ministry of Jesus (Mt 4:12-11:19).
  - Matthew 11:20: “Then Jesus began to denounce the cities in which most of his miracles had been performed **because they did not repent.** “Woe to you, Korazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! If the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.”

### Verse 12 *Return to Galilee*

- ❖ **“When Jesus heard that John had been put in prison.”**
  - John preached in the vicinity of the river Jordan near to the desert of Judea, south of the Sea of Galilee. He had been put in prison by Herod (Mt 11:2; 14:3-5).
  - John has fulfilled his task: “A voice of one calling in the desert, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.’” (Mt 3:3 = Isa 40:3) see also Mt 11:10 = Mal 3:1). “The ‘divine passive’ showing John’s sad end to be, like that of Jesus, the outcome of a divinely commissioned ministry.”<sup>5</sup>
  - **“Put in prison.”** From the beginning, the preaching of the Gospel met resistance and persecution (Mt 5:10-12; 10:17-33).
- ❖ **“he returned to Galilee.”**
  - This was not for safety reasons as was the case after Jesus’ fame had spread over Israel (Mt 14: 13, 14).
  - He went to Galilee to fulfil one of the key messianic prophecies. It is according to God’s plan. See above: “the prophecies of Isaiah and the Gospel of Matthew.

### Verse 13 *Leaving Nazareth*

- ❖ **“Leaving Nazareth”**
  - Jesus had lived in Nazareth for more than twenty years (Mt 2:23). The people knew him as the prophet from Nazareth (Mt 21:11; 26:71).
    - Luke recounts the rejection of Jesus by the people of Nazareth (Lk 4:14-30).

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<sup>5</sup> Davies, W. D., & Allison, D. C., Jr. (2004, p. 375).

- The crowds in Jerusalem knew Jesus as: “This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee” (Mt 21:11; also Acts 10:38).

❖ **“he went and lived in Capernaum”**

- “Capernaum” became the centre of the Galilean activities. Matthew refers to it as his own town (Mt 9:1; see also 8:5). “Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people” (Mt 4:23).<sup>6</sup>

Verse 14-16 (Isaiah 9:1, 2)

- ❖ **“To fulfill”** in Greek the passive voice is used. Often this voice implies God is acting.

- “This quotation serves as a rubric for the entire Galilean ministry of Jesus.”<sup>7</sup>

- ❖ **“Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, the way to the sea, along (beyond; ESV) the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles”**

- This text does not exactly correspond to the original Hebrew. Compare Isaiah 9:1: “Nevertheless, there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress. In the past he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the future he will honour Galilee of the Gentiles, by the way of the sea, along the Jordan—
- It is feasible that the “Land of Zebulun” (1), “Land of Naphtali” (2), “The way to the sea” (3), “beyond (ESV) the Jordan” (4), are four parts which together comprise the “Galilee of the Gentiles.” For discussion, see Nolland.<sup>8</sup>

- For general information about Galilee, see above.

- The Hebrew text (Isa 9:1) introduces the prophetic utterance (Isa 9:2-7).

- Here, **Matthew transformed this introduction into a call for attention:**<sup>9</sup>

*Listen:* Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali,  
the way to the sea, along the Jordan,  
Galilee of the Gentiles—

*This is what* “The people living in darkness have seen a great light;

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<sup>6</sup> See also: <https://www.christianstudylibrary.org/files/pub/word/Matthew%204.23-25.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> Hagner, D. A. (1993, p. 71).

<sup>8</sup> Nolland, J. (2005, p. 172).

<sup>9</sup> This "call" is following the LXX, in which Zebulun and Naphtali are vocatives. See Davies, W. D., & Allison, D. C., Jr. (2004, p. 381).

*happened:* on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light  
(Mt 4:17-19:1) has dawned."

- **“Galilee of the Gentiles”** does not mean that Galilee was inhabited by a majority of gentiles. The large crowds he addressed in the sermon on the mount, were familiar with the Old Testament and listening to the teachings of the Pharisees (see also Mt 10:6; 15:24).
  - It is feasible that the original meaning of this reference (Isaiah) was lost. From the perspective of the Jews living in Jerusalem and Judea, it might have condescending and contemptuous overtones (see Acts 2:7).<sup>10</sup>
  - It was not Jerusalem, the religious centre of the Jews, that saw the light first. “It is not uncharacteristic of God to go for the least likely place, where the orthodox would never expect to find him, among the greatest masses of unreached humanity.”<sup>11</sup>
  - It is possible that “with this OT designation Matthew wants on a secondary level to point ahead to what Jesus’ sending has begun in the history of salvation: the movement of salvation to the Gentiles.”<sup>12</sup> After the resurrection, the disciples had to go back to Galilee to receive the final instructions: “Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go” (Mt 28:16).
- ❖ **“— the people living in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.”**
  - In the days of Isaiah, people feared the Assyrian armies. The people were living in darkness and the shadow of death: “Every warrior’s boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood” (Isa 9:5).
  - **“a great light” / “a light has dawned”** means that **“the kingdom of heaven is near”** and salvation by the Messiah, the Christ, is at hand.
    - See also: “I, the LORD, have called you in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand. **I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles,** to open eyes that are blind, to free captives

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<sup>10</sup> “originally pejorative phrase”: Davies, W. D., & Allison, D. C., Jr. (2004, p. 383).

<sup>11</sup> Green, M. (2001, p. 85).

<sup>12</sup> Luz, U. (2007, p. 158).

from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness" (Isa 42:6, 7).

- "Here is my servant whom I have chosen, the one I love, in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him, **and he will proclaim justice to the nations**. He will not quarrel or cry out; no one will hear his voice in the streets. A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out, **till he leads justice to victory. In his name the nations will put their hope.**" (Mt 12:18-21 = Isa 42:1-4).
  - And:
    - "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor" (Lk 4:18, 19; Isa 61:1, 2; Also: Mt 11: 5, 6).
  - **"living in darkness" / "the land of the shadow of death"**: in the original context (Isa 7-9; see also 2 Kings 15:29) these words referred to the threat of war by the Assyrians. In the new context, it describes a people without hope and a future, the future of the Kingdom of Heaven.
    - Elsewhere in the New Testament is "darkness" a symbol of moral and spiritual bankruptcy (Lk 1:79; Jn 1:5; 3:19; 8:12; Rom 2:19; 13:12; Eph 5:8, 11; Col 1:13; 1 Th 5:4-5; 1 Pet 2:9; 1 Jn 2:9, 11).<sup>13</sup>
    - The contrast with Matthew 11:20-24 is sharp: "And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted up to the skies? No, you will go down to the depths. If the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Sodom, it would have remained to this day" (Mt 11:23; see also Mt 13:53-58).
- ❖ Matthew is already hinting at the Gentile Mission (Mt 4:15; 12:18-21; 21:43; 24:14).<sup>14</sup>

#### Verse 17 From that time

- ❖ **"From that time"** is the moment Jesus settled in Capernaum.
- ❖ **"Preach" = "κηρύσσω"**:
  - 1. **to make an official announcement, announce, make known, by an official herald** or one who functions as such.

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<sup>13</sup> Davies, W. D., & Allison, D. C., Jr. (2004, p. 385).

<sup>14</sup> See also: Brown, J. K. (2013, p. 579). *Matthew, Gospel Of*. In J. B. Green, J. K. Brown, & N. Perrin (Eds.).

- 2. to make public declarations, *proclaim aloud*.<sup>15</sup>

❖ **“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.”**

- Repentance is outlined in the blessings of the Sermon on the Mount<sup>16</sup>:

repentance <sup>17</sup>	promise (Kingdom of Heaven)
5:3 Blessed are the poor in spirit,	for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
5:4 Blessed are those who mourn,	for they will be comforted.
5:5 Blessed are the meek,	for they will inherit the earth.
5:6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,	for they will be filled.
5:7 Blessed are the merciful,	for they will be shown mercy.
5:8 Blessed are the pure in heart,	for they will see God.
5:9 Blessed are the peacemakers,	for they will be called sons of God.
5:10 Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,	for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

- **“the kingdom”** is near:
  - After the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ, “Jesus came to them and said, **“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.** Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. **And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age”** (Mt 28:18-20). He is truly Emmanuel.

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<sup>15</sup> Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., & Bauer, W. (2000, p. 543).

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.christianstudylibrary.org/files/pub/word/Matthew%205.3.pdf>

<sup>17</sup> For more information on repentance: Lunde, L. (1992, p. 669-673)

## Application

### Praise

- ❖ Praise God. He will fulfil all his promises as he did in the past, he will do in the present and the future.

### Verse 15

- ❖ **“Land of...”**: preaching has the character of an official announcement.
  - What did it mean in the days of Isaiah?
  - What did it mean to the people of Galilee?
  - What does it mean to people today?

### Verse 16

- ❖ **“living in darkness” / “the land of the shadow of death”**
  - Living in darkness is essentially living without hope, without a future.
    - This can have different causes:
      - War, as during the days of Isaiah (Isa 9:4-5).
      - Poverty, hunger and thirst (see also Lk 6:2-20-26).
      - Fear of death.
      - A materialistic world view.
- ❖ **“a great light” / “a light has dawned”**
  - Jesus Christ is the light for the world (see especially Jn 3:19; 8:12; 12:46). He embodied the Kingdom of Heaven.
    - “As a light to the nations (Isa 9:1–2), the community continues Jesus’ mission. Its exemplary conduct is responsible for bringing the world to acknowledge God. Matt 5:17–20 sets the agenda for what follows. Jesus will make possible a righteousness that does not negate the Torah but brings it to its completion.”<sup>18</sup> See also Eph 5:8-14.
    - Light = grace, righteousness, mercy, peace and joy, wisdom, the presence of God. See also Numbers 6:24-26.

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<sup>18</sup> Perkins, P. (1992, Vol 2., p. 659). *Ethics: New Testament*. In D. N. Freedman (Ed.).

- With his resurrection “**light**” has overcome “darkness” and the powers of darkness.
- Ideologies, philosophies and religions promise also “light” but:
  - Communism has led to oppression.
  - Capitalism has led to the poverty of many.
  - Buddhism offers light to the very view who reach enlightenment.
  - Rationalism has darkened the faith in God.

### Verse 17

- ❖ “**Repent**” means to turn towards the light.
  - The effect of repentance is described in Matthew 5:3-10. See above.
- ❖ “**The Kingdom of Heaven is near.**”
  - The Kingdom has been realized after the resurrection of Jesus Christ. He received all power. At the same time, there is the not yet. We are still awaiting the full realization of the Kingdom, the new heaven and the new earth.

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