

## Nightlights – Christmas Eve 2025

### Micah 5

Remember the old nightlights we use to use? With little incandescent bulbs that pulled 7-9 watts? And barely lit a 3-foot circle in your hallway, but put out enough heat to warm your hands? Remember those?

Back in the day they were the cat's meow. (**Photos**) Some of them had little knobs to turn them on or off. Some of them were combined with a scent diffuser . . . And some of them (**Photo**), if they were really fancy, cast a dim shadow of something on the floor or ceiling. Mostly indiscernible and shrouded, but if you looked really close, and studied it, you could see something.

Now (**Photos**), they're combined with sound machines and clocks that do everything but change diapers and make breakfast. They glow, they change color, they brighten, they dim; and for kids, they turn green when it's okay to get out of bed.

But the main purpose is the same as the old ones. To shed some light in the night until the *morning* light dawns. Just enough light to get you *through* the night, until the *sun* shines.

Which is just like Christmas. The day *the Son* appeared. S-O-N. The day *Jesus* dawned. *The Light*. Light of the world and light of our lives.

Until *then*, we just had nightlights. Prophecies. Casting faint shadows and shedding dim light, to give the world just enough hope and just enough help to make it through the darkness.

Prophecies like **Genesis 3:15**. Where all the way back in the Garden of Eden, right after the Fall, God said to Satan – “*I will put enmity between you and the woman [Eve], and between your offspring [the powers of darkness] and her offspring*; [and then he gets very specific] *he [some-one from Eve's offspring] shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.*” (ESV)

Some future person would deal a massive blow to Satan, *bruise his head*, while Satan would barely affect him; *bruise his heel*. A nightlight, at the very beginning, to assure us that things wouldn't always be so dark.

And then there's **Genesis 12:3c** and the promise God made to Abraham. Saying – *In you all the families of the earth shall be blessed*. And little bit later – *In your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.* (Genesis 22:18) Referring to Jesus. (Gal 3:16)

But they didn't know that. All they knew is that the One of whom God spoke would come from Abraham. A promise of hope. A nightlight.

Followed by **Gen 49:10**. Where Jacob, Abraham's grandson, said – *The scepter [the power] shall not depart from Judah [the lineage of one of his sons], nor the ruler's staff from between his feet [his leadership; that too would remain], until tribute comes to him [worship]; and to him [to someone from Judah's lineage] shall be the obedience of the peoples.* The nations. Someone from the line of Judah would rule and reign forever and ever. The *Lion of Judah*. (Rev 5:5) Another nightlight.

Or how about **Deuteronomy 18:18** 500 years later? (~1400BC) Where God told Moses that he would raise up a prophet just like *him* someday. Somebody in whom God would put his words and lead his people. So they looked and they hoped.

Until God spoke to King David 400 years after that. **2 Samuel 7:12-14a** – [12] “*When your days are fulfilled [he said] and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. [13] He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. [14a] I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son.*” (12-14a) A little brighter nightlight. A little clearer.

And after him, another in the prophecy of **Micah 5:1-5a**. Take a look. **Micah 5:1**.

[1] *Now muster your troops, O daughter of troops [people of God]; siege is laid against us [referring to the Assyrian invasion in 725BC; Micah's day]; with a rod they strike the judge of Israel [the king] on the cheek.* They humiliate him and remove him. Recorded in 2 Kings 17. Pretty dark.

[2] *But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah [like Davenport, Iowa], who are too little to be among the clans of Judah [too insignificant to be influential] from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days.* A nightlight.

[3] *Therefore he shall give them up [God will give his people into the hands of the Assyrians; and those who conquer after them] until the time when she who is in labor has given birth; then the rest of his brothers [those connected to the ruler from Bethlehem] shall return to the fold of God.*

[4] *And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth.* [5] *And he shall be their peace.*

Talk about a nightlight. The bulbs were getting brighter.

And shortly after Micah was Isaiah. Who lit the house up! Like **Isaiah 7:14** – *Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.*

And **Isaiah 9:6-7**, where he says a great light would shine – [6] *For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder [he'll rule and reign], and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.* [7] *Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.* God Almighty. A nightlight for sure.

And even brighter was **Isaiah 11:1-5** – [1] *There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse [the line of David], and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.* [2] *And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.* Nightlights. Brighter and brighter.

Including **Isaiah 53**. Where God says that his suffering servant would *bear their iniquities*, our iniquities, and make *intercession for the transgressors*. Isaiah lit it up.

And then came **Jeremiah 31:31-33** and the *new* covenant God promised. To put his law, his desires, within us; written on our hearts. A promise to be our God, and we his people. And forgive our sins for good. A massive nightlight.

Along with **Malachi 3:1-4**, where God says that the *messenger* of the covenant is coming.

And then, 400 years of silence. Darkness.

Until the LED's showed up. The billboards. Clearer and brighter than ever. Nightlights that spoke!

Like the angel in **Luke 1:5-25**, who spoke to Zechariah about his son John; the one who would prepare the *way* for the Lord. A nightlight foretelling another nightlight. And then another angel to Joseph. **Matthew 1:21**. Telling him that his fiancé would bear a son who would save his people from their sins. Amazing brightness. Amazing clarity.

And don't leave out the one who spoke to Mary herself; later on in Luke. (**Luke 1:26-38**) Saying the Holy Spirit would come upon her to make it all happen. She would conceive as a virgin and give birth to a son. And – [32] *He will be great* [the angel said] *and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, [33] and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever* [the house of Israel; his people; us], *and of his kingdom there will be no end. . . . Therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God.* (Luke 1:32-33,35b)

Talk about a nightlight. Those are floodlights. One, after another, after another, after another. Brighter and clearer than ever before.

Until finally, *the* light appeared. The one they were all waiting for. The one to whom Mary gave birth, wrapped in swaddling cloths, and laid in a manger. (Luke 2:7). A light in the night to exceed all lights. And a light for all. Even though it didn't seem like it.

Until another angel showed up to the shepherds in the same region, to announce him. *Overwhelming* them with the light of God. The very glory of the one who lay in a manger.

It gives new meaning to **Psalm 36:9b**, where King David said to God – *In your light do we see light.* Because the glory of the Lord shone around them, the light of the triune God, they were able to *see* God. Literally *and* spiritually. They were able to *see* the light.

And so are we. *In your light* [God], *do we see light. The Light.*

Then, just to put an exclamation point on it, as if the light of *one* angel weren't enough, he was joined by a *multitude* from the realms of glory. To magnify him all the more. God with us. Light of the world (John 8:12), and the Light of life (John 1:4).

The only question is, “Is he the light of *your* world?” The light of *your* life.

I hope so. I hope you've awakened in faith to the light that shines, and you're blessedly overwhelmed. I hope you've opened your heart like you open the blinds, to let the *Son* shine in. S-O-N.

And if you haven't, I hope you do so right now. I hope you make tonight a holy night for you.

#### Prayer

Oh God, open the eyes of our heart more and more this glorious night. Awaken us to faith and more faith. Shine in our lives and fill our homes. Shine in our church and fill our city. To the praise of your glory we worship your Son. Light of the world and light of our lives. Jesus. In whose name we pray. Amen.

#### Candle Lighting

700 years before Christ (**Is 60:1**), the prophet Isaiah took his cue from all the nightlights, and said to people like us – *Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.* The same glory that surrounded the shepherds. The same glory that filled the night. The same glory that occupied the manger.

So as we light our candles and remember his birth, may our hearts reflect it. And glow with the wonder of it all. Because the light of the *world* has come. Replacing the *darkness* with the light of *life*.

**Merry Christmas. You are loved.**