

# “Tangled” Talk – Arise & Shine Forth

## New Beginnings 2012

As most of you know, in the church, the sun is used to symbolize the Celestial Kingdom; the kingdom where, if we are worthy, we may one day enter and live eternally with our Heavenly Father & Jesus Christ. Just as Rapunzel did in all her art, we have surrounded ourselves this evening with symbols of the sun; in the lanterns, on the overhead lights, on the banners and flags. They act as a reminder to us of our divine nature, celestial goals & destiny as daughters of a King.

As the girls showed you in the skit, Rapunzel was taken from her parents & the Kingdom of the Sun at birth. She was then hidden and raised by her enemy so she would not discover who she was. The highlight of each year was when Rapunzel could watch the lights from her window, but she was forbidden to leave her tower or to talk about them. Goethel was very clever when dealing with Rapunzel. She took care of her not because she loved her, but because it was the easiest way to keep Rapunzel in line and keep the power of Rapunzel’s gift for herself. In fact, Goethel often belittled Rapunzel and her ideas, subtly undermining Rapunzel’s self-esteem and confidence so that she would never be confident enough to venture out on her own. Once Rapunzel did escape, she made the long journey and was finally able to see the lights for herself. It was the lights which ultimately lead to the discovery of Rapunzel’s true identity as a princess of the Kingdom of the Sun.

We, like Rapunzel, were separated at birth from loving parents. We left our Heavenly Father’s kingdom & came to earth in order to grow & learn many things. We came without any recollection of who we were or where we came from. Also, like Rapunzel, we were each born with special gifts. Now, last time I checked, none of us have magical glowing hair that heals everything....*but* each one of us *has* been bestowed with special spiritual gifts and talents from our Heavenly Father – gifts that if used properly have the ability to heal hearts and save souls.

But Satan, like Mother Goethel, does not want us to discover who we really are. He tries to distract us from the lights in our lives that would draw us back to our Father’s Kingdom. He doesn’t want us to discover our divine nature and potential as daughters of God. He would have us believe that we are not worthy of such.

Satan uses the same subtle tactics with us as Mother Goethel did with Rapunzel. He attacks our self-worth by convincing us that we’re not smart enough, pretty enough, or good enough. He belittles us. He emphasizes our mistakes and sins & makes us feel inadequate or unworthy. He provides us with a myriad of distractions that make it difficult for us to keep our focus on the light of the gospel and lays a huge guilt trip on us for even wanting to know what the lights are about. He disguises wrong as right & misery for happiness, but despite all his effort, the light of those lanterns are still there becoming us to come & if we desire it, we can seek them out for ourselves as Rapunzel did.

So what are the “lights” we see? They can be many things and even people around us. They are those around us in which the light of Christ shines. They are righteous examples and gospel truths. For each of you tonight, they are the YW Values. The light of faith, divine nature, individual worth, knowledge, choice & accountability, good works, integrity & virtue all shine brightly, piercing the darkness of this world. The YW Personal Progress Program is an avenue for the YW to grow & learn important qualities & characteristics of divinity. It is a part of a personal journey that will help them discover the truth about themselves. They are daughters of a Heavenly King, a loving Father, and heirs to the eternities. Each value experience they complete instills within them a deeper understanding of who they are and increases the light within them. The more they learn, the stronger their testimonies become. The stronger their testimonies become, the brighter their light shines. The brighter their light shines, the greater opportunity they have to bring others to Christ and share the gospel with them.

For the most part, we live in a world where the philosophies & teachings of men take precedence over those of the gospel of Jesus Christ. In a world such as this, a young woman of faith & firm testimony shines as a beacon in the spiritual night that surrounds her. Each young woman can act as a lantern filled with light drawing others to the knowledge of the gospel – to the knowledge that they are beloved children of God.

The 2012 YM/YW Theme is “Arise & Shine Forth”. It’s taken from D&C 115:5 which says, “Arise & shine forth, that thy light may be a standard for the nations.” To the young women here tonight, I encourage you to work towards earning your YW Personal Progress medallion and strive to live worthy of the blessings promised to all righteous daughters of God. You can be a standard unto the nations. You can let your light shine as you live to gospel and set forth a righteous example for those around you. You were chosen to come to earth at this time for a specific reason. The Lord saved many of his most valiant children for the last days because he knew they possessed within themselves the strength to withstand Satan and triumph over evil. He knew that once rooted in the gospel, they would stand strong and stay firm. You are valiant daughters of God. You can do it. You can bear anything life throws at you with the Savior’s help. With the Savior’s help you can accomplish the job the Lord needs you to do. In Ephesians 6:11 it says, “Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil”. Isaiah 52 tells us to “Awake, awake, and put on thy strength...shake thyself from the dust; arise”. *Now* is the time to awaken to a sense of your divine responsibilities as daughters of God. *Now* is the time for you to shake yourself from the dust and put on the armour of God. *Now* is the time for you to *arise and shine forth!*

I bear my testimony that the Lord lives & that he loves each of you deeply. He has a strong desire for you to return to him and has provided you with the tools necessary to do so. As you participate in the Young Women Program and continue to work on your Personal Progress Value Experiences, the Lord will bless you with a greater understanding of His plan and purpose for you. He will awaken within you a desire to do good and to live the gospel. As you read the scriptures daily and pray to the Lord, your testimonies will grow and you will truly begin to shine. I know that you can do it. You have the light...now is the time to share it... I add my testimony of these things in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

– Michelle Bradley