

Week 1: Day 1 Hope

December 1, 2020

Bible:

So the Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this,
"Cursed are you above all livestock
and all wild animals!
You will crawl on your belly
and you will eat dust
all the days of your life.
And I will put enmity
between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and hers;
he will crush your head,
and you will strike his heel."

To the woman he said,
"I will make your pains in childbearing very severe;
with painful labor you will give birth to children.
Your desire will be for your husband,
and he will rule over you."

To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate fruit from
the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat
from it,'

"Cursed is the ground because of you;
through painful toil you will eat food from it
all the days of your life.

It will produce thorns and thistles for you,
and you will eat the plants of the field.

By the sweat of your brow
you will eat your food
until you return to the ground,
since from it you were taken;
for dust you are
and to dust you will return."

Genesis 3:14-19 (NIV)

"Look, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to each
person according to what they have done. I am the Alpha and
the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.
Revelations 22:12-13 (NIV)

Devotion:

Today's passage may seem like a bunch of names that have no
meaning to you, but to each of these names, God had promised that
there was hope coming for these people. There was hope because of
God's promise to Abraham (Gen. 12) to make him and his descendants
into a great nation. There was hope because of God's promise to
David to establish His kingdom forever. There was hope for all
mankind that the Messiah would come and establish His reign forever.
There was real hope at this moment that God was going to show up in
a new way.

This Advent season, you can have hope that God will show up because
we have the end of the story (Revelations 22:12-13). We know that
God's kingdom has already been established through Jesus. We can
have the same hope that was given to Abraham and David because of
Jesus. We can have that hope if we are following Jesus.

Talk About it:

How can you actively remind yourself of the hope you have in God
every day?

If you have hope in God, how can it change your daily living?

How can you show others the hope you have in Jesus as well?

Further Reading:

Matthew 1, Luke 3:23-38, Revelations 22

Week 1: Day 5 Hope

December 5, 2020

Bible:

This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah the son of David, the son of Abraham:

Abraham was the father of Isaac, Isaac the father of Jacob, Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, Judah the father of Perez and Zerah, whose mother was Tamar, Perez the father of Hezron, Hezron the father of Ram, Ram the father of Amminadab, Amminadab the father of Nahshon, Nahshon the father of Salmon, Salmon the father of Boaz, whose mother was Rahab, Boaz the father of Obed, whose mother was Ruth, Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of King David.

David was the father of Solomon, whose mother had been Uriah's wife, Solomon the father of Rehoboam, Rehoboam the father of Abijah, Abijah the father of Asa, Asa the father of Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat the father of Jehoram, Jehoram the father of Uzziah, Uzziah the father of Jotham, Jotham the father of Ahaz, Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, Manasseh the father of Amon, Amon the father of Josiah, and Josiah the father of Jeconiah and his brothers at the time of the exile to Babylon.

After the exile to Babylon: Jeconiah was the father of Shealtiel, Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel, Zerubbabel the father of Abihud, Abihud the father of Eliakim, Eliakim the father of Azor, Azor the father of Zadok, Zadok the father of Akim, Akim the father of Elihud, Elihud the father of Eleazar, Eleazar the father of Matthan, Matthan the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, and Mary was the mother of Jesus who is called the Messiah.

Thus there were fourteen generations in all from Abraham to David, fourteen from David to the exile to Babylon, and fourteen from the exile to the Messiah.

Matthew 1 (NIV)

Devotion:

As we begin this December, we want to focus this first week on the topic of hope. This passage comes right after the first sin in Genesis. The situation for Adam and Eve (the first humans) seems bleak and hopeless. Adam and Eve had spent their entire lives in paradise, and now this was their fate. They walked with God in paradise and now it was all gone. God answers them with the passage that we read today. While this seemed horrible, there was some hope here. Sin had entered humanity, but God's promise of hope vowed justice. God tells the Devil (serpent) that there is one coming to crush his head. There is a hope that sin can be defeated through this promise. There is hope coming soon.

For each of us today, we live in a world filled with sin and evil. We live in a world of sickness and death. While it can seem horrible, we can still have hope. We can have the same hope that God gave to Adam and Eve. The hope that sin was defeated, and we see this through Jesus' death and resurrection. This advent season, we can hold on to the hope that comes from Jesus' defeat of sin that God promised in today's passage.

Talk About it:

How would you describe hope?

What are you hopeful for?

How do you live in a way where others see your hope?

Further Reading:

Genesis 1-3

Week 1: Day 2 Hope

December 2, 2020

Bible:

The Lord had said to Abram, “Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you.

“I will make you into a great nation,
and I will bless you;

I will make your name great,
and you will be a blessing.

I will bless those who bless you,
and whoever curses you I will curse;

and all peoples on earth
will be blessed through you.”

So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him.

Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Harran. He took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, all the possessions they had accumulated and the people they had acquired in Harran, and they set out for the land of Canaan, and they arrived there.

Genesis 12:1-5 (NIV)

After this, the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision:

“Do not be afraid, Abram.

I am your shield,
your very great reward.”

But Abram said, “Sovereign Lord, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?” And Abram said, “You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir.”

Then the word of the Lord came to him: “This man will not be your heir, but a son who is your own flesh and blood will be your heir.” He took him outside and said, “Look up at the sky and count the stars—if indeed you can count them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your offspring be.”

Devotion:

There will be a sign. A hope that will point you towards the Savior’s coming. There will be someone that will be coming proclaiming that the Messiah, the Savior is coming soon. In the later passage, we’re told specifically that this person described here would be Elijah and he would bring the hope of a Messiah.

Many in that time, were eagerly waiting for this day. They were hoping to find this person that would point them to the Messiah. Their hope was rising with each day. But after this passage in Malachi, it would be around 400 years before the “voice in the wilderness” (John the Baptist) would begin proclaiming the Messiah was near. There was hope, but it would feel like an eternity until their hopes were met.

Maybe this describes you today. You had hope that God was going to be with you, but over time, that hope has dwindled and faded. Where once there was hope, there is now hopelessness. What caused this? God wants to remind you to hold onto the hope of His promises.

Talk About it:

What promises from God have you forgotten about? Where is hope absent in your life?

Where do you feel hopeless in an area of life that God wants to breathe new hope into?

Further Reading:

Isaiah 40, Malachi 4

Week 1: Day 4 Hope

December 4, 2020

Bible:

Comfort, comfort my people,
says your God.
Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and proclaim to her
that her hard service has been completed,
that her sin has been paid for,
that she has received from the Lord's hand
double for all her sins.

A voice of one calling:
"In the wilderness prepare
the way for the Lord;
make straight in the desert
a highway for our God.
Every valley shall be raised up,
every mountain and hill made low;
the rough ground shall become level,
the rugged places a plain.
And the glory of the Lord will be revealed,
and all people will see it together.
For the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

Isaiah 40:1-5 (NIV)

"See, I will send the prophet Elijah to you before that great and
dreadful day of the Lord comes. He will turn the hearts of the
parents to their children, and the hearts of the children to their
parents; or else I will come and strike the land with total
destruction."

Malachi 4:5-6 (NIV)

There will be a sign. A hope that will point you towards the Savior's
coming. There will be someone that will be coming
proclaiming that Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to
him as righteousness.

Genesis 15:1-6 (NIV)

Devotion:

Today we read about Abram (later renamed Abraham) and his
promise from God-this promise that he will be given land and be made
into a great nation. In the later passage, God again tells Abram that he
will be a great nation and that his offspring would outnumber the
stars. This should bring hope to Abram because at this point in
Abram's life, he is getting older (75+) and he does not have any
children. This is the perfect point for Abram to lose hope, but God
speaks hope into a hopeless situation.

God can do the same for you today. We may have seasons or
situations that feel like they will never change and are hopeless. God
can speak hope into your hopeless situation if you trust in Him and His
promises. During these seasons of despair, we can have the same
hope that God gave to Abram in today's passage.

Talk About it:

What situation feels hopeless in your life today?

How would you feel if you were in Abram's spot and God came to
you?

What does God's Word say about your situation and about you? (Hint:
Google it or ask someone you trust who knows God's word)

Further Reading:

Genesis 12-15

Week 1: Day 3 Hope

December 3, 2020

Bible:

But that night the word of the Lord came to Nathan, saying:

“Go and tell my servant David, ‘This is what the Lord says: Are you the one to build me a house to dwell in? I have not dwelt in a house from the day I brought the Israelites up out of Egypt to this day. I have been moving from place to place with a tent as my dwelling. Wherever I have moved with all the Israelites, did I ever say to any of their rulers whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, “Why have you not built me a house of cedar?”’”

“Now then, tell my servant David, ‘This is what the Lord Almighty says: I took you from the pasture, from tending the flock, and appointed you ruler over my people Israel. I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have cut off all your enemies from before you. Now I will make your name great, like the names of the greatest men on earth. And I will provide a place for my people Israel and will plant them so that they can have a home of their own and no longer be disturbed. Wicked people will not oppress them anymore, as they did at the beginning and have done ever since the time I appointed leaders over my people Israel. I will also give you rest from all your enemies.

““The Lord declares to you that the Lord himself will establish a house for you: When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom. He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with a rod wielded by men, with floggings inflicted by human hands.

But my love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever.”

2 Samuel 7:4-16 (NIV)

Devotion:

In the passage today, we read God’s instructions and promise to King David. God has given David victories over his enemies, and he is at peace with them for the time being. David brings the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem and sets it up in a tent. In that day, the Ark of the Covenant, which is where God dwelled among His people at that time in the Bible. Whenever the Ark came to a house, that house was blessed by God.

God comes to David through Nathan and tells David that he should construct a house for the Ark of the Covenant. This would eventually become the temple, built by his son Solomon. God tells David that if he builds this temple for the Ark, David’s kingdom would extend forever. This promise of Hope is lived years later through Jesus establishing His kingdom as a descendant of King David.

Today we can have the hope of being a part of God’s kingdom through Jesus. When we are following Jesus, we are brought into his Kingdom and we are a part of this forever kingdom, Heaven.

Talk About it:

Are there areas of your life that you are forgetting God in? Name these.

Do you have hope of being a part of Jesus’ forever kingdom? How do you know?

Further Reading:

2 Samuel 6-7