

The Gift Of Hope

Various Passages

November 27, 2022
Community Bible Church
Pastor Bob DuPar

Initial Insights

Today, as we celebrate **Advent** (the coming of Christ), we lit the **Prophecy Candle** (also called the **Hope Candle**), signifying that God keeps His promises! God kept His promise of sending us the Messiah – **Jesus**, the One who saves us from our sins!

Question:

How can hope be found when biblical prophecies took 700 years to be fulfilled? How can we experience a hope that isn't realized until future generations?

Answer:

Because hope is found in a person – the living Christ – who although we can't see Him, resides within us!

Christmas Hope Is Found In...

1. **Promises Kept/Prophecy Fulfilled**

Scholars and theologians agree that the Christmas story and our Christian hope is based upon the fulfillment of at least 300 OT prophecies.

Romans 15:4

"For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope!"

Instruction = doctrine (19x), teaching (once)

Perseverance = *patient, steadfast endurance*

Encouragement = *consolation, comfort*

Truth transforms! Focusing upon truth changes us, lifts us!

Truth isn't merely an external entity that we study and pursue; it's also an internal reality that lives inside of us through the power of the Holy Spirit!

Truth **aligns us** with God's heart and purpose/plan. Truth renews our spirit. It restores our strength. It gives us the determination to persevere through hardship because we know that God is ultimately in control of the outcome!

Isaiah 11:1-4

Out of the stump of David's family will grow a shoot— yes, a new Branch bearing fruit from the old root. ² 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. ³ He will delight in obeying the Lord. He will not judge by appearance nor make a decision based on hearsay. ⁴ 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. ⁵ He will wear righteousness like a belt and truth like an undergarment.

Isaiah 42:1-7

"Look at my servant, whom I strengthen. He is my chosen one, who pleases me. I have put my Spirit upon him. He will bring justice to the nations. ² He will not shout or raise his voice in public. ³ He will not crush the weakest reed or put out a flickering candle. He will bring justice to all who have been wronged. ⁴ He will not falter or lose heart until justice prevails throughout the earth. Even distant lands beyond the sea will wait for his instruction." ⁵ God, the Lord, created the heavens and stretched them out. He created the earth and everything in it. He gives breath to everyone, life to everyone who walks the earth. And it is he who says, ⁶ "I, the Lord, have called you to demonstrate my right-eousness. I will take you by the hand and guard you, and I will give you to my people, Israel, as a symbol of my covenant with them. And you will be a light to guide the nations. ⁷ You will open the eyes of the blind. You will free the captives from prison, releasing those who sit in dark dungeons.

Luke 4:16-21

When Jesus came to the village of Nazareth, his boyhood home, He went as usual to the synagogue on the Sabbath and stood up to read the Scriptures. ¹⁷ The scroll of Isaiah the prophet was handed to Him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where this was written: ¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for He has anointed Me to bring Good News to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim that captives will be released, that the blind will see, that the oppressed will be set free, ¹⁹ and that the time of the Lord's favor has come." ²⁰ He rolled up the scroll, handed it back to the attendant, and sat down. All eyes in the synagogue looked at Him intently. ²¹ Then He began to speak to them. "The Scripture you've just heard has been fulfilled this very day!"

Christmas Hope Is Found In...

2. **The Birth Of Christ**

Isaiah 9:6

"For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace."

Jeremiah 31:31-34

"The day is coming," says the Lord, "when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and Judah. ³² This covenant will not be like the one I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand and brought them out of the land of Egypt. They broke that covenant, though I loved them as a husband loves his wife," says the Lord. ³³ "But this is the new covenant I will make with the people of Israel after those days," says the Lord. "I will put my instructions deep within them, and I will write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. ³⁴ And they will not need to teach their neighbors, nor will they need to teach their relatives, saying, 'You should know the Lord.' For everyone, from the least to the greatest, will know me already," says the Lord. "And I will forgive their wickedness, and I will never again remember their sins."

Matthew 21:18-21

"Look at my Servant, whom I have chosen. He is my Beloved, who pleases Me. I will put my Spirit upon Him, and He will proclaim justice to the nations. ¹⁹ He will not fight

or shout or raise His voice in public. ²⁰ He will not crush the weakest reed or put out a flickering candle. Finally, He will cause justice to be victorious. ²¹ And His name will be the hope of all the world."

"And in His name the Gentiles will hope."

Matthew 12:21 NASB

"And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth."

John

1:14

"Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him."

John

14:23

Colossians 1:27

"Christ in us, the hope of glory!"

Christmas Hope Is Found In...

3. Christ's Death & Resurrection

Romans 8:23-25

And we believers also groan, even though we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, for we long for our bodies to be released from sin and suffering. We, too, wait with eager hope for the day when God will give us our full rights as his adopted children, including the new bodies he has promised us. ²⁴ We were given this hope when we were saved. (If we already have something, we don't need to hope for it. ²⁵ But if we look forward to something we don't yet have, we must wait patiently and confidently.)

Hope here is **not** just waiting for God's promise to be fulfilled, it's the means (the way in which) that promise is fulfilled!

1 Peter 1:3

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead!

Rebirthed to a living hope! Our hope is *living* because our hope is Jesus – the eternal One!

Closing Comments

Karl Marx viewed religion and Christianity as *the opiate of the people*. Over the years, many have criticized Christians for hoping so much in the future that they forget the needs of the present world. They argue that believers are so heavenly-minded that they're no earthly-good!

But we never need to apologize for our hope of a new heaven and new earth, where Christ reigns and justice prevails. Because comfort and strength isn't found in our present circumstances. It's found in the reign, the rule, of Christ – in our lives and in this world. And, our hope not only acknowledges this reign but it also activates its power!

Biblical hope is allowing the certainty of our promised future to transform our present reality!

Today, we celebrate the fulfillment of the promised hope (*Jesus*) as we also look forward to the *final fulfillment* of hope – His imminent return!