

HOPE

AT THE END OF YOUR ROPE
FINDING HOPE IN THE PSALMS

week 1



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Psalm 40: 1-5

I waited patiently for the LORD, He turned to me and heard my cry

He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; He set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand.

He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God.

Many will see and fear the LORD and put their trust in Him.

who trusts in the LORD, who does not look to the proud, to those who turn aside to false gods.

Many, LORD my God, are the wonders You have done, the things You planned for us.

None can compare with You; were I to speak and tell of Your deeds,

they would be too many to declare.

Blessed is the one

Hope is the conviction that, despite one's present circumstances, the future will, **in some meaningful way**, be 'better' than the present.

Adam Hamilton

**I put all my
hope in the
Lord.**

Psalm 40:1

Memory Verse Week 1

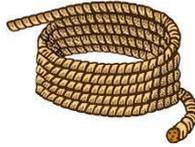


MONDAY – Hope is a Rope



Psalm 40: 2 *He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; He set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand.*

When your world is turned upside down – what do you hold on to?
In the face of uncertainty – who do you count on?



Each one of us, in varying degrees, has been affected by this pandemic. As the months drag on, we find ourselves getting to the end of our rope. Getting to the point where we need HOPE.

The Hebrew word for HOPE is *TIQ(K)VAH* – to hope; to wait, expecting. The etymology (historical development of the word) is ROPE.

Let us pause and take that in: HOPE has its roots in the word ROPE.

But the question is: WHO IS AT THE OTHER END OF YOUR ROPE?

We can be secure in the knowledge that when we reach out to God, He will be firmly holding the other end of our rope. Picture a sea rescue

mission – the life-line descends from the rescue helicopter and the person in distress grabs hold of the line. Slowly they are winched up and flown to safety. That is exactly what God does for us. He extends a life-line to us – saying “Trust Me.” He meets each one of us at the point of our own despair.

Hope is believing that where He sets us down will be a better place than we know currently. It may not be the ‘better’ that we envisage but it will most assuredly be the ‘better’ that God envisages for us.

Hope is believing that God has got this. When I am tired I don’t need to sort things out, I just need to hold on. We are often told to think with our hearts, but perhaps now we need to think with our heads. Trusting and hoping that God will steer us through this is not a feeling, it is relying on the knowledge that we have of a faithful God.



Prayer: *Be Thou my Vision, O Lord of my heart;*
Lord I pray that You be my vision. That Your presence be my light and hope. Help me to rely on Your vision for me and not on my own vision. Lord of hope and strength, be my life-line. AMEN

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6CMclLT_Hjg

TUESDAY – Waiting



Psalm 40: 1 (NIV) *I waited patiently for the Lord;*

Psalm 27: 14 *Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord.*

As we see from Hebrew: hoping is synonymous with waiting.....

We are not really good at this. We so easily believe our prayers are not being answered because we put a time limit on them; or we think that God has chosen not to answer because we have predetermined the direction that answer should take.

In Psalm 40 we read of David's great distress and despondency. Such a heavy spirit. We know that many times David fell weeping at God's feet. Yet every time he had the hope that God would hear him. In this psalm we see David's humble submission to his God; where he recalls God's goodness to him in the past – and because



of this past goodness, he once again turns to God in hope.

This psalm is how God carries out His plan in our lives, in His way, in His time. Regardless of the circumstances, God's plan will always find a way. A new path may have to be made, but He stands at the beginning of it saying, "Come, it is okay."

The battle is not yours – it is God's. Pray for Him to guide you through this season. Hold on to Him, and wait for Him to set your feet on solid ground.

Our hope is in Christ, that sometime in the future our circumstances will be meaningfully better. Let us just be patient.



Prayer: Lord, help me to relax in the knowledge that You hear all my prayers, see all my tears, understand all my anger and that You JUST know. Grant me peace while I wait for the storm to pass; and may my hope be a source of strength to others. AMEN

WEDNESDAY – Sing psalms unto the Lord



Psalm 40: 3 *He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see and fear the Lord and put their trust in Him.*

Through the Psalms, the Old Testament writers gave words to their feelings. These prayers, songs and lamentations expressed what was happening in their lives. It was an outpouring of every emotion: joy, fear, anger, despair.

Throughout history, God's people have been using the Psalms to connect to Him through every crisis.

There is something about singing to God that restores our souls.

So then.... how can the Psalms help us today?

Our response to life is no different to the time of David. Just like David, one moment we are praising, the next we are angry and questioning. Perhaps, however, we do not have the same freedom



as the Psalmists to weep or shout at God. But we need to hear that IT IS OKAY TO DO THIS. God can take it – He knows us and loves us through all those feelings.

That is the point of the Psalms – they reflect and put into words human emotion and feelings. They remind us that God hears us: shouting, crying, angry or praising. They enable us to lay our lives before God.

Many of the psalms end with: "*I trust Lord in your unfailing love OR I rejoice in Your salvation.*" They trusted in a deliverance not yet seen because: "*In the past You were there.*" He has **always** been there for us.

- Let us take a new look at these ancient poems. During the week read a psalm a day. Imagine yourself being the author and let these be your prayers.

"If we treat the Psalms like works of art - we will be led to a true image of ourselves." Unknown



Prayer: Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise Him, my Saviour and my God. AMEN

Psalm 42: 11

THURSDAY – The path from trouble to hope



Psalm 32: 8 (NLV) *The Lord says, “I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you.”*

We all walk our own paths. We all have our own reality. One of the things I have wrestled with during this time is people saying to me “Oh but you are so much better off than so many others.” Yes – I wholeheartedly acknowledge that I am, but it doesn't diminish MY struggles and challenges. And neither does God have a sliding scale of whom He will reach out to. We all matter to Him and He meets each one of us at our point of need.

“I will advise you and watch over you.”

This is where our comfort and hope is. Paul said as we meet trouble, with God's grace and hope, we grow. It is often only with hindsight that we see the truth in this. And it is sometimes too glibly said that “troubles make you stronger.” But each path, each



journey that we undertake helps us to grow. Perhaps in this time of pandemic and isolation we need to focus on the journey rather than the destination.

Pastor John Guest said “the grieving mind learns to live one day at a time.”

Could we stop looking for the end and deal just with today? Each day as the sun peeps through your window - smile! Yesterday is done, you just need to do today.

“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in faith so that you overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit (Romans 15:13).

- How can you TODAY, open your heart and let God fill you to overflowing with hope? –

Be still my soul, the Lord is on your side.



Prayer: Lord, walk with me. Help me to do today. Help me to find beauty in this day amidst the fear, uncertainty and death for I just need to do one day at a time. AMEN

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mq59iE3MhXM>

FRIDAY – Seasons



Psalm 8: 1; 3 & 4; 9 (NIV) *¹Lord, our Lord, how majestic is Your name in all the earth! ^{3&4}When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have set in place, what is mankind that You are mindful of them. ⁹How majestic is Your name in all the earth!*

God is Creator! He created all life and all life He created with cycles and seasons. The Psalms capture the heart and soul of God's people in all the various seasons of life. The psalmists seemed to get this concept – life moves in cycles. And therein lies the hope!

Walter Brueggemann is an American Old Testament scholar and theologian who wrote that life has three seasons: Orientation, Disorientation and Reorientation.

Orientation – life is ordered and going according to plan.

Disorientation – major upsets to our lives; where some things just happen which are beyond our control. Causing confusion, loss of faith and God seems silent.

Reorientation – the slow and gentle settling of life where our feet find solid ground again.



This is where we are. Seasons do not last forever, there is a constant ebb and flow of them. We can trust this cycle; we can put our hope in God that we will move beyond this season. There may be a cost, but God redeems and changes us during periods of disorientation, until our feet find solid ground again.

Jesus's life is symbolic of these seasons:

He was amongst His people teaching – **ORIENTATION**;

He was crucified – **DISORIENTATION**;

He rose – **REORIENTATION**.

We have had Easter, Ascension and Pentecost in lockdown but just as the Holy Spirit came then, so God's breath and winds of change will come now.

The worst thing is
never the last thing!



Prayer: Lord help me to hold on tightly to Your rope, help me to trust that You are in the midst of this disorientation. Help me to process that this season will pass and You will make all things new. You will set my feet on solid ground. AMEN.