



A Thrill of Hope

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“In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. And Gabriel came to her and said, “Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.” But Mary was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be.

The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.”

Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I am a virgin?” The angel said to her, “The Holy Spirit will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.”

*Then Mary said, “Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.” The angel departed from her.” **Luke 1:26-38***

*“And now faith, **hope**, and love abide, these three.” **1 Corinthians 13:13***

Faith and Love spring from Hope: “We have heard of your **faith** in Christ Jesus and of the **love** that you have for all the saints, because of the **hope** laid up for you in heaven. You have heard of this **hope** before in the word of the truth, the Gospel.” **Colossians 1:4-5**

What is hope?

- An expectation of the future
- Trust in attaining that future
- Patience while awaiting the future

- A desire to be benefitted by the future
- Confidence in divine promises

What you hope for influences how you live today.

Eschatology influences Ethics

Eschatology = The Second Coming of Jesus Christ

Where do you see yourself in 10 years?
Where am I going?
What is my purpose?
What is going to happen?

What is my future? = What is my hope?

The Season of Advent is about **the future**.

The word, “Advent”, is derived from the Latin word, *Adventus*, which means “Arrival or Coming.”

Advent is about anticipating the Coming of Jesus Christ.

The Season of Advent is about **hope**.

What happens when we become **hopeless**?

We become like ancient Jews.

The Jews—during the time of the birth of Jesus—were under unjust oppression by the Roman Empire. In fact, they have been oppressed since the time of the Babylonians.

In 587 B.C. (6th Century B.C.), Jerusalem (the capital city of Israel) was destroyed by Babylon, and the Jews were exiled from their homeland. The Babylonians ruled over the Jews.

In the 5th Century B.C., the Jews returned to their homeland, because the Persians defeated the Babylonians. So, the Persian Empire ruled over the Jews.

In the 4th Century B.C., the Persians were defeated by the Greeks—led by Alexander the Great. The Greek Empire controlled the Jews.

300 years later (1st Century B.C.), the Middle East was completely conquered by the Roman Empire.

For 600 years, the Jewish people were beaten up, oppressed, enslaved, defeated, disgraced, belittled, devalued, and marginalized by oppressors.

The Jewish people were hopeless.

What you hope for influences how you live today.

What happened to the Jewish people?

But the angel Gabriel came to the Jewish girl, Mary and brought **hope**.

The birth of Jesus included all persons of the Holy Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

- The Father sent the angel, Gabriel
- The child to be born will be called Jesus, the Son of God
- The Holy Spirit will overshadow Mary and help the Son of God become a human being.

Divine Promises:

- You WILL conceive in your womb and bear a son.
- You WILL name him Jesus
- He WILL be great
- He WILL be called the Son of the Most High
- The Lord WILL give him the throne of David
- His Kingdom WILL have no end
- He WILL reign
- The Holy Spirit WILL come upon you
- Nothing WILL be impossible with God.

The angel brought **hope**.

“Mary’s response: “Here I am, the servant of the Lord, let it be with me according to your word.”” **Luke 1:38**

What does hope do for us?

1. Hope creates a beautiful future.

“For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.” **Romans 8:24-25**

2. Hope helps us live ethical lives.

“And all who have this hope in Christ purify themselves, just as he is pure.” **1 John 3:3**

Hope compels us to have faith and to love right now.

3. Hope reminds us of the story of Jesus Christ.

“God our Savior and of Christ Jesus, our hope.” **1 Timothy 1:1**

In the season of Advent, we hope that Jesus Christ will come back and make all things new.

In this season of change, I hope we will follow God faithfully.

For Faith Community, I hope you will become whatever God wants you to become.

What do you hope for in your life?

Because what you hope for influences how you live today.