

# HOPE

The first candle in Advent symbolizes hope. It is sometimes called the “Prophecy Candle” in remembrance of the prophets, especially Isaiah, who foretold the coming of Christ. It represents the expectation felt in anticipation of the coming Messiah and the hope that the appearance of our Messiah provides as we reflect on His life & work while here on earth and in us.

Included are prophecies in Scripture for you to reflect on each day or as you see fit. Each one speaks hope into a hopeless situation during Old Testament times and later is fulfilled in New Testament times.

While reading each one consider contemplating these two questions:

- What is the context into which this prophecy is being spoken?
- What hope does it provide?

## Day 1

### **Prophecy:**

Nevertheless, there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress. In the past he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the future he will honor Galilee of the nations, by the Way of the Sea, beyond the Jordan— The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned" (Isaiah 9:1–2)

### **Fulfillment:**

“When Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, he withdrew to Galilee. Leaving Nazareth, he went and lived in Capernaum, which was by the lake in the area of Zebulun and Naphtali—to fulfill what was said through the prophet Isaiah:

‘Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali,  
the Way of the Sea, beyond the Jordan,  
Galilee of the Gentiles—  
the people living in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
on those living in the land of the shadow of death  
a light has dawned.’

From that time on Jesus began to preach, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near'" (Matthew 4:12–17).

## Day 2

### **Prophecy:**

In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his resting place will be glorious" (Isaiah 11:10)

**Fulfillment:** Many people, because they had heard that he had performed this sign, went out to meet him. So the Pharisees said to one another, 'See, this is getting us nowhere. Look how the whole world has gone after him!

“Now there were some Greeks among those who went up to worship at the festival. They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, with a request. 'Sir,' they said, 'we would like to see Jesus'" (John 12:18–21).

### Day 3

#### **Prophecy:**

“Then will the eyes of the blind be opened  
and the ears of the deaf unstopped.  
Then will the lame leap like a deer,  
and the mute tongue shout for joy.  
Water will gush forth in the wilderness  
and streams in the desert” (Isaiah 35:5–6).

#### **Fulfillment:**

When John, who was in prison, heard about the deeds of the Messiah, he sent his disciples to ask him, 'Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?'

"Jesus replied, 'Go back and report to John what you hear and see: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor. Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me'" (Matthew 11:2–6)

### Day 4

#### **Prophecy:**

“Here is my servant, whom I uphold,  
my chosen one in whom I delight;  
I will put my Spirit on him,  
and he will bring justice to the nations.  
He will not shout or cry out,  
or raise his voice in the streets.  
A bruised reed he will not break,  
and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out.  
In faithfulness he will bring forth justice;  
he will not falter or be discouraged  
till he establishes justice on earth.  
In his teaching the islands will put their hope” (Isaiah 42:1–4).

#### **Fulfillment:**

“Aware of this, Jesus withdrew from that place. A large crowd followed him, and he healed all who were ill. He warned them not to tell others about him. This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah: 'Here is my servant whom I have chosen, the one I love, in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him, and he will proclaim justice to the nations. He will not quarrel or cry out; no one will hear his voice in the streets. A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out, till he has brought justice through to victory. In his name the nations will put their hope.'” (Matthew 12:15–21).

## Day 5

### **Prophecy:**

"He was despised and rejected by mankind,  
a man of suffering, and familiar with pain.  
Like one from whom people hide their faces  
he was despised, and we held him in low esteem" (Isaiah 53:3).

### **Fulfillment:**

"All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this. They got up, drove him out of the town, and took him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built, in order to throw him off the cliff" (Luke 4:28–29).

## Day 6

### **Prophecy:**

"The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me,  
because the Lord has anointed me  
to proclaim good news to the poor.  
He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,  
to proclaim freedom for the captives  
and release from darkness for the prisoners" (Isaiah 61:1).

### **Fulfillment:**

He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

'The Spirit of the Lord is on me,  
because he has anointed me  
to proclaim good news to the poor.  
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners  
and recovery of sight for the blind,  
to set the oppressed free,  
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.'

"Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. He began by saying to them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing" (Luke 4:16–21).

## Day 7

### **Prophecy:**

"On this mountain he will destroy  
the shroud that enfolds all peoples,  
the sheet that covers all nations;  
he will swallow up death forever.  
The Sovereign Lord will wipe away the tears  
from all faces;  
he will remove his people's disgrace  
from all the earth.  
The Lord has spoken" (Isaiah 25:7–8).

**Fulfillment:**

“When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: ‘Death has been swallowed up in victory’” (1 Corinthians 15:54).

- Throughout the week, what has stood out to you in these prophecies?
- Do you sense the Holy Spirit speaking anything personally into your heart regarding them or the incarnation and how it personally impacts you or our world?
- Is there anything in the above scriptures that specifically ministers hope to your heart this week?
- Do these prophecies give you a sense that God is for you?
- Is there any area in your life in which you feel hopeless and you are particularly in need of hope?

Now, take a look at what Paul wrote about hope in the midst of adversity:

**Romans 8:18-39**

*For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.*

*Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.*

This passage brings me great hope because it reminds me that the incarnation is way bigger than I often think. In Scripture, we are called the Body of Christ. In 2 Cor 4:11, Paul wrote: “For we who live are always being given over to death for Jesus’ sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.”

- What stirs in you as you read the above passage?
- How might God be being born in you right now, or in the process of being born in you—even in the midst of difficulty?
- What might He be in the process of redeeming in your life so that He might be made known in new ways to you and those around you?
- What other thoughts and ideas do Romans 8:18-39 or any of the prophecy passages stir in you that you’d like to share with us?

\* Come join the Conversation!

We’d love it if you shared your thoughts in the comments section under the Advent post titled “HOPE” (Week 1) on our Hope For All Connection Group page here:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/HopeForAllConnection/>