

Advent

A SEASON OF ANTICIPATION

Hope – 2021 Advent Devotional

by: Nicholas Kyrouac

Light your first **PURPLE** advent candle. The Candle of Hope.

Whether you are reading this as a family, a group of friends, or by yourself, we encourage you to read the words aloud near your advent candles.

READ GOD'S WORD

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 15:13

**⁶ For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given,
and the government will be on his shoulders.
And he will be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.**

**⁷ Of the greatness of his government and peace
there will be no end.
He will reign on David's throne
and over his kingdom,
establishing and upholding it
with justice and righteousness
from that time on and forever.
The zeal of the LORD Almighty
will accomplish this.
Isaiah 9:6-7**

SOMETHING TO CONSIDER

The famous christmas carol, *O Holy Night*, that was written by French composer Adolphe Adam and translated into English by Minister John Sullivan Dwight, has a wonderful line that says, “**A thrill of Hope, the weary world rejoices.**” To think, Adam and Dwight needed to describe the mystery of Hope we find in Jesus, and chose the word, “thrill,” as the best description! There are many things that we might say are thrilling:

- Roller Coasters
- Sky Diving
- Bungee Jumping
- A rock concert
- The lightsaber fights between Luke and Darth Vader

Hope on the other hand, well, that isn't something we tend to describe as thrilling. So how is it that a composer and a minister landed on the word, “thrill,” to describe hope?

All throughout the Bible we hear about how we as sinful people are enslaved or in bondage to sin (Acts 8:23; Romans 6:6, 16, 19; 7:14; 2 Peter 2:19). Specifically for the Israelites (God's chosen people in the Old testament) they had been waiting thousands of years to be set free from the bondage of sin by a savior that was promised to them by God from the beginning of time. Then after what seemed like an eternity, Jesus is born, just as Isaiah prophesied (Isaiah 9:6-7). Finally, God's people who were enslaved by their sins are finally going to be set free!

Imagine being imprisoned your entire life, then one day when you are old and grey, someone walks in and tells you that there is a person at the front door of the prison who is on their way to your cell to unlock it and let you go free. It's safe to say, the next few minutes as you wait for the savior to unlock your chains will be a thrilling experience.

Here is the best news, this thrill of Hope is not exclusively reserved for the Israelites of the Old Testament. God offers us a gift of salvation to all who believe and follow Jesus.

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

John 3:16

In the very last book of the Bible, Revelation 22, Jesus also promises us three different times that one day he will return to earth and when he does all sin, pain, and fear will be eradicated from this earth and we will live in harmony with him.

“Look, I am coming soon! Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy written in this scroll.”

Revelation 22:7

“Look, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to each person according to what they have done.

Revelation 22:12

He who testifies to these things says, “Yes, I am coming soon.”

Revelation 22:20

Tonight, as we take time to slow down, we celebrate the thrill we receive from the Hope that God promises us through His birth, through His gift of salvation, and through His promised return.

TAKE SOME TIME FOR PRAYER

If you have a child in CBKids, take this time to hang HOPE ornament on the tree that your child made this morning at church. After you are finished return as a family to your advent candles for a time of prayer.

Let's Pray together.

Dear Jesus,

Thank you for your many promises. Thank you for the Hope that one day we will dwell with you in a place where there is no sin, no pain, no fear, and no sadness. We ask that during this time of waiting and anticipation for your return grant us strength and perseverance that is only possible through your Holy Spirit. Let us take this gift of Hope and share it with those who have yet to hear about it.

**Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be Your name.
Your kingdom come.
Your will be done
On earth as *it is* in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts,
As we forgive our debtors.
And do not lead us into temptation,
But deliver us from the evil one.
For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

Matthew 6:9-13