

Hope Study Teaching Notes

Lesson Two Review: The Lord's Prayer- Hope in Relationship



Discussion Questions

~ Looking Back on Lesson Two ~

1) From

~ Looking Ahead to Lesson Three ~

In the next two weeks we'll look at several Psalms

What are you hoping to learn more about in the coming weeks?

"My Hope is Built on Nothing Less"
by Edward Mote, 1797-1874

My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But wholly lean on Jesus' name.
On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand.

When darkness veils His lovely face,
I rest on His unchanging grace;
In every high and stormy gale
My anchor holds within the veil.
On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand.

His oath, His covenant, and blood
Support me in the whelming flood;
When every earthly prop gives way,
He then is all my Hope and Stay.
On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand.

When He shall come with trumpet sound,
Oh, may I then in Him be found,
Clothed in His righteousness alone,
Faultless to stand before the throne!
On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand.



~ Lesson Three Introduction ~

Welcome back! I'm looking forward to the next lesson and chapters in our study together! We have built our lessons covering hope on the sure foundation of the **resurrection** of Jesus. We've meditated through the Lord's Prayer to see how this hope draws us into **relationship** with our Father in Heaven. Now, our study will walk with those who have **wrestled** with hope.

Resurrection — Relationship — Wrestling.

As we add to our understanding, I pray that you are adding to your hope in our wonderful God. In this lesson we will see what hope has looked like in the lives of the writers of some of the most powerful and emotionally charged books of the Bible: Psalms, Job, and Lamentations. Our study focus will be unpacking the Hebrew word for "hope." As in the English language, there are many ways hope is expressed in the Hebrew. Consider these two uses of the word:

"I hope I get extra sprinkles on my donut." And "I hope he comes home safely."

One is simply wishful thinking while the other is a deep yearning of the heart. We understand the relative weight of one statement over the other because we understand the context of the situation. We're going to get into some interesting word studies in the coming days. I think you'll really enjoy the depth of understanding that seeing the Hebrew words will give you. There are at least fifteen words that can be translated "hope" in the Tanakh – the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament.) Here are the six main root words for hope that you'll learn plus the words that build from each root listed under each:

- 1. בַּטַּח** **batach** **trust, confident(ce), secure, bold, hope, hoped, sure**
בַּטַּח betach safely(ty), assurance, boldly, care, confidence, hope, secure, surely
בִּטְחוֹן bittachone confidence, hope
מִבְטָח mivtach confidence, trust, sure, hope
- 2. חָסָה** **chacah'** **to trust, to make a refuge, have hope**
מַחֲסֵה machaseh refuge, shelter, hope, trust
- 3. יָאֵשׁ** **ya'ash** **no hope, despair, desperate,**
- 4. יָחַל** **yachal** **hope, wait, tarry, trust, stayed**
תּוֹחֵלֶת towcheleth hope
יַחֲיִל yachiyl hope
- 5. שָׁבַר** **sabar** **hope, wait, view, tarry**
שִׁבְרָה seber hope
- 6. קָוָה** **qavah** **wait, look, wait for, look for, gathered, misc**
תִּקְוָה tiqvah hope, expectation, line, expected
מִקְוֵה miqveh linen yarn, hope, gathering together, pool, plenty, abiding

KEEP THIS IN MIND AS YOU STUDY:

1. **Read from a translation not a paraphrase Bible** - I could print the chapters out for us to read, however, there is more value to you in getting familiar with your own Bible. I'll be using several translations throughout the study, but my personal study Bible is an NIV. Use whichever version of the Bible you prefer – just use a translation and not a paraphrase. Examples of paraphrases are the New Living, The Message, and The Living Bible. *Instead of these, you'll want to read from a reliable translation* like the New International, English Standard, New American Standard, Holman Christian, or New King James.
2. **This is a Bible Study – not a devotional** - You are beginning a Bible study and this is different than reading a passage in the Bible, and it's different than reading a devotional. Study takes being a good student and that will mean thinking like a student and practicing good study habits. *Usually we read a passage and think of how it applies to our life in that moment*, but in this study, as up close and personal as each chapter will likely feel, you will want to have the mindset first of what the Bible says about God and finally how you can apply it to yourself – if at all. Sometimes, you'll just be reading to edify God.
3. **Study to Glorify God, not solve your problems** - As you read the verses in our study instead of reading to find that personal message of hope, read to deepen your understanding of who God is. Ask, "What does this tell me about God?" instead of "What does this say to me?" Will you find what it says to you as well? Certainly! But let's review what we just read in our last lesson through the Lord's Prayer. Where did that prayer begin? "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name." Relationship begins with a right understanding and acknowledgment of who God is. And who He is to be in our lives. He is our Holy Father in Heaven whose name we must live to make holy on earth. Let's have that as our focus.
4. **Study takes time** - You will want to set aside time to complete your study. Depending on your familiarity with the Bible, you might find that it takes you longer than you think it should. Please don't be discouraged if you think you're not understanding things or if you find yourself pressed for time and behind. There are two weeks in between each of our study get-togethers and only 10 days of study in this lesson. Make it your goal to read every day. Remember, you're adding something new into your life and you'll likely need to move aside something else you are already doing. *We each have the same 168 hours in a week, which of those hours are you going to purposefully set aside for your time in the Word?*
5. **Get a Study Buddy** - If you haven't already, get a study buddy! Really! Find a friend from your small group and text or call each other daily with a reminder or a word of encouragement. As well-intentioned as we all are to start and finish something, the hours can simply slip away. With an accountability partner you can be there to encourage one another. What a blessing God has for you for your commitment to His Word!
6. **You are loved and prayed for** - Finally, know that I am praying for you daily! It's true. I take time every day to pray by name for the women who are enrolled in this study. Let's do it together! I may have written the study, but I am also completing it again along with you every single day. You can join me live as I read and complete every lesson day. The recordings are here at www.DwellingRichly.podbean.com You can also join our Facebook community at "Dwelling Richly." Email me with any questions or to share what you're learning at

Jennifer@LaMiradaChurch.com



~ Lesson Three — Day One ~

We Wait In Hope — Part 1

Scripture Focus: Psalm 33

Pray Psalm 119:18 “Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your Law.”

Please Note: I'll be using the NIV. If you're using a different translation, some wording might be slightly different. I recommend www.Biblegateway.com or the YouVersion Bible app on your phone/tablet to help you look up verses in a different translation.

Read Psalm 33 — Are you ready? Let's Study!

Read the first three verses of Psalm 32 and of Psalm 34.

1. Who wrote these Psalms? _____
2. Do we know who wrote Psalm 33? _____ Maybe it was David. Maybe it was one of the other writers of the 150 psalms in this book: Moses, Asaph, a son of Korah, or Solomon. There is no author given for this Psalm. It's simply nestled in between two of David's with no credit given.

Psalms, as we learned in Lesson Two, is a book of the Bible that is a collection of praises. The word “psalm” means “praise.” This particular Psalm is one that gives beautiful praise but also sums up the reasons we can praise and why those praises give us hope.

Now let's read Psalm 33 again, and as you read, think about who is speaking, to whom they're speaking, about whom they're speaking. Write your observations here:

3. Who is speaking? _____
4. To whom is the author speaking? _____
5. To whom is the author pointing our attention? _____

Remember, you're writing your answers based on your best thoughts. Don't use a commentary or study notes to assist you. This is an important step in personal Bible study: just you and the Word and trusting that God will answer your prayer that you just prayed from Psalm 119:18.

I'm not the kind who likes to read the final chapter of a novel before I start it, but I do read novels based on a friend's recommendation. “You will loooooove this book!” she will say, “It's so inspirational!” or “It made me really think!” or “I loved how the story all tied together.” I feel the same way when it comes to reading the Psalms. Often the final wrap-up is stated at the very end of the chapter. The set-up to how we can get there is throughout the chapter and verse by verse as we read we see it building to the final take-home thought.

Read the final verses of Psalm 33, verses 20-22

6. Who do we wait for? _____
7. Who is He to us? _____ and _____

8. Why do we rejoice?

Write verse Psalm 33:22 here:

The Hebrew word נָחַח (chacah') is the word translated "wait in hope" or "wait expectantly" in the English. In some versions it is translated simply "wait", however the idea of this waiting is not merely like waiting for a bus or waiting your turn in line. The word here means an expectant waiting, a hope-filled waiting, a waiting based on knowledge of the One in whom our waiting waits! Ok, that was a little wordy, but you get the idea. That's what's so meaningful as we go back to the beginning and read the verses leading us here. We're going to see exactly for whom we are waiting, and it makes all the difference in the world.

Read Psalm 33:1-3

9. Who is the one singing? (two descriptive words)

_____ and _____

10. What do the righteous and upright do? _____

11. How do they do it? (I see at least 6 ways!)

In verse 3 it says "new song." This doesn't mean to sing a song you've never heard of as much as it means to let the praise you have in your heart be like new every day!

~ Lesson Three — Day Two ~

We Wait In Hope — Part 2

Scripture Focus: Psalm 33

Read Lamentations 3:22-23

12. What do we read here about God's mercies?

They're new not because He came up with new ways to be merciful, but because they are renewed in our lives every morning! This is how our praise should be to Him...renewed, not stale. Not same 'ol-same 'ol...NEW! Refreshed. Not feeling it? Then go back to verse 1 and re-read the kind of people for whom they are new: the righteous and the upright. And how are we made righteous? How are we upright? By

walking humbly before God. Do you see it? I know it's hard to feel fresh and new to God every day, but His mercies are there for you fresh and new – let's make our praises to Him be the same.

Read Psalm 33:4-5

13. Why do we sing praises? Three reasons in verse 4

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

14. What does the LORD love?

_____ and _____

15. In verses 4-5, what does it say about the word and character of the LORD?

|

Understanding and really embracing the nature and character of God is central to our ultimate willingness to trust in Him and to “wait in hope” for Him. If He has a fickle character, why would we wait for Him? If he wasn't faithful in **all** He does, why should we count on Him?

16. Verse 5 says, “the earth is full of His unfailing love.” From your own experience or from Scripture you know – or both – what examples in the earth do you see that show His unfailing love?

|

Read Psalm 33:6-9, Genesis 1:3 and Hebrews 11:3

17. What do these verses tell us about creation and the power of God?

|

Read Psalm 33:10-17

Let's back up a bit: In verse 8 we read, “Let all the earth fear the LORD; let all the people of the world revere Him.” And yet, they didn't then and clearly they do not today. This is a central reminder in every book of the Bible. Every chapter of the story of God redeeming and rescuing His people is a call to fear God. Fear God. Fear. God. Proverbs 1:7 gets the entire collection of wisdom started by stating, “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline.”

With this in mind, as you read verses 10-17 complete the chart listing the ways the world thinks and what it values on the left and the character and behavior of God on the right:

<u>WORLD</u>	<u>GOD</u>
--------------	------------

--	--

Now, you don't have an army, you're not a warrior by trade, you don't depend on your horse to get you out of scrapes...but you, like me, might have a tendency to put your hope in things of this earth from time to time, to trust in your own understanding even when you know that you need to trust God. So, next to the words you wrote above about what the nations put their trust in, confess what you might be trusting in today: Your job and the money it provides? Your spouse? Your stamina, determination, knowledge?

18. Write as many things as you can think of and prayerfully lay each one down to the Father.

~ Lesson Three – Day Three ~

We Wait in Hope – Part 3

Scripture Focus: Psalm 33

Read Psalm 33:18-19

The first word of verse 18 translated “But” in the NIV is the Hebrew word **הִנֵּה** (hee-nay) which means “Behold” or “here” with the sense of make note of this. What do verses 18-19 say in comparison to the what we just in verses 16-17?

19. What kind of people is God watching over? (v18)

20. What will He do for them? (v19)

The worst that life can offer – death and dying a slow death. God. Will. Deliver. We saw that clearly in our Lesson One study when we studied the foundation of our hope. And what is our hope founded upon? The resurrection!

“Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death is your sting?”

(Hosea 13:14, 1 Cor. 15:55)

Are you getting excited to think about this?

I am!

I am thinking back to verses 1-3 in our chapter. No wonder why the author was singing joyfully, praising with a band, singing a new song, and shouting for joy at the very beginning of the Psalm!

We have real hope,

a true hope,

a bigger, better, *awesomer* hope than those who trust in what the world can provide!

Kings? Peh! . . .

Warriors? Ha! . . .

Horses? Pbth!

We have the LORD God almighty on our side!

I feel like Isaiah when he wrote,

“Do you not know? Have you not heard?

The LORD is the everlasting God

the creator of the ends of the earth!”

Read Psalm 33:20-22

Read it aloud and really emphasize “the LORD” and “He” and in “Him” and “His” to drive home the point. Go on....aloud. (I know you were just sort of reading it to yourself.) Why not stand up and reeeeaally put your back into it. Read it like you mean it.

While others may trust in kings, warriors, horses, presidents, jobs, personal wealth, etc., we fear God and will be placing our hope in the LORD!

21. And look again, what does the author say in verse 21? In Him our hearts do what?

(write it in ALL CAPS!) - _____ (just like in verses 1-3!)

22. Why can our hearts rejoice? (second part of verse 21)

Remember from Lesson Two the important of His name? This is that same name. The name that

Moses was instructed to use when Pharaoh would ask who he was sent by. The name is the “I AM. I WAS AND WILL ALWAYS BE” – YHVH – Yaweh.

In this final verse the author uses the Hebrew word **יָחַל** (yachal) which means to have an expectant hope. Verse 22 sums up also in a unique way, because not only are we hoping, but the meaning here “even as we put our hope” means that in proportion to our hope/trust in Him, His love will be upon us.

I sure want His love - also translated “mercy” and “lovingkindness” - to rest on me! Don’t you?

It’s not that He’s withholding his love because I am not fully giving him my hopes here. Don’t misunderstand. The idea is that I’m able to fully be open to His unfailing love because I’m fully open to total surrender in my willingness to hope in Him.

Sister, as we close our time today, let this be your prayer that you would surrender every tendency you

may have to trust in the people and things of this world and that you would rejoice in the God of the Word, His Truth in your life, and His promise of power over death. Write your prayer on the following

page naming in your prayer truths of who God is and your commitment to Him to trust Him fully in every corner of your life:

My Prayer



~ Lesson Three – Day Four ~

I Have Put My Hope in Your Word – Part 1

Scripture Focus: Psalm 119

When I began my study on what the Bible says about hope I began with a basic word study. I

literally looked up every verse that had the word hope in it. Some Bible translations use the word “trust” or “wait” where others use “hope”, but in my overall study I began to see a theme and flow. Hope – true, worthwhile, biblical hope – is only ultimately possible because of the truth of the resurrection. This leads us to a relationship with the Giver of hope, and in relationship we need to come to terms with or wrestle with what that hope looks and feels like in our lives. It’s easy enough to say that we “hope” this or that will happen – not easy at all though, to face a devastating season of what feels like endless loss and disappointment. Do we honor a God who gives hope in these most desperate times? Certainly. But do we really, confidently hope – or do we have simple wishful thinking? I believe that true hope is both simple in its availability and difficult in that we often have to wrestle to really grasp it.

This wrestling has been at the center of much of my own story. During each season of waiting on God

it was ultimately the truth of His word that strengthened my hope. Did you catch that? It was the truth of His **word** that brought me the most hope. What has God promised and does He have a habit of keeping or breaking His promises? Over and over, in spite of the disappointments I faced, I saw that God, through time most definitely kept His Word. As I faced infertility, I looked to His Word for encouragement and hope. Through the pain of a broken marriage, His Word brought me wisdom and hope. In coping with my husband’s depression and substance abuse, His Word was my strength. So, it was no surprise that in my studies I found that the chapter in the Bible most filled with hope was the one whose entire focus was on the importance of the Word of God – Psalm 119.

Psalm 119 is one of the most unique chapters in the Bible. That’s clear enough reading it in English, but reading it in Hebrew is even more amazing. When you read it in Hebrew you see the beauty of the structure. Psalm 119 is divided into 22 sections: one for each letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Each section is composed of 8 verses and each verse begins with the same Hebrew letter. It’s not only beautifully written, it’s got a purpose! It’s special kind of poem that makes learning the word easy and you might have learned this way in school. This kind of poem is known as an acrostic. Each verse contains a special word pertaining to God’s commandments, law, ordinances, word, judgments, statutes, precepts and decrees.

If you are familiar with Psalm 119 then there might be one big question on your mind as you’re reading this introduction right now, “How are we going to study Psalm 119 in two days of home Bible study?” We’re not. Psalm 119 is the longest chapter in the Bible with twenty-two sections that each have eight verses. With 176 verses in the entire chapter, it would be too much to cover in a single day. Instead, we will be looking at several verses that specifically point to the hope we have because of God’s Word and then I will be encouraging you take the time to read through Psalm 119 on your own.

My heart is that you will come away with a renewed passion to be in God’s Word!

Pray Psalm 119:18 “Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your Law.”

Are you ready? Let’s Study!

1. Read Psalm 119:1-24 Make a note of several verses you read that shows how King David* feels about God’s word.

While studying, we want to see David as our inspiration and role model. Inspired by the Holy Spirit (Hebrew: the ruach chodesh), he wrote this Psalm over 3000 years ago and yet reading it today I feel that David could be sitting across from me sharing his heart. The Bible says that God called David a “man after His own heart.” That is high praise and calls me to want to get to know David all the more through this Psalm.

*David is not named as the author. Some think it might have been the prophet Ezra. However, tradition and scholars tend to agree that David was, so for our study I’ll be referring to King David as the author.

2. Read Psalm 119: 25-48 What did David do when he was discouraged? Write the verses and examples here:

Write Psalm 119:43 – underline the word “hope”

Where has David placed his hope? _____

This is the verse where the word “hope” first appears in this chapter. The word for hope here is the Hebrew word: יָחַלְתִּי (yi-ḥā-lā-tî) from the root יָחַל (yachal) meaning an expectant hope. This word does not mean to wonder if something will happen and “hope” it does but, to “know” that something will happen in the future. We do not hope that God will protect us, we “know” he will.

The word “hope” might appear here, 43 verses into the chapter, but if you’ll look you’ll see hope throughout from verse one to verse 42. It’s centered on one hope-giving reality: God’s Word. In fact, David so treasures God’s Word that after 42 verses of recounting how deliberately he needs, wants, works for, memorizes, treasures, recounts, and obeys God’s Word He asks God to not take – literally “snatch” – the “word of truth” from his mouth.

Does this strike you as odd? Why would he even be concerned that God do such a thing as snatch the word away? Well, David’s been through a lot – A LOT – and by “a lot” I mean serious sinful behavior.

3. Read Psalm 51:1-19 The introduction in your Bible will give you a reminder about why David wrote this psalm. He had broken the word of God. He had sinned by coveting, murdering, lying, committing adultery. What does he say to God in verse 11?

What does he say in 51:15?

Before that in verse 11 he cried out for God NOT to cast him away or take His Holy Spirit, and later in Psalm 119:43 he pleads again, don't take this from me! What does this say about David's priorities? Write your thoughts here:

What about you?

Where does God's word rank as a priority in your life and heart?

Write your thoughts here:

~ Lesson Three – Day Five ~

I Have Put My Hope in Your Word – Part 2

Scripture Focus: Psalm 119

I remember a season of my life when it occurred to me that I hadn't opened my Bible for personal study in over a week. I had read it with my students at school where I was teaching (a Christian school), I had opened it at church, I had even opened it to quickly race through answers in the Bible study I was attending! Ha! But there it sat in between those moments completely untouched, totally unread – no priority in my personal life and relationship with God. Maybe you've heard it said, "Seven days without prayer makes one weak?" I suggest to you that the same is true for being in the Word. Truly being in

God's word isn't checking it off a list of to-do's to accomplish any more than spending time with your best friend or grandchild is. You treasure and long for time with them. Do you feel the same about God's Word?

Think of it the way a friend of mine said:

"One day without the Word and you'll know it.
Two days and your husband will know it,
three and the whole world will know."

If you don't think so, perhaps it's because you are not experiencing the transformational power of what truly being in the Word can bring, and so missing the Word is par for your day instead of rare.

There are no lifestyle activities I can imagine literally going without. A lifestyle activity is something I enjoy doing, but don't have to do - like watching TV. I can certainly live without it even though I enjoy it a lot. I can live without reading books, talking walks with my dog, going out for a cup of coffee. None of these are life-saving, just pleasurable lifestyle activities. I used to treat reading God's Word like that. I could live without it, but it was nice when I did it.

That is no longer true for me. Now, I cannot get enough of God's word.

I long to spend time reading and praying and learning more from Him. David wrote in Psalm

119:20, "My soul is consumed with longing for your laws..." vs 81 says, "My soul faints with longing for your salvation..." vs 82, "My eyes fail, looking for your promise..." I actually know just how he feels! Do you?

Take a moment to pray about this. Consider how you might adjust your schedule so you can give God the time He deserves.

Have you put your hope in God's judgments? Is what He has decided final enough for you? David had most definitely been on the receiving end of God's judgment. In fact, David and Bathsheba committed adultery, conceived a child, and part of God's judgment on their sin was that their child would die. Harsh and so painful! And yet, David can come before the Lord and say that he has "hope in your judgment." This hope is because of David's confidence in the righteousness of God. That is why we can hope in the Word of God. It is right. It is true. It is not going to fail us even when we fail Him.

Read Psalm 119:49-50

What a strong thought!

4. From verse 49, write what David wants God to do and why. Then from verse 50 write from where David draws comfort:

|

In Psalm 119 we see at least FIVE verses where David repeats this phrase.

Using the chart on the following page, write the opening phrase in each of these verses in the first column.

Write the hope phrase in the second column. In the third column, think about your life and how it would look if you let David's model be yours.

How would it look in each instance to really live as if your hope was fully in God's Word?

Think of relationships, your job, your family, your health, big decisions you're facing. Use the verses before and after each one to clarify how this might look in your life.

Psalm 119:	Opening Phrase	Hope Phrase	My Life
43			
74			
81			
114			
147			

Now, select one of these verses to commit to memory. That's right. You can totally do that. Grab a stack of Post-It™ Notes, write that verse down on several of them and post it alllllll over your house – your mirror – your car – your purse – your refrigerator – where ever you're going to see it and remember, "Hey Lady, God's got this! Let your hope be in his Word!"

In a few days, Lord willing, I'll be seeing you face to face at our next Bible study. And guess what I'm going to ask you? I'm going to ask, "Where have you put your hope?" and do you know what I expect you to be able to say? Loud, proud, strong, and bold, like there is no way God or anyone anywhere could snatch it away from your lips...

"I have put my hope in His Word!"

In fact, better yet, the moment you say "amen" after you finish today's study why not text me? Send me a text and simply say, "I have put my hope in His Word!" My personal cell number is 562.755.4964 It doesn't matter to me if we've met or not before, my heart echoes what David wrote in Psalm 119:63, "I am a friend to all who fear You, to all who follow Your precepts." Let's be Bible verse friends and praise our awesome God together, proclaiming boldly that we have put our hope in His Word! Amen? Amen!

In closing today, why not write out your own prayer of passion for the Word? Ask God to increase your desire to be in the Word and to bless you as you seek Him daily. Write your prayer here:

My Prayer



The Alef-Bet in Psalm 119

There are nearly a hundred more verses in this most powerful and hope-filled Psalm. Set aside time right now to read Psalm 119 from alef to tav – beginning to end. Make this a special goal over the next two weeks to read the entire Psalm every day. I know that God will fulfill His word to “open your eyes and let you behold wonderful things from His Law” as you read.

You may have noticed in your Bible that each section of Psalm 119 is divided into 8 verses and each of those verse groups has a Hebrew letter heading. There are 22 letters in the Hebrew alef-bet (alphabet), and guess what? There’s 22 sections in this Psalm! Not only that but every word in each section begins with that section’s letter of the alphabet. You won’t notice that at all in the English though, so here is the Hebrew along with the English translation of verses 1-8. Note the first letter in each verse begins with ALEPH (in blue).

N	1 ALEPH
<p>אָשְׁרֵי תְּמִיּוּדָךְ הַחֲלָכִים בְּתוֹרַת יְהוָה: YHWH TORAH</p> <p>אָשְׁרֵי נֹצְרֵי עֲדָתוֹ בְּכָל־לֵב יִדְרְשׁוּהוּ: EDAH</p> <p>אֵף לֹא־פָעְלוּ עוֹלָה בְּדַרְכֵי יְהוָה: DEREK</p> <p>אֲתָה צִוִּיתָה פְּקֻדֶיךָ לְשֹׁמֵר מִאֵד: PIQUWD</p> <p>אֲחֲלִי יִכְנֹו דַרְכֵי לְשֹׁמֵר חֻקֶיךָ: CHOQ</p> <p>אִז לֹא־אֲבוֹשׁ בְּהִבִּטִי אֶל־כָּל־מִצְוֹתֶיךָ: MITSVAH</p> <p>אֲוֹךְ בִּישָׁר לֵבָב בְּלִמְדֵי מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ: MISHPAT</p> <p>אֲתַחֲקֶיךָ אֲשֶׁמֶר אֶל־תַּעֲזֹבֵנִי עַד־מָאֵד: CHOQ</p>	<p>1 Blessed are those whose ways are blameless, who walk according to Yahweh’s law.</p> <p>2 Blessed are those who keep his statutes, who seek him with their whole heart.</p> <p>3 Yes, they do nothing wrong. They walk in his ways.</p> <p>4 You have commanded your precepts, that we should fully obey them.</p> <p>5 Oh that my ways were steadfast to obey your statutes!</p> <p>6 Then I wouldn’t be disappointed, when I consider all of your commandments.</p> <p>7 I will give thanks to you with uprightness of heart, when I learn your righteous judgments.</p> <p>8 I will observe your statutes. Don’t utterly forsake me.</p>

~ Lesson Three – Day Six ~

My Hope Is in You – Part 1

Scripture Focus: Psalm 25

Psalm 25 is another acrostic, where each verse begins with a successive letter of the Hebrew alphabet...sort of. The sixth letter “vav” is skipped then “kof” is skipped and replaced with “resh”. Other than that, it’s an acrostic. Because it’s an acrostic, the theme doesn’t present in chronological or cause/effect flow but rather a collection of thoughts, concepts, statements, and desires that focus on a theme. Let’s dig together and study God’s word.

Are you Ready? Let’s Study!

Read Psalm 25:1-22 (from the New International Version)

Write verses 4-5 here:

1. What does David want God to do? _____
2. Who does David say God is to him? _____

Read Psalm 119:105

3. This verse says that God’s word is a _____

Not only is God’s Word a lamp to illuminate our path, but David is reaching to the personal God and Savior in his life. David uses the personal revealed name of God that we learned about in an earlier lesson: YHVH – LORD – Yaweh – along with the Creator name of God: Elohim

David is asking the Lord God to be his guide.

Read verses 8-10

4. What is the Lord like?

5. As a result, what will He do?
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____

Read verse 11

5. What does David ask God to do? _____

Read 1 John 1:9 and write it here:

|

Will you do this? _____

Read 1 Peter 5:6 and write it here:

|

Will you do this? _____

Jesus said, “Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them.” (John 14:21)

Are you willing to keep God’s commands? _____

~ Lesson Three – Day Seven ~

My Hope Is in You – Part 2

Scripture Focus: Psalm 25

There’s a reason why I wanted you to commit to those last three rather self-evident questions. I met with a woman not too long ago who said to me that she knew why so much wrong, so much hurt and disappointment, so much pain was happening in her life. She knew, she said with tears welling up and spilling from her eyes, because she had done so many bad things in her past that God was punishing her. I’ve met with women like this in every season of ministry - an elderly great-grandmother, an infertile woman, a young mother of three, a widow, a divorcee, a homeless woman, a woman with chronic illness...even me. But this is not the message of God’s Word. God’s Word, we see here in Psalm 25 is full of hope for those who are humble, teachable, obedient, and willing to confess their sins.

Sister, I believe that you want to live a hope-filled life. You want to live confident in the hope of the resurrection and in the hope of your relationship with God, but are you letting that hope – like I once did – remain in the future? That someday, after we’re done “a’passin’ through” this world, you’ll have that hope met? Are you – like I once was – hopeful for God’s kingdom to come, but not experiencing hope now? As we learned in our last study God’s dominion is now, His kingdom is now, His relationship, His hope is for now and it’s for you. This is where the wrestling comes in. Remember though, we “wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” (Eph 6:12 KJV) David meets us right here in Psalm 25 again. See who David is wrestling with:

Verse 2 _____

Verse 3b _____

Verse 7 _____

Verse 11 _____

Verse 19 _____

God’s word reminds us that we have an adversary! We have an enemy constantly accusing us. We read Revelation 12:10 in our last study (look it up and mark it in your Bible if you haven’t yet). It says that Satan is our accuser and he accuses us day and night. Not that we needed any help, though. Many of us do a fine job reviewing our sinful past and recalling the sins that God has promised, upon our confession, to forgive. We might not be able to forget, but we need to remember that our youthful and sinful ways are not reasons for God to disengage with us. Not if we’re repentant.

David, in verse 7 acknowledges his sinful past. Read that verse carefully again. How does David ask God to “remember” him? _____

Instead of God thinking of you (“calling you to mind” it means in the Hebrew) through the lens of your wrongdoings, David asks that God recalls him in accordance to His mercy, His love, His “covenant loyalty” (lit. Hebrew).

Now, look again at verses 14-15. There’s three things that David says that Yaweh (the LORD) does for those who fear him and have their eyes on him. Write them here:

Verse 14 _____

Verse 14 _____

Verse 15 _____

~ Confide --- Reveal the Covenant --- Release from Snares ~

Think of the first and last things in these verses that God will do:

He’ll confide or whisper. This word in Hebrew is טִיף (sow-d) and it means “secret.” Where does someone have to be to whisper a secret to you? Hollering across a room? Yelling from the around the corner? No! They’d have to be right up next to you! In. Your. Ear! Up close and personal. That’s how David sees his relationship with God. And that’s how you can too!

Next, in verse 15 it says, “he will release my feet from the snare.” Sister, again, how close does someone have to be to release you from a snare? He’d have to bend down and untangle your feet. He’d need to be close enough to see your distress and help you out. Are you catching on, here? This isn’t a far-off God who recalls your knuckleheaded behaviors or your willful wickedness and angrily tosses them back at you to remind you of your failings! This is an up-close and personal God who cherishes you, sees you through the lens of His great mercy, and is close enough to whisper His counsel in your ear. And when you slip up - whether by your own doing or by the treacherous ways (see verse 3) of those who know better – He will

...

Read verses 16-20 and write at least 9 things God will do!

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

5) _____

6) _____

7) _____

8) _____

9) _____

This is a powerful and intimate way to remember our Great God and what He will do for those who fear Him and hope in Him. When you're "lonely and afflicted" . . . when your "troubles have multiplied" . . . when you're surrounded by hateful enemies . . . Go back to this list!

Now read David's beautiful, final words in verses 21-22,

*"May integrity and uprightness protect me, because my hope is in you.
Redeem Israel, O God, from all their troubles."*

Where, again, is David's hope? _____

And his selfless ultimate call in the final verse is that not only would he as an individual be protected and hope-filled, but that all God's people would be the same. In Psalm 33:12 we read that the nation whose "God is the Lord" will be blessed. How can a nation be blessed if its individual people aren't living for the Lord?

Sister, my prayer for you today is that you would pray "lift up your soul" to the Lord. That you would put your trust in Him. Using Psalm 25 as your model, why not write your own prayer here:

My Prayer



~ Lesson Three – Day Eight ~

~ O Israel, Put Your Hope in the Lord ~

Part 1

Scripture Focus: Psalm 120-134 – The Songs of Ascent

Growing up, traveling to grandma’s house from ours wasn’t “over the river and through the woods, but it was down the 101 freeway, then to the 5 and finally into the heart of San Diego in a little neighborhood called “Normal Heights.” There were a couple of rivers along the way, but no woods. With or without rivers and woods, my two sisters and I would sit in the back seat and sing much of that drive from Thousand Oaks to San Diego - silly camp songs, fun church songs, and if it was the season, festive Christmas songs. We’d clap and bounce and sing and play the time away all the while looking forward to not just seeing Grandma and Grandpa but hoping the house would smell of cookies and breads and other treats. We looked forward to tasting all the foods of the holidays, playing with our cousins, watching the slide show of their latest trip to the Grand Canyon, and falling asleep to the songs from the Lawrence Welk show. The trip to get there was also filled with Mom’s and Dad’s stories. Both of them had grown up in San Diego, so as we’d get closer to their childhood homes they’d point out places they’d been, telling stories of where they’d met, antics they’d done as teens (Dad’s were the best – what a stinker he was!), “That’s my old elementary school, girls” and “That’s where I pulled a prank on Old Mr. What’s-His-Name” and “That place used to be my barber shop.” – pointing out a record store. “I got in a fight on that corner...” and on and on. And it didn’t matter if we’d already heard every story. For me, and my sisters I’m sure as well, I liked hearing them again and picturing our parents as a kids or teens. I liked imagining them in the clothes of the day looking like kids from the set of “Leave It to Beaver.”

I imagine that there’s a special place in your heart as well for the memories you have in traveling to a loved one’s home. Like me, you can picture the route, the familiar buildings, homes, parks and see the things that have changed over time. Every corner has a memory and the final place where you’re heading is dear to your heart because of all that has happened there. I hope in our study you’ll read the chapters we’re going to look at with this in mind. Each chapter is a reminder and was written to honor and draw our hearts to a significant place of hope – God’s City – Jerusalem.

We’re going to look at a special group of Psalms called the “Songs of Ascent.” You may have never noticed that fifteen entire Psalms get this special category. King David wrote four of them (122, 124, 131, 133). Solomon wrote Psalm 127 and the remaining ten are anonymous. They are “ascent” psalms because they were sung as the Jews would walk up to the city of Jerusalem “a city on a hill” (Matthew 5:14). When YHWH delivered His people from Egypt, He set for them Holy Days to observe. Three of those seven holy days required that they go to Jerusalem – Passover, Feast of Weeks (Shavuot), Feast of Booths (Sukkot). These became the traditional songs to sing as they “ascended” the hill to Jerusalem, Mount Zion, the Holy City. Also, some traditions say that the Jewish priests would sing these Songs of Ascent as they walked up the steps to the temple in Jerusalem.

Are you Ready? Let’s Study!

We’re going to take two days to study this collection, so divide up your reading as best suits your schedule. In every psalm we’ll be reading I would encourage you to picture yourself walking the road up to Jerusalem. Maybe you have sandals, dusty and road-worn, perhaps a leather satchel slung over your

shoulder, and you're singing these songs. As you get closer to Jerusalem you may even hear the sounds of other families and groups singing as well. Then as you gather closer and closer your songs join and you are singing in unison the familiar words of one of these songs as you ascend to the Holy City – the city of David.

This entire collection of Psalms is about ascending to what place? - Jerusalem, the City of God. Why include this special focus in a study on Hope? Because, my friend, as we will see, while Jerusalem is a real place we could visit today, it is also a reminder of God's provision and deliverance and His ultimate victorious return. How much more hope could we want? As Christians we have not grown up with a religious tradition that focused on an earthly Holy City, but God's people, the Jews, have from their earliest youthful prayers to their final prayers at death's door prayed for the peace of Jerusalem. Maybe you have been blessed to have been able to visit the Holy Land and walk the streets of Jerusalem. This is a longing of my heart for sure! As Christians we do not have a central place of worship that calls us from every denomination together. We go to all just go to our own churches every Sunday. But as Jews, while they may worship in a synagogue, their hearts collectively hope for Jerusalem. At the close of every feast, Passover in particular, Jews sing or recite:

לְשָׁנָה הַבָּאָה בִּירוּשָׁלַיִם
Leshana haba'a biy'rushalayim
Next year in Jerusalem!

Jerusalem is referred to by at least 70 different names in the Bible! Here are a few:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) Adonay Yireh The Lord is seen (Gen 22:14) | 12) Kiryat Hannah David City Where David Camped (Is 29:1) |
| 2) Ariel Lion of God (Is 29:1) | 13) Kiryah Ne'emanah Faithful City (Is 1:25) |
| 3) Betulah Virgin (Lam 1:16) | 14) Klilat Yoffi Paragon of Beauty (Lam 2:15) |
| 4) Drushah Sought After (Is 62:12) | 15) Moriah (Gen 22:2) |
| 5) Gai Hizayon Valley of Vision (Is 22:1) | 16) Neveh Zedek Righteous Dwelling (Jer 31:22) |
| 6) Gilah Joy (Is 65:18) | 17) Oholivah My Tent is in Her (Ezek 23:4) |
| 7) Ir Ha'Elohim City of God (Ps 87:2) | 18) Shalem Peace (Whole) (Gen 14:18) |
| 8) Ir Ha'Emet City of Truth (Zech 8:3) | 19) Tzur Hamishor Rock of the Plain (Jer 21:13) |
| 9) Jebus (Judges 19:10) | 20) kiryat melekh rav City of the Great King (Psalm 48:2) |
| 10) Kir City (Ezek 13:14) | |
| 11) Kiriya Aliza Joyful City (Is 22:2) | |

If you have time...look up those verses and highlight them in your Bible. Next time you're reading you'll see them and remember how special Jerusalem is. Let that highlighting be a reminder for you to "pray for the peace of Jerusalem."

1. Read Psalms 120-123 - A moving phrase that only occurs three times in the Bible (once in Ezra and twice in Psalms) is found in Psalm 121:1 and Psalm 123:1, "I lift up my eyes..."
In Psalm 121:1-2, where does help come from? Write the complete answer (v2) here:

2. Read Psalm 123 and answer:

To whom we look: _____

And what are we expecting from Him: _____

~ Lesson Three – Day Eight ~

~ O Israel, Put Your Hope in the Lord ~

Part 2

Scripture Focus: Psalm 120-134 – The Songs of Ascent

3. What words or phrases in Psalms 120-123 tell you that the writer is picturing Jerusalem and the paths to and from Jerusalem? Write those words/phrases along with the verses here:

Example: *121:8 the Lord will watch over your coming and going*

I found at least 9 in these chapters. There are eleven more chapters in this collection of psalms and every one of them points to Jerusalem in some way. As we continue to read, be alert for these words and phrases.

4. Read Psalm 121:2, 124:8, 134:3 – What phrase is repeated in each of these psalms? Write it here:

Who made the earth? _____

Who will bless those who “trust in Him?” _____

Who will bless Jerusalem? _____

Dear sister, when you are facing challenges and hardships, I would encourage you to recall exactly to

Whom you pray: The Maker of the Earth.

He is the One who by His very word spoke the entire universe into existence. He knows you, cares for you, sees you and desires relationship with you. If that is not hope-giving, I honestly do not know what is.

Read Jeremiah 32:17 – and write it here:

|

What's too difficult for God? _____

What about your finances? Your relationships? Your job? Your health? Your loved one's diminishing health? Are any of these too difficult for God? _____

I realize this is one of those easy Sunday School answers. I realize also, that while you'd never – I don't think – actually say that anything was too difficult for God, that it's not the just problem itself that you wrestle with. It's your feelings about the problem you're facing that are hard.

You want the stress to end.

You want the sadness to cease.

You don't want to feel anxious any more.

You have an intellectual grasp of God's power, but you're not "feeling" it.

And when you think you're doing better, something triggers your emotions again and off you go – anxiety, stress, fear, doubt – they all come swirling around you all over again. Sound familiar?

5. Read Psalm 124 – What perils are mentioned? Write them here:

|

6. Where was the Lord during each of these perils? _____ (vs 2)

7. Read Isaiah 43:2 What does God say about going through trials?

|

Sister, you may be reading this and going through deep hurt and disappointment. You may feel swallowed by the flood or torn by the teeth of the of the hurtful people in your life, but you can have hope. You may have a loved one wrestling with their faith in light of the pain they are going through. Read Deuteronomy 31:6 (quoted also in Hebrews 13:5) and write it here:

|

Even when we do not feel God's presence in the midst of our pain, we can still believe His promise that He will never leave us nor forsake us. Like God's people walking to Jerusalem, facing perils along the way and having been delivered from the attacks of men and natural disasters, you too can keep your eyes on the God of Israel, the God of Jerusalem, the God of you and me.

~ Lesson Three – Day Ten ~

~ O Israel, Put Your Hope in the Lord ~

Part 3

Scripture Focus: Psalm 120-134 – The Songs of Ascent

Read Psalm 126

8. Where had the captives been (generally speaking)? _____
9. What was it like for them when they returned? _____

Read Ezra 1:1-3

This verse recounts when the Jews returned from their Babylonian exile. Scholars believe this may have been the occasion for which Psalm 126 was written as it prophetically describes the Jewish return from the Babylonian exile. The Psalm describes how, when the long-awaited return to Zion finally comes, the recollection of the harsh and bitter exile will seem like just a bad dream – and we will explode with joy at the miraculous turn of events. (The verb tense of the Psalm indicates a vision of the future redemption, when "our mouths will be filled with laughter.") To this day, Psalm 126 is recited by Jewish families as an introduction to "Grace After Meals" on Shabbat, holidays, and other joyous occasions.

Read Psalm 126 and take note of the word "joy." Write the phrases that mention joy:

10. Reading through this chapter why do the people have joy?

The other day at church, my husband and I were at our quarterly meeting with staff, deacons, and elders. There were some new faces since we had last met so everyone was going around making introductions – how long we'd been attending La Mirada Christian Church and what role we have. I introduced myself, "I'm on staff as the women's pastor and have been attending since June of 2010." When my husband's turn came he stood and said, "I'm an elder, and I've been attending since May 5th of 2013." Only Pastor Jay and I knew the special significance of that day and my heart welled with joy looking at my husband standing there saying, "I'm an elder." How far he's come since that May 5th. That day is Cinco de Mayo for most of California, but it's Sobriety Anniversary for my husband.

That was a day and a weekend I'll never forget. Unbeknownst to me, Glen had been

in a drunken rage and had been racing and driving recklessly with our 17-year-old son in the car. Jonathan had to nearly jump out of the moving car to get away from his inebriated and cursing father. He called me panicked to tell me what was going on. I hung up the phone and raced to pack a few belongings so I could leave the house before and if Glen made it home. But that was the weekend that Glen, after years and years of drinking, violence, rage, and abuse, finally hit bottom enough to get sober.

For three years I had gone to church alone. But for the ten years before that, even when Glen had gone to church, I had lived with a "church husband" and a "home husband." At church he would look fine, but at home he was either depressed and reclusive or unpredictable and rageful. Either way, he drank himself to sleep almost every night. My life was an exile of sorts. I was far away from what I hoped my reality should be. I was a captive of my broken and often terrifying marriage. On May 5th that all changed. Glen sobered up, confessed his sins, got help from AA and our pastor and began true healing in his heart by returning his life to Jesus. Like the men in Psalm 126, I had felt my life was a horrible dream. I know Glen had felt it too. But God redeemed our past, restored our marriage and, while I had sown "in tears" I was now and am today reaping "with songs of joy."

I would encourage you to do a word study on "joy." Look up and take note of what leads up to the moments of joy you find. I promise, you'll never read that "this or that" person was happy and then they had joy, you'll not see how great everything was going and then – Joy! No, you'll find that joy comes in God's word over and over again after deep sorrow, heavy loss, total exile. Whether you are in a season of exile and longing or you are in a joyful season of restoration you can point your attention to Zion and the God of deliverance for whom it says, "The Lord has done great things **for us**, and **we** are filled with joy."

11. Read Psalm 122 again. Write every word or phrase that refers to more than one person.

Example: vs 1- *"I rejoiced with THOSE who said...Let US go..."*

I found at least 7 references to plural pronouns and people.

12. Now skim through chapters 123-132 and see how many other references you can find that relate to "us" going through trials, God delivering "us", God doing good to "those" who are upright, etc. Write a few phrases here from the ones that stood out to you:

13. Read Psalm 133 According to this chapter, what is good and pleasant? (NIV)

14. What does this say to you in light of going through trials?

I'm not sure what it is about going through heartache and trial, but many of us are better at being there for others than we are at asking for others to be there for us. And yet, over and over and over again in these psalms we see the blessing of "us." It is GOOD and PLEASANT for us to dwell together in unity. To be there for one another, to be with one another.

15. Re-Read Psalm 133:3 Where does the LORD bestow blessing?

Our Father echoed this model in Jesus Christ who did not complete His ministry alone but as soon as He was baptized began calling disciples. He taught us to pray "our Father", "give us our daily bread." In His final hours he wanted to pray together WITH his disciples, upon His return, He met up with His disciples to break bread and fellowship with them and Heaven itself is pictured as the great Zion (Jerusalem) where he will gather us all together and we'll truly be in unity!

Are you aching today? Are you faltering on your journey to Jerusalem? Are you in a season of wrestling with your faith, your hope, even your love? Maybe your eyes are on Jesus but you need a hand to hold along the way. Sister, reach out to others. This was never meant to be a solo journey. You may feel alone, but you have at least one friend - besides the Lord - who wants to walk alongside you – me! As I am writing these very words I am praying for you. As you are reading these words know that you can reach out and connect with me for prayer. You may feel alone and like there is no one you trust to share your heart with today, but you can cry out to your Abba Father and you can reach out to me. I will pray with you and listen and walk with you. What a blessing to be in unity. I hope you will reach out and walk with someone today.

We have read over and over again of the faithfulness of our God in our study. From the resurrection to the relationship to these days of wrestling, He is faithful. Do not lose heart. You might not ever see the reason or understand the difficulties you are facing that is why we are called to "walk by faith and not by sight." Our hope is not in what is seen or perceived. We hope in God, the Maker of Heaven and Earth.

Until we meet again, know that you are loved and prayed for and

"may the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth, bless you from Zion."

(Ps 134:3)

Your sister in Christ,

Jennifer

562.755.4964

jennifer@lamiradachurch.com

p.s. This is one of my favorite songs. It has given me comfort when my heart felt the weight of the trials I was going through. “He Will Carry You” by the Gaithers

*There is no problem too big
God cannot solve it
There is no mountain too tall
God cannot move it
There is no storm too dark
God cannot calm it
There is no sorrow too deep
He cannot soothe it
Oh, if He carried the weight of the world upon His shoulders
I know my brother that He will carry you
Oh, if He carried the weight of the world upon His shoulders
I know my sister that He will carry you*

You can listen to it [here](#) or by searching YouTube for “He Will Carry You”