

Seasons of Hope: Someone is Coming

¹⁴ Then the LORD God said to the serpent: Because you have done this, you are cursed more than any livestock and more than any wild animal. You will move on your belly and eat dust all the days of your life. ¹⁵ I will put hostility between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed. He will bruise your head, and you will bruise his heel." (Gen. 3:14-15 CSB)

The garden of Eden was a perfect paradise.

God created Adam and Eve, put them there, and told them they could eat anything except the fruit from one tree ... a tree called the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

... they could eat anything else but the fruit from that one tree!

But then the devil came into that perfect paradise in the body of a serpent.

You would expect to see the devil in bar or a crack house but not in the garden of Eden!?

Sadly, the devil walks about as a roaring lion and, in my ministry, I have known him to come to church with more regularity than some church members. (ha)

Satan came, spoke beautifully and deceptively and tricked Eve, who then convinced her husband Adam, to eat the very fruit God had forbidden.

Here, in these verses, we see God's response to the Devil's deception and Adam and Eve's disobedience.

- God says to the devil, I am in a war with you. There will be enmity (hostility) between the woman and the serpent—between light and darkness.
- God also says there is going to be war between the serpent's seed and the 'woman's' seed but someone is coming and this "someone" will defeat the devil once and for all ...

... In fact, this "someone who is coming" will deal such a crushing blow, it will bruise his heel.

The year was approximately 4000 B.C. when the whisper was first heard ... **Humanity is sinful and self-destructive ... but someone is coming!**

Today I want you to go with me on a journey that passes through more than 6000 years.

... a journey that I believe proves and validates that Jesus is the promised Messiah, the Son of God—the Lamb that was slain before the foundation of the world.

There are some things we believe simply because we've just heard them our whole lives.

... We **haven't really thought about them**, we can't really explain them, we certainly can't take the Bible and show somebody the scriptures that prove them ...

... this is just what believe because it is what we've always heard ... this is called embedded theology.

It is my desire that we understand the foundational principles of Christianity better than this.

... This is what today is all about regarding the Lord Jesus Christ.

... I want you to see in the Bible, that across 4000 years, repeatedly, prophecies were given promising that Jesus the Messiah, the eternal king was coming.

... It is my hope that you will walk out of church today with full and complete confidence that every prophecy regarding the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ has been and will be filled with perfect and complete specificity.

PRAY

1. The Hope of Abraham

³ I will bless those who bless you, I will curse anyone who treats you with contempt, and all the peoples on earth will be blessed through you. (Gen. 12:3 CSB)

The year was 2090 B.C.

... It was only about 250 years earlier that the earth had been destroyed by a flood.

Scholars estimate in those 250 years since Noah there were about 12 million people living on the earth.

There were no Israelites ... there were no people of God ... much of the world had imagined false gods and worshipped idols.

But Abraham loved, feared, and worshipped God ...

...IT IS VERY LIKELY THAT ABRAHAM OFTEN FELT ALONE IN HIS FAITH! –because he was.

But then God came to Abraham (a man God called His friend) and said, *“someone is coming, one of your descendants ... and the whole earth will be blessed by that someone.*

What an encouraging promise that must have been.

Interestingly the New Testament opens with *“An account of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham.” (Matt. 1:1 CSB)*

Jesus said, *“Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; he saw it and was glad.” (Jn. 8:56 CSB)*

Imagine Abraham all alone in the wilderness with only his family when suddenly God shows up and says ... “DON’T BE DISCOURAGED, SOMEONE IS COMING.”

2000 years later Jesus himself would say that this promise made Abraham glad.

2. The Hope of Jacob

¹⁰ The scepter will not depart from Judah or the staff from between his feet until he whose right it is comes and the obedience of the peoples belongs to him. (Gen. 49:10 CSB)

The year was 1859 B.C. – 231 years after Abraham.

Here is Genesis 49 Jacob is an old man, on his death bed, and his whole family has been displaced and are now living as strangers in Egypt.

The Bible tells us that when Jacob finished giving this death-bed exhortation that *“he drew his feet into the bed, took his last breath, and was gathered to his people.”*

Surrounded by his family, all of them without a homeland, all of them strangers in Egypt and Jacob takes the time to remind them ... don't be worried ...

Someone is Coming

This was not the only time **these words of Jacob** were heard ...

449 years later (around 1410 B.C.) there was a Chaldean, a false prophet named Balaam, who had been paid by the king of Moab to curse the Jewish people.

... on his way to curse Israel, Balaam riding his donkey, encounters the angel of the Lord. The donkey stops in the road, refusing to go any further.

Balaam doesn't see the angel and he begins to beat his donkey trying to force it to continue the journey.

... at this point the donkey is miraculously given the power to speak and it says, *“What have I done to you, that you have struck me these three times?”*

Suddenly, just as miraculously, Balaam is made to see the angel the donkey has already seen.

Balaam is frightened and sorry for his plans and asks forgiveness.

So, the angel allows Balaam to continue his journey with the instruction that, instead of cursing Israel, he must bless them.

Upon arriving at **Kirjat Huzoth** (the place where Moab worshipped Baal) Balaam meets up with the king who had paid him, and instead cursing Israel Balaam blesses the Jews with words very similar to Jacob's 449 years earlier.

¹⁷ I see him, but not now; I perceive him, but not near. A star will come from Jacob, and a scepter will arise from Israel. (Num. 24:17 CSB)

Someone is coming!

... and as this message echoes down the corridors of human history even the enemies of the Lord are compelled to tell the truth so **that all the world may know.**

Balaam and his prophecy are mentioned 65 times in 8 different books of the Bible (Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Nehemiah, Micah, 2nd Peter, Jude and Revelation)

The Magi came and said, "*Where is he who has been born king of the Jews ...*"

Herod the Great inquired ... why are you here? What are you looking for?

... and again, in words similar to Jacob and Balaam they said:

⁵ "In Bethlehem of Judea," they told him, "because this is what was written by the prophet: ⁶ And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah: Because out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel." (Matt. 2:5-6 CSB)

**This was the hope of Jacob repeated by Balaam and the Magi: Someone is coming!
Someone is coming! Someone is coming!**

3. The Hope of Moses

The Jews had been slaves in Egypt for 400 years.

One day, at the age of 40, Moses killed an Egyptian who was beating a Jewish slave ... and in fear for his life ran and hid in wilderness for 40 years.

At the age 80 God called Moses to go and deliver the people, God sent plagues, and the Jews escaped their Egyptian bondage.

... But the wilderness was no picnic either, the Jews wandered for 40 years and now Moses, at the age of 120 delivers 3 final sermons just before his death.

In the 2nd sermon reminding Israel of the duties of the Levites Moses says:

15 "The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own brothers. You must listen to him. (Deut. 18:15 CSB)

The year was 1407 B.C. – 452 years after Jacob.

This prophecy seemed to captivate the very heart and mind of all of Israel.

Listen to what the 5000 men whom Jesus fed with a few loaves and fishes said after eating:

14 When the people saw the sign he had done, they said, "This truly is the Prophet who is to come into the world." (Jn. 6:14 CSB)

This promise so enthralled the Jewish people that it made it into Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost.

22 Moses said: The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your brothers and sisters. You must listen to everything he tells you. 23 And everyone who does not listen to that prophet will be completely cut off from the people. (Acts 3:22-23 CSB)

... then just a few weeks after Peter's sermon, Stephen the deacon preached and it made the Pharisees so angry they killed him, Stephen said:

37 "This is the Moses who said to the Israelites: God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your brothers and sisters. (Acts 7:37 CSB)

“Someone is Coming” ... and Peter and Stephen repeat Moses' hope and add ... that someone is Jesus Christ!

4. The Hope of Boaz and Ruth

22 Obed fathered Jesse, and Jesse fathered David. (Ruth 4:22 CSB)

The year was 1100 B.C. – 307 years after Moses – almost 100 years since Abraham.

Israel had suffered through a time of famine and some people had left Israel to find food ...

... Naomi and Elimelech were 2 of those people ... they had gone to Moab.

By the time the famine ended Naomi's husband Elimelech had died so she returned to Israel a widow with Ruth her daughter-in-law, whose husband had also died.

It was a time of loss, sadness and sorrow.

However, in the providential working of God, Ruth meets and marries Boaz, a godly man from the tribe of Judah.

Ruth and Boaz get married, have a son they named Obed whose grandson was King David himself!

But the story does not end there.

5. The Hope of David

The years was 1004 B.C. not even 100 years after Ruth and Boaz.

Listen to what God told David through the prophet Nathan:

¹² When your time comes and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up after you your descendant, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. ¹³ He is the one who will build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. ¹⁴ I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will discipline him with a rod of men and blows from mortals. ¹⁵ But my faithful love will never leave him as it did when I removed it from Saul, whom I removed from before you. ¹⁶ Your house and kingdom will endure before me forever, and your throne will be established forever." (2 Sam. 7:12-16 CSB)

Interestingly these are the last recorded words that God ever spoke to David.

We see, in verses 12 and 14, God's promise to David was that his son Solomon would be the next king (*the phrases from your body & when he does wrong cannot refer to Jesus*)

... but the 16th verse prophecies of Jesus ... a point which the angel of the Lord references in Luke:

³⁰ Then the angel told her: "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ Now listen: You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David. ³³ He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and his kingdom will have no end." (Lk. 1:30-33 CSB17)

Someone is Coming ... and He will sit on David's throne forever!

6. The Hope of Isaiah

The year was 690 B.C. – 314 years after David – 1400 years after Abraham—695 years before the birth of Jesus.

... the city of Jerusalem was being threatened by the **Resin** (King of Syria) and **Pekah** (King of Israel's ten tribes).

Isaiah the prophet, at God's command, attempts to reassure Ahaz, Judah's frightened king, that the city would be saved/

Isaiah even told Ahaz to ask for a sign from God as proof that Judah would be safe but Ahaz was wicked, he hated God so he refused to ask for a sign.

So, instead God then gave a sign to the whole nation Israel to show them that someday Jerusalem would be safe from her enemies forever!

This was the sign:

¹⁴ Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign: See, the virgin will conceive, have a son, and name him Immanuel. (Isa. 7:14 CSB)

Someone is coming and He will be "God with Us."

Five years later (685 B.C.) God repeated this promise in even in greater detail:

⁶ For a child will be born for us, a Son will be given to us, and the government will be on his shoulders. He will be named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷ The dominion will be vast, and its prosperity will never end. He will reign on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish and sustain it with justice and righteousness from now on and forever. The zeal of the LORD of Armies will accomplish this. (Isa. 9:6-7 CSB)

Someone is coming and he will be a child (fully man) and God's Son (fully God) ... *wonderful, counselor, mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.*

The Bible, written over a period of roughly **2,000 years** by **40 different authors** from **three continents**, who wrote in **three different languages** ...

... and yet despite the diversity of human authors, cultures, perspectives and languages the Bible speaks as one single unified voice and that voice says ...

Someone is coming, Someone is coming... and He will reverse the curse of sin, save the lost and cause justice and righteousness to rain down upon the earth in glory!

This is OUR hope!

7. Our Hope

We all went astray like sheep; we all have turned to our own way; and the LORD has punished him for the iniquity of us all. (Isa. 53:6 CSB)

It would be easy to read this simple verse (especially the first phrase) and come away hopeless ... but we must not miss the phrase:

“the LORD has punished Jesus for the iniquity of us all”

He has died the death we should have died!

He endured the wrath that was rightfully ours!

He died in our place so that we might live in His life!

That single fact has changed the course of human history ... and if you have put your faith in Jesus Christ, it has changed the course of your history.

... if you haven't you can today and your life will be changed forever!

The year is 2023.

... 6000 years after Adam; 4000 years after Abraham; 3400 years after Moses; 3000 years after David; 2600 years after Isaiah; and 2000 years after the birth of Jesus Christ.

... and this is still a world of trouble ... a world where even the **best of us can struggle with hope.**

I've recently been trying to organize my digital files in the hopes of purchasing a larger external hard drive on which to organize 25+ years of sermons, research, and creative writing.

This past week I came across something I wrote during a difficult season in 2018.

I am a little reluctant to read it because it is so naïve and cynical ...

... however, after some prayer I feel the need to read it to you ... I want you to know that as your pastor I don't stand head and shoulders above you ...

... I'm not better than you ... I am a fellow traveler with you in this world.

... So, I want to read this because I think it will give you a glimpse into my mind and my heart at a time I was dealing with difficult circumstances.

... perhaps you will be able to relate.

Here it goes ...

As a child I had visions of what my life would look like once I became an adult. I would be free from all the constraints of youth—rules, authorities, parents, homework, and worst of all, expectations. ... I would finally be free to choose my own path.

Free to let the winds of life nudge me in a thousand different directions and in each place, I would experience, learn, transition, and transform into something entirely different from what I previously had been.

I would love people and they would love me back. Everyone would be my friend and I would be theirs.

There would be no deceitfulness, duplicity, nor guile among us, for we would all be true.

There would be no under-currents, posturing, nor hidden agendas.

We would grow and change together as we interacted with our environment.

There would be no survival of the fittest because that would imply inequality.

Together we would know our world, we would know one another, and we would laugh. ... I love to laugh.

In this world, this naïve construct of childhood, tears were never considered. What was sorrow to a 10-year-old?

I knew nothing of divorce, disloyalty, disappointment or death—cancer?—self-righteousness?—hatefulness?—gossip?

My adolescent world was pure, clean, and insulated.

The only times my heart was called upon to exert itself was when I jumped from the hay loft, read the final chapters of a Hardy Boy mystery, or when the preacher's daughter, kissed 7-year-old me on the cheek in her backyard swing.

I lived a world of hummingbirds, honey-suckle, and homemade strawberry jam on a buttered toasted biscuit.

Always the optimist I lived in denial of the real world around me.

I continued to believe that existence had meaning, and that people were fundamentally kind and good.

I refused to believe the worst, choosing instead, to hope for the best.

A childhood friend betrayed my confidence, and I chalked it up to his membership in a religious cult. ... I did the same with a brother's disloyalty.

I kept pushing down and pushing back the horrible reality that fought to reveal itself.

There is no good life, there are no good people ... there is just this chaotic world filled with people bumping into each other, all of us living in denial of our own inward misery and hopelessness.

That was a dark time for me.

You see the devil had me where he wanted me in that season, **discouraged, hopeless, defeated**
...

... And that is where the devil wants you.

And yet through that “dark night of the soul” there was this relentless whisper that came from the lips of Jesus Himself ...

"Don't let your heart be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. ² In my Father's house are many rooms; if not, I would have told you. I am going away to prepare a place for you. ³ If I go away and prepare a place for you, I will come again and take you to myself, so that where I am you may be also. (Jn. 14:1-3 CSB)

Jesus says that “someone coming” is me, I have come and I am coming again!

My question to you today is this: Are You Ready?