

James 5:7-8
The Hope of the Savior

Main idea: God's people throughout the ages have longed for the Savior.

I'd like for us to take a few moments to reflect on the hopes we have.

- Maybe you hope for good health and healing for yourself or someone you love.¹
- What are some of your hopes this season?
- Many of our hopes are for "happy" things.²
- But maybe you secretly hope for something else.
- Maybe you hope for your enemies to get what they deserve.³
- Today, the first Sunday of Advent, is a great reminder of how all our hopes are fulfilled in Christ.⁴

This morning, we're going to read several verses of Scripture as we talk about the advent, or coming, of Jesus.

Read James 5:7-8

Advent is the period of time leading up to Christmas.

- Specifically, the word "advent" refers to the arrival of a notable person. [word study]⁵
- It implies the great anticipation and importance of Jesus's coming.

Strictly speaking, these verses in James are talking about the second coming of Jesus.

- But we should have the same sentiment as we approach Christmas.⁶
- In fact, the early church understood many of the passages about the second coming to also have reference to the first coming of Jesus. [quote 1]⁷ [quote 2]⁸ [quote 3]⁹
- In the New Testament, the same word actually refers to both of Jesus's appearances. [2 Peter 1:16]

Of course, we know that the Old Testament contains many prophecies of the coming of the Messiah. [Isaiah 7:14] [Deuteronomy 18:15] [Genesis 3:15]

- But, really, all of the Old Testament anticipates the arrival of Jesus. [1 Samuel 2:10] [Job 9:33-35] [Genesis 1:2]
- Jesus really can be found in the most unexpected places!¹⁰

In the Old Testament, we see how God's people yearned for a savior. [Isaiah 25:8-9] [Zechariah 10:2-3] [Malachi 3:1]

- And it's the same for us today.
- The world is broken because of our sin. All of creation has fallen.¹¹
- The birth of the Savior gives us hope.¹²

Everyone has a different experience when it comes to Christmas.

- It's okay that the Christmas season makes you sad, happy, or even angry.
- But Christmas directs us to think less about us, and more about Christ.¹³
- That gives us hope.
- "The hopes and fears of all the years are met in Thee tonight."

Endnotes

1. Jeremiah 17:14, 1 Peter 2:14
2. Jeremiah 29:11, Romans 15:13
3. Matthew 12:36, Romans 6:23
4. Luke 2:10, 2 Corinthians 1:20
5. It is a translation of the Greek word *parousia*.
6. That's certainly how the believers in the Old Testament would have felt.
7. "The coming of our Lord Jesus Christ is, in a certain sense, a perpetual one; He continually comes to those who are capable of receiving Him." -Origen, *Commentary on Matthew 24.30*
8. "The Word has come and revealed what was hidden...He is the light shining in darkness, the day of the Lord has dawned." - Clement of Alexandria, *Exhortation to the Greeks*
9. "The kingdom of God has come to us already through Christ's coming in the flesh, and yet it is still to come in its fullness at the end of time." -Augustine of Hippo, *City of God*
10. Matthew 25:35-40, John 4:10
11. Romans 3:23, Romans 8:20-22
12. Luke 2:10
13. 2 Corinthians 9:15