



WEEK 1

Hope

Advent

**WEEKLY CANDLE
LIGHTING DEVOTIONAL**

"Long lay the world, in sin and error pining, till He appeared, and the soul felt its worth. A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices..."

This line from the classic Christmas song "O Holy Night" has always been my favorite. A thrill of hope—those words evoke an internal excitement, the kind that sends shivers down your spine. On the night Jesus was born, the prophecies long cherished by God's people began to unfold.

For centuries, people awaited the Savior that was promised. Through the Old Testament, we read the prophecies that foretold of a Messiah who would one day come to liberate His people. God's people harbored hope across generations to witness this promise come to fruition. Amid seasons of darkness and discouragement, wars and displacement, they steadfastly held to the prophecies—the hope that a Savior was imminent, and He would renew all things.

We, too, face days of darkness and loss, loneliness, and weariness. We are a people yearning for the promise to be realized once more. But we do not wait as those devoid of hope! Jesus came, and He is returning! We possess a hope that anchors our souls, a hope that empowers and supports us through every challenge and hardship. We can celebrate, knowing that our Savior has arrived and will come again.

Light one Purple Candle

We light this candle in eager anticipation of the Messiah's return and as a symbol of the hope we hold in Jesus.

Scripture Reading

- Isaiah 7:14 "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call Him Immanuel."
- Isaiah 9:2 "The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness, a light has dawned."
- 1 Peter 1:13 "Therefore, with minds that are alert and fully sober, set your hope on the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at His coming."
- Romans 15:13 "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."

Prayer

Thank you, Jesus, for coming to earth, just as the prophets foretold, and for Your promise to return. As we light the first candle, we ask that You infuse our hearts with expectancy. May this act serve as a reminder of the hope we have in You, now and forever. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Discussion

- What does hope mean to you?
- What hope do we hold today?
- In what ways does God instill hope within us?