

The Earliest Expressions of Christmas Hope  
Selected Texts from Genesis 3–5  
December 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025

3 early expressions of hope for Christ that encourage you to place your hope in God today:

1. The hope of \_\_\_\_\_. (3:20)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. The hope of God's \_\_\_\_\_. (4:1, 25)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. The hope of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. (5:28–29)

Applying the Word

Questions for Discussion/Reflection

1. Do you view the early chapters of Genesis as a factual account of , or as myth? What is the reasoning for your view?
2. Christians throughout history have viewed Genesis 3:15 as the first giving of the gospel message (*Protoevangelium*). What grammatical shift takes place from the first part of the verse to the second part, and why is this shift significant for interpretation?
3. Which components of the gospel are present in the wider context of Genesis 3:8-21? Albeit in a less developed form, can you find:
  - An indication of injury to the Messiah?
  - The confession of sin?
  - Evidence of God's grace?
  - A substitutionary animal sacrifice?
  - Belief in God?
4. In what ways are the components of the gospel found in Genesis 3 similar or different from the gospel that we see taught by Jesus and the Apostles? Based on the Genesis account, would you say that Adam and Eve were believers? Why or why not?
5. What are the specific ways that Christ has brought life, God's help, rest, and comfort to believers today?
6. Compare Lamech's words in Genesis 5:29 with the words of the other Lamech in Genesis 4:19-24. How does one differ from the other in attitude, action, and expression?

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 University Bible Church  
 December 21, 2025

**Prayer**

**Introduction**

I have titled this message: The Earliest Expressions of Christmas Hope

- The hope of Christmas is placed in the birth of a Son who would become the Savior.
- Hope is the looking forward to something. It's a confident expectation that something will happen.

The Law of Moses, the first five books in the Bible, is inspired history. It is God's account of history.

- There is much skepticism in our day towards history. Because it is acknowledged that whoever records history records it from their own point of view. That point of view might be flawed or unjust.
- Painting an accurate picture of the past is difficult, if not impossible for us. But it is not for God.

Abner Chou – “The prophets were not simplistic in their thinking and writing. Rather, being guided by the Holy Spirit, they were precise and sophisticated.”

Moses, a prophet of God, wrote Genesis in a precise and sophisticated way. He presents the ancient people as intelligent, they understood God's prophecy and believed it. Their actions and expressions reveal this much.

The anticipation of Christ, that we remember at Christmas time, was like a snowball.

The expressions that we will cover this morning all relate, to one degree or another, to the individual described in Genesis 3:15.

For Genesis 3:15 is a prophecy about a Son.

- *Read Genesis 3:15*
- A group aspect and an individual aspect

- There is hostility between two groups that will culminate in hostility between two individuals.
  - The main clash will be between the serpent, which is Satan, and a Son.
  - The individual in Genesis 3:15 is described using the pronoun “He”
    - It is masculine – which indicates the person in view is a male.
    - It is singular – which means that one man is in view.
  - So began the anticipation of the birth of a very important son. So began the hope of Christmas.

Why are these passages important for you?

- Because the hope of Christ, which we remember at Christmas time is an old hope.
- Because you need to know that hope in God can survive and thrive in the difficult circumstances of life. The hope of Christ is not for the strong, but for the weak. It’s a hope for the ruined.
- Last, because even though life takes unexpected turns, those who hope in the promises of God will not be let down.
  - You need to know that that the hope found in Christ is an unshakable hope.

3 early expressions of hope for Christ that encourage you to place your hope in God today:

- These are 3 expressions of hope from 3 individuals
- It is the timing and context of these expressions that make them significant.

### 1. The hope of **life**. (3:20)

- a. The first expression of Christmas hope came from Adam, our first father.
  - i. *Read Genesis 3:14-24*
- b. It is the timing and the context of Adam’s action that is surprising.
  - i. It was given on a most depressing day, filled with the expectation of death.
  - ii. This was a bad day
  - iii. Genesis 3 is not like Christmas morning. God is not passing out blessings but solemn consequences.
  - iv. It was at such a time that Adam chose to look up, to believe God, and to cling to hope that was given.
- c. His expression (described in his action of naming Eve): The hope of life
  - i. *Read 3:20*
  - ii. Why did Adam name his wife Eve?
    1. We must consider the timing of the statement.
      - a. It came before Eve had conceived and bore a son
        - i. And so it was forward looking
      - b. It came directly after God’s words to Him
        - i. He was expecting death and difficulty for himself – God had made this clear

- ii. And yet he names his wife, Life, “because she was the mother of all the living.”
  - 2. Derek Kidner “After the sentence of death, this name, ‘life,’ with its play on the word *living*, is very striking; its connection with Eve’s role as *mother* further suggests that Adam heard the promise of 3:15 in faith.”
  - 3. In a day filled with the expectation of death, Adam looked to the prophecy of God and saw in it the hope of life.
- d. What followed Adam’s hope-filled naming of his wife—persistent death:
- i. First, He and his wife are driven out from the Garden, barred from partaking of the tree of life.
    - 1. Because the thought of them continuing on forever in the fallen condition that they were in was unthinkable.
      - a. God’s thought is not even completed in 3:22.
  - ii. Second, there was persistent death. The Apostle Paul summarizes the idea this way in Romans 5, “death reigned” from Adam to Moses.
    - 1. The genealogy in Genesis 5 makes that clear.
      - i. “And he died...” is the repeated refrain of that chapter.
  - iii. And so, the question we must ask is, “Was Adam’s hope in God misplaced? Was it a mistake? Was He let down?”
    - 1. No, he was not.
    - 2. For, even in the depressing genealogy of Genesis 5, there is the hope of life.
      - a. There is wonderful outlier in Genesis 5 – that’s Enoch (5:24).
        - i. Enoch found life
        - ii. Or as Hebrews 11:5 puts it, “Enoch was taken up so that he would not see death.”
    - 3. Adam’s hope was not disappointed. History does not show him to be a fool for his faith. The life that he hoped for his descendants would come, not through the fruit of a now inaccessible tree, but through a son, born of a woman, who would hang on a tree.

And so, the first expression of Christmas hope is found in our first father, who, in a day filled with the expectation of his own death, hoped for life.

## 2. The hope of God’s **help**. (4:1, 25)

- a. The second expression of Christmas hope came from Eve, our first mother.
  - i. Read 4:1
- b. Her difficulty: The pain of childbirth
  - i. Likely the first childbirth

- c. Her response: The hope of God's help.
  - i. She names her son Cain, which sounds similar to the Hebrew word for "acquire or buy" or sometimes "create."
  - ii. She said "I've gotten a man!"
    - 1. Her exclamation can be described in part because this was the first birth of a child.
      - a. Adam and Eve were both fashioned by God in their mature form. They didn't develop from childhood.
      - b. You can imagine her surprise, then, when a baby boy comes out.
      - c. Her exclamation rings also with excitement. "I've got one!" "I've gotten a man!"
        - i. He's tiny and fussy but he is a man nonetheless!
  - iii. She said further "I've gotten a man, with the LORD"
    - 1. What does she mean?
      - a. There are a few options here
        - i. The first view is that she is arrogantly elevating herself. She has "created" a man just as God did Adam.
        - ii. The second view would translate the verse in a simpler form as "I've gotten a man, the LORD."
          - 1. Some see in her expression, the idea of the deity of the Christ. The fact that prophesied Son of man would in some way also be God.
          - 2. I've heard this view taught before, perhaps you have also.
        - iii. The third view
          - 1. There is excitement, Eve had acquired a son and she had great hope for him.
            - a. She thought that the birth of Cain meant that she had entered the on-ramp to victory.
    - iv. What was undone through Adam and Eve's disobedience, God would help restore. That was our first mother's hope.
  - d. What followed her hope-filled expression—tragedy.
    - i. Her difficulty was to extend far beyond that of childbirth. For she would live to see her first born son kill her second born.
    - ii. Cain's rebellion
      - 1. He was a man who worshiped God in a way most convenient for Him (v. 3-5).
        - a. Not how God prescribed
      - 2. He became angry and depressed when confronted (v. 5b).

3. He disregarded warning, disregarded God's attempt at restoration and proceeded down the path of moral decay (v. 6-8)
  4. He lied and denied responsibility for his monstrous crime (v. 9-10).
  5. He protested the consequence of his monstrous crime (v. 11-15).
  6. He continued to habitually disregard God (4:16-17).
  7. He raised godless descendants were absorbed in world achievement (v. 18-24).
    - a. In summary, there was no hope to be found in Cain or his descendants.
- iii. And so, the question again arises, "Was Eve's hope in God misplaced? Was it a mistake? Was She let down?"
1. No, and Genesis 4:25 makes that clear.
    - a. God appointed for her another son.
      - i. *Read 4:25*
    - b. She named her third son Seth, which sounds like the Hebrew word for "appoint" or "set in place."
      - i. In her disobedience and pain – God was there to help
      - ii. In her tragedy and loss – God was again there to help.
    - c. Allen Ross "The motivation for the name is at one time a poignant reminder of the murder and a hopeful anticipation of things to come.... On this child their hopes were renewed. With this child they once again enjoyed God's provision."
  2. It is interesting to note the specific reasoning of the verse.
    - a. Seth was to replace Abel, not Cain.
    - b. There was no redemption hope to be found in a man who rebelled against God.
      - i. Eve's hope had shifted from Cain to Abel
    - c. Because the prophecy of Genesis 3:15 could only be fulfilled by a righteous man—one who obeyed God.
    - d. For this reason, Seth was Abel's replacement, because Cain killed him.
      - i. The family of Seth is confirmed in the very next verse (4:26)

What was undone through Adam and Eve's disobedience, God would help restore. That was our first mother's hope. And so the second expression of Christmas hope is found in our first mother, who hoped for God's continued help in bringing about what He had spoken.

### 3. The hope of **rest** and **comfort**. (5:28-29)

- a. The third and final expression of Christmas hope, came from Lamech, the father of Noah.
  - i. It is found in Genesis 5:28-29
    - 1. **Genealogies are like Italian charm bracelets**
  - ii. He names his son Noah
    - 1. Noah means “rest” in Hebrew and is somewhat similar to the word for “comfort”, which is used in the explanation that is given.
- b. His difficulty: Life in a cursed world.
  - i. Here we may catch a glimpse of the intended purpose of the curse. Our struggle ought to work in us an appropriate humility and dependence upon God.
    - 1. The earth was subjected to futility so that mankind would find difficulty in this life, In the hope that they would depend upon God.
    - 2. Lamech was a man who correctly understood the problem
  - ii. Because our difficulty is placed there by God, our only solution is that which God offers.
- c. His response: The hope of rest and comfort
  - i. This hope is placed on Noah, his son.
    - 1. It is a very tall task that he hoped for.
      - a. He wasn’t just wishing for another set of hands to help on the farm.
        - i. Listen to his words, “This one will give us rest from our work and from the toil of our hands arising from the ground which the LORD has cursed.”
          - 1. Lamech yearned for one who would bring comfort to a weary world.
          - 2. And his hope fell on his son—now why would that be the case?
          - 3. His hope was in the promise that God gave in Gen 3:15
      - b. He accurately quotes God’s words to Adam in Genesis 3
      - c. He is aware of God’s words to Eve
        - i. He names His son, He knows that its through the seed of the woman that the curse will be broken.
        - ii. He laments the toil of life, he longs for rest and comfort.
- d. What followed?
  - i. He was no prophet of God, but he was a man of hope.
    - 1. His prediction was wrong
    - 2. But his trust was rightly placed
  - ii. The record tells us that Lamech would have lived to see his son commissioned by God to build an ark.

1. Noah was 500 years old when he had his 3 sons (5:32)
  - a. He would have begun construction of the ark sometime after that, likely when his 3 sons were able to assist him.
2. Noah was 600 years old when the flood came (7:6)
3. Lamech, we are told, lived 595 years after Noah was born (5:30).
  - a. If my math is right, Lamech died only 5 years before the flood.
- iii. Noah did not bring rest and comfort from the curse, he brought God's worldwide judgement and salvation for his own household.
- e. Was Lamech's misplaced? Was he let down by hoping in God?
  - i. No!
  - ii. The same verbs used by the godly Lamech in Genesis 5:29 are used of God in 6:3.
    1. Words translated in English in 5:29 as: rest (comfort), work, and toil are repeated by God in 6:6 as: sorry, made, and grieved.
      - a. Further these verbs are repeated many times throughout the flood narrative.
      - b. What is the meaning of this?
        - i. Mankind longs for relief from the curse, but there is even a taller task at hand. God wrath must be satisfied, because justice must be upheld.
      - c. How ever will a son be able to both bring relief to weary mankind and satisfy God's justice?
        - i. Who in the world could accomplish this?
        - ii. How in the world could this be accomplished?
    2. Contrary to his father's statement, Noah did not bring relief from the curse.
      - a. But a descendant of Noah would come and He would satisfy God's justice toward sinners and make a way for the ungodly to be right with God and be delivered from the curse.

The third and final expression of Christmas hope is found in Lamech, Noah's father, who hoped for rest and comfort.

The Christmas hope, the hope of Christ:

- is the hope of life.
- It is the hope of God's help.
- It is the hope of rest and comfort.



**Applying the Word**

- Hope can be found in dark and difficult days, because God has given it.
- Those who hope in God will NOT be let down.

The excitement of Christmas is focused on the birth of a child. More precisely, the one spoken of in Genesis 3:15. The expected birth of Christ brought hope to our first parents. His birth and all that He accomplished thereafter brings hope to us today.