

Bible Study - Week beginning 4th May 2020
prepared by Emma & Dave



HE IS OUR HOPE!

Part 1 - Have a read of Luke 24

A couple of weeks back in Tuesday house group, Mel led us and asked Dave to lead communion using 'The Road to Emmaus' (one of Dave's favourite passages), so we thought we might expand on that passage a bit further this week.



Cleopas and his friend are deep in discussion when we find them walking to Emmaus. Jesus catches them up and asks them what they're talking about, but they were kept from recognising him. They stop walking to tell him about what has been going on over the last three days.

'Jesus of Nazareth was a prophet, powerful in word and deed ... we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel'.

The words "**had hoped**" in the NIV translation come from the Greek verb *elpizo*, "**to look forward to something, with the implication of confidence about something coming to pass, hope, hope for.**" In the imperfect tense it has the idea of continued action in the past, "were hoping." But now their hopes are dashed. Jesus had been crucified. They had hoped that Jesus was going to be the Saviour of the Jewish people and defeat the Romans. The disciples are downcast and confused. And what's more some of the women had returned saying that they had seen a vision of an angel who'd told them Jesus was alive. Cleopas and his friend certainly didn't give that much credence!!

But now the stranger tells them they are foolish (*I wonder how that made them feel!*) He goes back to the beginning - back to Moses, the prophets and all that was in the Scriptures concerning himself and explains it all to them.

They continue onto the village and invite Jesus to eat with them, still not realising who he is. It isn't until he breaks bread to share with them that their eyes are opened, and they realise who this stranger actually is! Isn't hindsight a wonderful thing - "**Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road?**"

- ♦ Why do you think Jesus takes the time to re-explain the scriptures to these men instead of just revealing who He was?
- ♦ What are some of the dangers of expecting God to act and respond in a certain way?
- ♦ What occurs when your faith is based on how you think God should respond instead of just God Himself?

The two travellers finally realized that God was in control the whole time and they just needed to have faith. **Discuss a situation in your life** that, after looking back, you realized God was in control of the whole time, even if you didn't believe it while everything was occurring.

Remember, whatever you are going through or have been through Jesus has already travelled that road, and although you may not feel it or realise it He is walking with you every step of the way.

This leads us nicely into part 2 and placing our faith and trust firmly in God.

Part 2—Have a read of Psalm 121 v1-8

The title of this Psalm should be "Look Up," or as Mel once said, "Trust Him, Keep Calm and Carry On!"

I have really struggled over the past few weeks to keep looking up. I feel like the disciples - I had hoped for things to be so different this year to what they are actually turning out to be, and I feel a long way from God right now. I have lost my focus and become distracted with things that can never give me strength and hope.

So today I have a choice to make. Do I let my eyes look down and to the problems around me, or do *I choose to lift my eyes to the hills (v1)*, to where my hope comes from?

**"Trust Him, Keep Calm
and Carry On!"**

Mel Turner

I lift up my
eyes to the hills.
From where
does my help come?

***My help comes
from the LORD,***

who made heaven & earth.



5 Truths from Psalm 121 that Give Us Hope for Today:

"My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth." (v2)

He's All-powerful. God is a mountain mover and Creator of heaven and earth. He's with us, always. He breathes help and strength into our souls, into our day.

"He will not allow your foot to slip; He who keeps you will not slumber." (v3)

He won't allow us to fall. We may find ourselves on slippery slopes, or the path we're walking seems to be full of potholes and obstacles. But the God who knows all, knows our way. And even when we stumble, as our eyes are fixed on Him, He will keep our footsteps firm. For He watches over us and never sleeps or slumbers.

"The Lord is your keeper; the Lord is your shade on your right hand." (v5)

He keeps us, safe, in His care. He protects us like the shade protects from the heat of the day. Why the "right hand?" Because it is known as the hand that works, so we can be assured that whatever He's given us to do in this life, His covering of protection rests over all of our work and efforts.

"The Lord will protect you from all evil; He will keep your soul." (v7)

He protects us from "all evil," not some, but "all." It does not have the final say over our lives. Fear of death, disease, and hardship has lost its sting, for our lives are hidden with Christ in God. No matter who or what we're rubbing shoulders with each day, God's power is greater than whatever darkness we might face. For He is the soul-keeper and He holds all of our tomorrows.

"The Lord will guard your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forever." (v8)

He watches over us, constantly, His eyes are towards us. He cannot look away from those He loves. He watches our coming and our going, and all in between. He watches over our family and children, even when we cannot see. We do not have to worry, for He strongly supports those whose hearts are His.

*"For the eyes of the
LORD range throughout
the earth to
strengthen those whose
hearts are fully
committed to
Him."*

2 Chronicles 16:9

He is our Hope.

Dear God,

Thank you for your reminders that you are surely with us. Thank you that you watch over our coming and going, and that you neither slumber or sleep. Thank you for your constant care, that you are our help and strength in the daily battles that we face. Thank you that you are our Protector and Defender against the schemes of the enemy and the evil that tries to overtake us. We believe that no weapon formed against us will prosper in this life, because you are always greater, and our lives are hidden with Christ. We are safe with You. We choose today to keep our eyes off our problems and fixed solely on you. We choose to look up, for you alone are our Hope. **Amen**