

HOPE

Part 1

50 - Ephesians: Rise Up & Walk
Church on the Park Live | Sunday, 3 April 2020

Text: “I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened so that you will know what is the hope of His calling...” (Ephesians 1:18).

Theme: Our God is the God of hope.

Intro: My wife, Anna, visited her doctor last week. The doctor asked, “What does your husband do?” When she told her I was a pastor, the doctor seemed to spring to life and responded, “People need hope right now. Give the people hope.” Today, I want to share with you a message of hope from Isaac’s life in Genesis 26, as well as from Psalm 91. We will use the letters of HOPE as an acrostic (acronym). Today, we focus on the first letter, ‘h’, and in the weeks to come the other letters.

Hear (Genesis 26:1-5)

1) In times of crisis, it’s critical to hear God (Genesis 26:1-5).

- In times of crisis, it’s critical that we don’t just do what we feel is right, but instead hear God (Genesis 26:1-5).
- During this time, **Isaac’s life** has been an **inspiration** to me and I hope it will be an inspiration to you.
 - Isaac’s **name** in Hebrew means **laughter** (צַחַק - YitzCHAQ)
 - From צַחַק, *tsachaq*: laugh, play, joke.
 - Today, we need **the joy of God**. It’s **God’s joy** that **sustains** us in **the hardest of times**.
 - Isaac was **tempted** to do what his father, **Abraham**, did during the famine.
 - Look at what Abraham did (Gen. 12:10)
 - “Now there was a famine in the land, and Abram went down to Egypt to live there for a while because the famine was severe.”
 - Today, there is also a famine—but it’s **a famine of a different nature**. It’s a famine of **jobs, money and medical equipment**. It’s also a **famine of God’s Word**.
 - **Amos 8:11-12**
 - People need **hope**—but **not false hope**.
 - The only real hope and joy come from **God’s word**.
 - Isaac **wasn’t meant** to **respond** like his father, Abraham.
 - Isaac was about to go to **the wrong place**, but God **stopped** him.
 - In time’s of **stress** it’s natural to **imitate our parents**.
 - Usually, this happens **subconsciously**.
 - It’s something that is **ingrained** in us.
 - When you experience **stress**—**stop** and **seek** your **Father’s guidance**.
 - What your **flesh feels first** is most likely not the Father’s will.

2) In difficult times, expect God to reveal himself to you (Gen. 26:2).

- You’ll find throughout **Biblical history**, God **appears and speaks** in times of **extreme difficulty**.
- **Hearing** is all about **letting God sow good seeds** into your heart.
- Your **heart** will be **hopeless** without **hearing** God.
 - Your **heart** was **created to hear God and experience him**.
 - And the good news is that God **initiates** the **conversation**—he **starts** the **speaking first**.
- Isaac had to be **reminded** of **his covenant relationship** with God.

- God **already spoke** to his **father** Abraham, but now Isaac needed to be **reminded** of **who God is**.
 - What does a **covenant relationship** with God mean?
 - It means you are **locked into your heavenly Father**.
 - Remember the illustration from last week, the **Millionaire Hot Seat**. “Lock it in, Eddy.”
 - God is a **responsible Father** who will actively be with you.

3) In hardship, your heavenly Father will actively be with you (Gen. 26:3)

- וְאֶהְיֶה עִמָּךְ (*v'eh'heh'yeh imcha*)
 - ‘And I will be with you’ or ‘And I am with you’ (Gen. 26:3)
- The **presence of God** is the **most important thing** you need right now.
- **God’s presence** is **more important** than **people, things** or **money**.
 - If **he is with you**, you will be **blessed in every way**.
- “And I am with you”—so **close** you can **hear his breath**.
 - In the **middle** of this **Hebrew word** (*eh'heh'yeh*) is the **sound of breath**.
 - When you are **really close** to someone you can **hear their breath**.
- Later, when Israel and **Moses** were **in a dark time**, God came to Moses like **a fire** and said to him (Exodus 3:14)...

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וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל־מֹשֶׁה
 אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה
 וַיֹּאמֶר כֹּה תֹאמַר לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
 אֶהְיֶה שְׁלַחְנִי אֵלֵיכֶם:

- **Know your covenant keeping God**.
 - Your covenant keeping God is able to keep you in famine.
- **Psalm 16**—which was quoted in Peter’s sermon on the day of Pentecost—reaches its peak by telling us about the fullness of joy that comes from God’s presence.
 - Psalm 16:11 - “You make me know the path of life—satiated joy in **your presence**, pleasures in your right hand forever” (*my translation*).

4) When you’re down in the dust, it’s God’s Word that revives you (Psalm 119:25, Psalm 91:14-16).

- One day in **2014**, I was in a very **dark place**. I wanted to **quit** ministry and life. I stayed up all night wrestling in prayer about what to do. The more I thought of quitting, the darker my spirit and emotions became. I needed rescue. Then, as the sun rose God broke through.
- The verses that gave me fresh life were from Psalm 91: “Because he has loved me, therefore I will deliver him; I will set him securely on high, because he has known my name. He will call upon me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will rescue him and honour him. With a long life I will satisfy him and let him see My salvation” (Ps 91:14-16).
- Morning Thought: One morning on our road trip I experienced a beautiful sunrise over the waters after a terrible night. The sunrise refreshed my soul. Then I opened Scripture and experienced an even far greater dawn. The promises of God’s Word brought hope to my soul where I had lost hope. Today, may you be moved by this verse: “But for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its rays. And you will go out and frolic like well-fed calves.” (Malachi 4:2 NIV - 2014)
- God’s **voice** is the **voice of revival**. His very **words breathe** into your life—eternal, heaven sent life.
- Psalm 130
 - “I wait for the Lord, my soul does wait, and in His word do I **hope**” (Ps. 130:5).

To be continued...

Conclusion: In times of crisis, it's critical to hear God. And here's the good news, God will initiate speaking to you—so expect him to reveal himself. He wants to remind you of his covenant nature and his very words will revive you.

END NOTES

WORD STUDY

קִּחַץ to laugh. (Arabic ضَحِكَ, Syr. and Nasor. ܠܫܚܐ, Chald. also ܩܝܚܐ id.; all of which are onomatopoeitic, and accord with the Greek καχάζω, καγχάζω, Lat. *cachinnor*, Germ. *kichern*. This root, with the exception of the passages Jud. 16:25; Eze. 23:32, is only found in the Pentateuch, and the later writers and poets use instead of it the softer form קִּחַץ. Comp. קִּחַץ.) Gen. 18:12, seq.; followed by לָ with any one, Gen. 21:6.

Piel—(1) *to play, to sport, to jest* (prop. iteratively, to laugh repeatedly), Ex. 32:6; Gen. 19:14; specially—(a) with singing or dancing, Gen. 21:9; Jud. 16:25.—(b) with women (like παίξειν, *ludere*), Gen. 26:8.

(2) *to make sport of any one*, followed by אֵ, and more emphatically, *to mock*, Gen. 39:14, 17. Hence—

קִּחַץ m. *laughter, sport*, Gen. 21:6.

Gesenius, W., & Tregelles, S. P. (2003). [*Gesenius' Hebrew and Chaldee lexicon to the Old Testament Scriptures*](#) (p. 707). Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.