

# **Dawn of Hope**

## *Hope Transforms (December 27<sup>th</sup>, 2020)*

### **PREPARATION**

- Familiarize yourself with this Study Guide.
- If you missed it, watch the sermon online [HERE](#).
- Spend some time in prayer before your group gathers.
- You **always** have the option to use some or all the questions and/or prepare your own questions.
- Review the learning objective to focus the conversation, read the primary scriptures as a group, summarize the main points, ask the questions, and use supporting texts to enhance the concepts.

### **DISCUSSION**

#### **Opening Prayer:** (1-2 minutes)

*In light of what God is saying through this week's message, here's a suggestion of how your group can invite God into your time together.*

Thank the Father for loving us so much that He came to us in the person of Jesus to sacrifice Himself on our behalf while we were still sinners! Pray that as we navigate the chaotic waters of our cultural moment that we would humbly listen and obey the promptings of the Holy Spirit as we seek to love one another, just as He has loved us. Pray that the Holy Spirit would continue to remind us of the victory we have over sin in Jesus Christ! Pray that over the Holiday season that the Spirit would open our hearts to find the right words to speak, see new opportunities to serve our neighbors, and continue to transform us into the likeness of Jesus!

#### **Discussion:** (45-60 minutes)

##### **What's Going on This Week**

This Sunday, Miguel Ramirez, Pastor of Community Life, led us into the fifth week of our current series titled *Dawn of Hope*. Pastor Miguel brings our attention to *Luke 1:67-80* in order to point out the prophetic song of Zachariah. Pastor Miguel shows us that all of God's promises throughout the Old Testament alluded to in Zachariah's song point to God's plan of salvation. Next, John the Baptist would be the one to prepare the way for the one who would purchase and redeem all sinners. Finally, God gives us a tremendous purpose as he empowers us to be a witness, like John, to what Jesus has done and continues to do in our lives!

**“There is no sinner that God cannot save.” – Pastor Miguel Ramirez**

## Suggested Questions

**Check-In: Icebreaker** – What is one of the most important lessons 2020 has taught you?

**Study Tip:** In this week's study guide, we will be looking at the words of praise from Zachariah that are rich with Jewish character. In question 1 below, you will notice that there are a variety of supporting texts. In this week's study tip, let's walk through them and get a better glimpse of what Zachariah is saying, what Luke is trying to portray, and what the Holy Spirit may be saying to you and your group!

**v. 68** Did you notice that 1 Chronicles 29 records the end of David's life, Ezra 7 closes the decree that would lead to the final return of the exiles, and each one of the Psalms passages concludes the 5 books (or sections) of the Psalms? By beginning with important OT endings, it's as if Luke is saying the story is just starting!

**v. 69** The wording used by Zachariah point prominently to the song of Hannah in 1 Samuel. *Why?* Before there was a king (Saul, David, Solomon,...etc.) there was a prophet (Samuel)! Hannah is the mother of Samuel the prophet that would make way for the king of Israel...sound familiar?

**vv. 70-72** The "holy prophets of old" remind us of the salvation and mercy that God continues to bring to Israel. Psalms 105-106 are a retelling of these stories in the writings section of scripture and conclude book 4 of the Psalms! At the end of the law-giving portion of Leviticus and at the end of Micah's prophecy, we are reminded that the people of God *STILL* need a heart of repentance and a definitive work from God! *What would that be?*

**vv. 73-74** Did you notice that the oath of God made in Genesis 22 was made to Abraham in response to *the sacrifice of his one and only son*? The words used by Zachariah also mirrors the end of Zephaniah who anticipates a time where God is dwelling with His people in Jerusalem and has transformed the nations as he *defeats the enemies* of His faithful people and *brings restoration*!

**v. 75** Jeremiah concludes by anticipating the day when God's people will *receive a new heart* that will follow God in holiness and righteousness. This promise is what Luke follows through his gospel account and Acts

As you reflect on this study guide, consider how Zachariah is appealing to the Old Testament to showcase the work God is about to do through Jesus the Messiah!

### **Objective #1: Explore your worldview perspective as you reflect on the Old Testament promises!**

*Primary Texts: Luke 1:67-75, 24:44-49* – Miguel begins his sermon by pointing the opening words of Zachariah's praise in order to show how God's *promises* throughout the Old Testament revolve around the plan of salvation.

**What thoughts or feelings come to your mind when you think about all of the Old Testament pointing to the coming of Jesus? What about when you think about your life fitting into the larger story that the Bible presents?**

*Supporting Texts: (v. 68) 1 Chr. 29:10-13; Ez. 7:27-28; Ps. 41:13, 72:18-20; 89:52; 106:48; 150 / (v. 69) 1 Sam. 2:1, 10; Ps. 18:2 / (v. 70-72) Ps. 105:8-9, 106:1-12; Mic. 7:18-20; Lev. 26:40-46 / (v. 73-74) Gen. 22:16-18; Zeph. 3:9-20 / (v. 75) Jer. 32:36-41*

### **Objective #2: Reflect on the hope that Zachariah expresses and the hope that we long to experience!**

*Primary Texts: Luke 1:76-79; Malachi 3:1, 4:1-6; Isaiah 9:2-7, 40:3-5; 42:1-9* – Next, Miguel points out that the birth of Zachariah's son would be the one who would point to Jesus who would *purchase* and redeem sinners! **As you reflect on this series, what do you think your response would have been if you found yourself in Zachariah's situation? How has the story of Zachariah given you *hope* in this season of waiting? What has been your main barrier to resting in that *hope*?**

### **Objective #3: Explore new ways that you and your group can be a witness of Jesus in 2021!**

*Primary Texts: Luke 1:80, 3:1-21* – Finally, Miguel points to the ministry of John the Baptizer to challenge us that God has given each one of us a *purpose*. Just as John had a tremendous role to play in the redemptive story, we too have a reason to exist and are empowered to witness of Jesus' continuing work! **As you think about the New Year, how do you sense God empowering you to step into your role as a witness of Jesus' continuing work in your life? How can we pray that you continue to move forward in 2021 with the hope that Jesus brings?**

## **Closing Prayer: (5-10 minutes)**

*In light of what God is saying through this week's message, here's some suggestions of what your group could talk about with God in prayer.*

Thank our Heavenly Father for sending His son at the perfect time! Praise the Son for emptying himself by becoming a human in a humble manger so that he might give up His own life so that we could be free from the bondage of our spiritual enemy! Ask that the Holy Spirit would mold our hearts and continue to equip us to live, love, and forgive like Jesus over the Christmas Season. Finally, pray that we as a church would have the courage and boldness to proclaim the gospel of Jesus as we celebrate His coming and share time with our friends, family, and loved ones.

## **THROUGHOUT THE WEEK**

- **2020 Daily Reader:** Interested in diving deeper? You can spend the next 8 weeks walking with us through the entire Bible as you put on your kingdom lens through this difficult season! You can find the daily reader at [3Crosses.org/fall2020](https://3Crosses.org/fall2020)

-**Stay up to date with Coronavirus Ministry Opportunities:** Help us out by pointing the people in your Community Group to [3Crosses.org/coronavirus](https://3Crosses.org/coronavirus). If you or anyone in your group is looking to serve food in our pantry, access spiritual care, or seek financial assistance, you can find all you need at [3Crosses.org/neighborhood](https://3Crosses.org/neighborhood)

- **Christmas with 3Crosses:** Even though the Holidays are over, check out [Christmas with 3Crosses](https://3Crosses.org/christmas) to continue finding new ways to serve and give to those in need around our community!

-**Community Groups 2021:** For more information about joining a group, leading a group, or general inquiries, contact AJ at [avanegas@3crosses.org](mailto:avanegas@3crosses.org)