

**LIVING TRUTH**

# HOPE

**MESSAGE GUIDE**

## MESSAGE GUIDE

*This Message Guide may be a little different from those that you have used before.*

*The purpose of these Notes is not an in-depth study of the scriptures used, but rather to assist you or your Study Group as you reflect on this message given by Brett McBride*

*We present questions in order to stimulate discussion. Sometimes we will give you the answer...sometimes not. At other times a statement or a theme is presented for your consideration.*

*As you allow the Holy Spirit to guide the direction of your study and discussions we pray the flexibility of this Message Guide will help you as you delve more deeply into Brett's message, and that you will unearth more lessons from the Lord that may not have been immediately obvious.*

# MESSAGE GUIDE & QUESTIONS

## Hope Series

### PART 1 – A HOPE FULFILLED

*Luke 1:5-25*

1. Read and consider Luke 1:5-25

---

---

2. In Luke Chapter 1 verse 5 God broke his silence to the people of Israel, For how many years did they wait?

---

---

3. Today we will look at three aspects:

1. A Hopeless S \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

2. A Hopeful P \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

3. A Hopeless R \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

4. One of the main characters in this section was King Herod. He called himself 'Herod the Great'. Was he great or not? If YES – why? If NO – why?

---

---

5. Did the people have much hope during the rule of 'Herod the Great'?

---

---

6. The Old Testament speaks of Hope repeatedly, for example: Read and consider: Psalm 22:18; Psalm 33:20 and Micah 7:7

---

---

7. **1. A Hopeless Situation**

In the midst of the political and societal turmoil that the New Testament open under let's take a quick look at two people mentioned in this passage. Zechariah and Elizabeth. What do we know about them?

---

---

8. What else was it about Zechariah and Elizabeth that was significant?

---

---

9. **2. A Hopeful Prayer**

Read and consider again Luke 5:8-10

---

---

10. Read and consider Luke 5:11-21

---

---

11. **3. A Hopeless Response**

Read and consider Luke 5:21-25

---

---

---

**Final Thoughts**

---

**How do we define 'hope'?**

A feeling of expectation and desire for a certain thing to happen.

Wanting something to happen.

*Natural hope is sometimes wishful thinking that something may or may not happen.*

**Biblical hope is far different from this.**

It is NOT wishful thinking, but it is rooted in a PROMISE made by a trustworthy source.

*It is a confident expectation and desire for something good in the future.*

**Biblical hope has certainty in it, because God is the source of it.**

When the Word says, "Hope in God!"

it does not mean "cross your fingers".

*It means "Expect great things from God."*

**Hope Series**

**PART 2 – SURPRISED BY HOPE**

*Luke 1:26-28*

1. Please read and consider Luke 1:26-38

---

---

2. As Gabriel has been sent to deliver the next steps in God's plan, we will look at two aspects.

1. The D \_\_\_\_\_ G \_\_\_\_ of God.

2. The D \_\_\_\_\_ of O \_\_\_\_\_

3. **1. The Divine Gift of God**

God could have planted His Son into any well-to-do family of wealth and influence. But read and consider Isaiah 55:8-9

---

---

4. Let us not forget the full extent of the task given to the angel Gabriel.

---

---

5. What was Mary's response to Gabriel; remembering she was just a teenage girl.

---

---

6. **2. The Dilemma of Obedience**  
Read and consider Luke 1:39-56

---

---

7. To see what Joseph's response was read and consider Matthew 1:19

---

---

8. Joseph was being called to allow his reputation to be tainted along with Mary's. What enabled Mary and Joseph to face the dilemma caused by obedience?

---

---

---

### Final Thoughts

---

The Old Testament Laws and Rules made us aware of our condition making us aware of our need for Grace.

With the New Testament [after 400 years of silence from God] we see the ushering in of God's Grace through the birth of His Son, Jesus Christ.

## Hope Series

### PART 3 – SEARCHING FOR HOPE *Matthew 2:1-12*

1. Please read and consider Matthew 2:1-12

---

---

2. **1. Searching For Hope**  
To start with we focus on the first 2 verses of Matthew Chapter 2

---

---

3. **2. Stirring Up Herod**  
Read and consider Matthew 2:3-8

---

---

4. **3. Stopping To Worship**  
Read and consider Matthew 2:9-11

---

---

5. There were 2 Kings presented at that first Christmas; which one will you serve?

---

---

---

## Final Thoughts

---

God is preparing ALL people for the coming of Jesus!

Herod pretends that he wants to worship the “King”  
but in fact he wants to receive worship, after all he is Herod the Great!  
He wants to steal, kill and destroy – not Give.

Herod’s search for HOPE was a bottomless pit.  
His approach to HOPE was always wanting to attain ‘more’.  
Herod worshiped his own desires which had become his god.

Herod did not want to worship Him – He wanted to eliminate Him.  
So he attempts to set a trap.  
The wise men move on to follow the Star.

## LEADER’S MESSAGE GUIDE

*This Leader’s Guide is prepared to help the Study Group Leader to keep the discussions moving along. Maybe your people will come up with different answers, or perhaps they will need a little prompting from you.*

*Remember, you want to encourage your people to fully participate. This is not a ‘teaching session’ by the Group Leader, but rather a discussion group. This may at first seem like a contradiction, but you will need for the Lord to give you wisdom to keep the discussions ‘on track’ whilst also allowing the Holy Spirit to direct your path.*

# LEADER'S MESSAGE GUIDE & QUESTIONS

## Hope Series

### PART 1 – A HOPE FULFILLED

*Luke 1:5-25*

1. This part of the familiar Christmas story leads us to ask the question: *What is the longest you have had to wait for something?*
2. 400 years. From the end of Malachi to the beginning of the 4 Gospels.
3.
  1. A Hopeless Situation
  2. A Hopeful Prayer
  3. A Hopeless Response
4. If YES – Why? He rebuilt the temple in Jerusalem, plus many other magnificent buildings throughout Judea.  
If NO – Why?
  - Herod was despotic and cruel.
  - He had 10 wives – one after another.
  - He murdered many of his close family members including a wife and several of his sons.
  - He had thousands of men crucified and line the roads of New Testament Palestine.
  - There were many other atrocities ordered by Herod
5. No they most certainly did not. And it appeared that God was silent, and doing nothing. Only Holy people held out any hope – despite the difficult circumstances.

6. Read and consider: Psalm 22:18; Psalm 33:20 and Micah 7:7
7. What do we know about Zechariah & Elizabeth?
  - Both were from a distinguished priestly background.
  - Both were described as 'Righteous in the sight of God'.
  - They were blameless and observed all His commands and decrees.
  - They were HOLY, and set apart for priestly duty.
8. They had a 'personal wound' that they had carried their whole married lives. That being that they were childless; and because they were 'very old' there wasn't any hope that this would change. Society would have interpreted this as a sign of God's displeasure with them
9. Against all hope Zechariah sends up a prayer of HOPE and looks to God in the midst of their disgrace. He thinks of his wife and carries both of their plights before Him!
10. AND THEN...after 400 years of silence God has a message for His people! It is the message that echoes throughout the New Testament! **"Don't be afraid!" "Stop fearing!"**
11. The danger of unbelief is that: When God sends us good tidings and blessing, we reject them because they just seem too good to be true. If they go beyond reasonable abilities, we reject them.

It is ironic that after 400 years of silence, when God finally speaks, the recipient is made silent.

## Hope Series

### PART 2 – SURPRISED BY HOPE

*Luke 1:26-38*

1. These verses cover the visit to Mary by the Angel Gabriel
2. As Gabriel has been sent to deliver the next steps in God's plan, we will look at two aspects.
  1. **The divine Gift of God.**
  2. **The Dilemma of Obedience**
3. But God plants His Son in Nazareth, among a 'working class' family who, in the eyes of the world would be considered, at best, average.
4. Gabriel's task was to announce the birth of TWO sons whose names had be pre-determined by God.

**John:** meaning **The Lord is gracious**  
**Jesus:** meaning **Jehovah is Salvation**
5. As is well known, Mary was 'greatly troubled' = probably her first thought being 'what will Joseph think? She knew she was still a virgin ..... but Joseph?  
  
Gabriel immediately speaks to that fear by assuring Mary,  
"You have found favor with God."
6. As we read these verses we have to remember that we have the benefit of hindsight, which Mary and Elizabeth did not have.
7. And consider what would be the basis for Joseph's response.

Read and consider Deuteronomy 22:23-24

Mary's willingness for God Will to be done has put her in a dilemma which has resulted in rejection by her husband.

8. Matthew 20 & 21  
They knew exactly what God had said to them through the Angel Gabriel

## Hope Series

### PART 3 – SEARCHING FOR HOPE

*Matthew 2:1-12*

1. Brett divides this message into 3 sections:
  1. Searching For Hope
  2. Stirring Up Herod
  3. Stopping To Worship
2. To set the record straight; there is no indication that there were only 3 of these men.  
Also, by this time Jesus was between one and two years old. These 'magi' were almost certainly not actual 'kings' .... more like 'spiritual advisers' and or 'seekers of truth'.  
There is a long explanation concerning the origins and motivations of these men that would take far too long for a study of this natures.  
The 'debunking of these 'myths' in no way lessens to impact or importance of what took place. The fact is: they DID follow a star, and it DID lead them to Jesus.

3. In a previous study we ascertained that Herod was an evil man, and the arrival of these ‘magi’ looking for a ‘king’ obviously greatly stirred up Herod.

How could this be happening right under his nose? Perhaps the people were planning a coup?

4. When the wise men found Jesus – after their journey of a great distance – the humility of the place may well have caught them off guard. They were expecting a King of Kings to be found in an appropriately ‘kingly’ place.

But read Isaiah 53 verse 2.

5. **Jesus**

Life of Simplicity

Always Giving

To give, serve and save

**Herod**

Life of Luxury

Always Taking

To steal, kill and destroy