

A NEW DEFINITION OF HOPE

PASTOR NATHAN ELMS

Hope matters:

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."

Romans 15:13

Hope (Dictionary) – The general consensus from all dictionary definitions is that hope is a feeling of expectation, a desire or wish for a certain thing to happen.

As a society, we are living with stress. As believers we are living with stress. Not everything is an easy fix. We live though things we don't even control.

King David is a man of promise and destiny. But destiny takes time.

...anointed by the prophet and sent back to the sheep
...mocked by his brothers but finally elevated to the King's house
...given the hand of the King's daughter, but then threatened
...living in a cave, living among the enemy,

David is living in The Wait... now in 2 Sam 9 a particularly difficult moment: Saul is dead. Jonathan is dead. DAVID IS STILL NOT KING!

David somehow gets to this question: Is there someone in a worse situation than me?

9 David asked, "Is there anyone still left in Saul's family? I want to show kindness to this person. I want to do it for Jonathan."

2 There was a servant named Ziba from Saul's family. David's servants called Ziba to David. King David said to Ziba, "Are you Ziba?"

Ziba said, "Yes, I am your servant Ziba."

3 The king said, "Is there anyone left in Saul's family? I want to show God's kindness to this person."

Ziba said to King David, "Jonathan has a son still living. He is crippled in both feet."

4 The king said to Ziba, "Where is this son?"

Ziba said to the king, "He is at the house of Makir son of Ammiel in Lo Debar."

It was not his fault that he was crippled. Somebody dropped him.

Why is David thinking about how someone else is instead of worrying about his own situation?

Chesed is a Hebrew word used throughout the Old Testament, like in Psalm 13:5, which reads, "But I trust in your unfailing love (chesed)." Chesed has no direct analogue in English, but it is frequently translated as "lovingkindness" or "loyal love." It is how God loves his people—with an enduring and faithful love that transcends circumstances and seasons.

Christians have a deep fondness for studying the words for love used in Scripture: agape, chesed, and others. But our understanding of these words is often incomplete, as it focuses on how God loves us; agape is a Greek word that describes God's unconditional love for us, chesed is God's lovingkindness to us.

While true, chesed has another equally important application that we often overlook.

For example, in the book of Ruth—where God is never directly mentioned—we see frequent uses of the word chesed. It describes the care Naomi receives from her daughters-in-law and also the generosity of Boaz. It is how Boaz describes Ruth when she shares her affection with him. So this loyal, unfailing love is not only something that we receive from God; chesed is also how we are called to love others.

HOPE IS ANTICIPATING GOD'S GOODNESS

PSALM 23: I AM ANTICIPATING GOD'S GOODNESS

1. HE WILL MEET MY NEEDS WHEN I'M WORRIED!

"The Lord is my shepherd, I will lack nothing." Psalm 23:1

2. HE WILL TEACH ME TO RELAX WHEN I'M STRESSED!

"He makes me lie down in green pastures, and he leads me beside quiet waters." Psalm 23:2

3. HE WILL REPLENISH MY STRENGTH WHEN I'M EMPTY!

"He restores my soul." Psalm 23:3a

"He gives me new strength." Psalm 23:3a (NCV)

4. HE WILL GUIDE ME WHEN I'M CONFUSED!

"He guides me in the right paths for his name's sake." Psalm 23:3b

5. HE WILL WALK WITH ME IN DARK & FEARFUL DAYS!

"Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me." Psalm 23:4

6. HE WILL PROTECT ME WHEN I FEEL INSECURE!

"Your rod and your staff, they comfort me." Psalm 23:4b

7. HE WILL PUBLICLY SHOW HIS FAVOR ON MY LIFE!

"You prepare a banquet for me in front of all my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows." Psalm 23:5

8. HE WILL BE GOOD TO ME NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS!

"Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life." Psalm 23:6a

9. HE WILL TAKE ME TO HEAVEN ONE DAY!

"And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." Psalm 23:6b