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## HOPE - ROOT OF REDEMPTION

The four Sundays before Christmas are called "Advent." The word means "coming" and so you anticipate the birth of our Savior. This is the long-expected and pivotal event in the history of the world, because the coming of Jesus is the only reason you have **HOPE** for your life.

The coming of Christ, the Redeemer, is the reason family histories were kept. Only God knows who is coming and when, because He is forming His forever family tree. Even that popular TV show which traces the roots of famous people would affirm that no one in your past ever predicted you in advance. No, you look **backward** at your lineage to discover your ancestors.

But for Jesus, people looked **forward to** this one promised descendant. And His roots are the roots of your redemption. You can trace through history - His story - and marvel at God's amazing providence in bringing about the birth of Jesus Christ, because only He can change your life.

Jesus is the most unique figure in all of human history. Someone has well said, Jesus Christ is the **ONLY** person ever born into this world whose ancestry, birth-time, forerunner, birth-place, birth-manner, infancy, manhood, teaching, character, career, preaching, reception, rejection, death, burial, resurrection, and ascension - were ALL pre-written hundreds and thousands of years BEFORE He was born.

The genealogy of Jesus, listed in Matthew 1 and Luke 3, trace His genetic and legal claims as Christ, especially highlighting His relationship to Adam, Abraham, and David. These are three of the important people in the Old Testament given remarkable prophecies concerning the promised Messiah.

Genesis 3:15 promised Adam "**the offspring of the woman**" who would come to pay for sin. What a disappointment when Cain killed Abel. Then Seth was born. And God renewed His promise. In Genesis 12, He promises to make Abraham the father of many nations. Genesis 22:18 says "**In your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.**" And Galatians 3:16 says "**that offspring is Christ.**"

God renewed His promise with an amazing covenant with King David, the son of Jesse, who traces back to Abraham and Adam. 2 Samuel 7:12 says, "**I will raise up your offspring, who shall come from your body, and I will establish the throne of His kingdom forever.**" Matthew 1 and Luke 3 and many other passages establish Jesus Christ as the One to whom the world looked forward.

Isaiah 11:1-3 predicts, "**There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him.**" Romans 15:12 affirms Jesus as this promised shoot of Jesse, and verse 13 says "**May the God of HOPE fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in HOPE.**"

This promise of HOPE in Jesus is the real thing that gives your life meaning. Because after earthly life comes earthly death. Only those who are spiritually alive in Christ will have eternal life with Him in heaven forever. Without Jesus, you are living a HOPE-less life, and you will suffer a God-less eternity.

Galatians 4:4 explains, "**When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, to redeem those who receive adoption as sons**" through the Holy Spirit. John 1:11 says, "**to all who received Jesus, who believed in His name, He gives the power (right, authority, reality) to become children of God - to those who are born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man - but born of God.**" Speaking of being re-born from above by the Holy Spirit, in John 3:3, Jesus says, "**unless you are born again, you cannot see the kingdom of God.**"

John 3:16 says, "**God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.**" Jesus is the offspring God promised as Redeemer.

With all His promises, God gives you HOPE in Jesus. This CHRIST-mas season, He invites you to believe in Jesus Christ - to receive His gift of forgiveness of sins and eternal life, as His adopted child. But you must be re-born, spiritually, by receiving and believing in Christ as your Lord and Savior.

God is growing His forever family tree. But you can't **receive** if you don't **believe**. Trust in Jesus today!