

# 5-Day Devotional Guide

## *Easter Began in the Dark: Hope Before the Empty Tomb*

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### Day 1 — The Real Problem: Separation

#### Scripture

Genesis 3:8–10

Genesis 3:15

#### Key Truth

Humanity's deepest problem is not suffering but separation from God.

#### Reflection

When sin entered the world in Genesis 3, everything changed instantly. Adam and Eve had previously walked with God in the garden with openness and joy. But after their rebellion, their first instinct was to hide.

“Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden... and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden.” (Genesis 3:8)

Sin did not merely introduce pain or difficulty into life—it fractured the relationship humanity was created for. Shame replaced innocence. Fear replaced fellowship. The closeness that defined life with God was broken.

Every human struggle traces back to this fracture. Loneliness, anxiety, injustice, conflict, and death are all symptoms of something deeper: humanity has been separated from its Creator.

Yet in the very moment humanity fell, God spoke a promise. In Genesis 3:15 He declared that one day a descendant of the woman would crush the serpent. Evil would wound Him, but it would not win.

Before Adam and Eve even left the garden, God planted a seed of hope.

Easter hope began right there—in the middle of humanity's darkest moment.

#### Personal Application

Many people spend their lives trying to solve surface problems while ignoring the deeper one. We chase success, comfort, relationships, or achievement, hoping they will satisfy us.

But until the separation between us and God is addressed, something will always feel incomplete.

The gospel begins with recognizing our need for reconciliation with God.

## Reflection Questions

1. In what ways do people try to solve surface problems while ignoring the deeper issue of separation from God?
  2. How have you experienced the effects of sin creating distance in relationships?
  3. Why is it significant that God spoke hope immediately after the fall?
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## Day 2 — The First Seed of Hope

### Scripture

Genesis 3:15

### Key Truth

God promised a rescuer long before humanity understood how that rescue would come.

### Reflection

Genesis 3:15 is sometimes called the *protoevangelium*—the “first gospel.” In this single sentence, God reveals the outline of redemption.

“He will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.”

This promise describes a future battle between the serpent (representing evil) and a descendant of the woman.

The serpent would wound him. But the wound would not be final. The descendant would crush the serpent’s head—delivering a decisive victory over evil.

Imagine hearing that promise as Adam and Eve left the garden. They had just lost everything: innocence, peace, and paradise. The future must have felt uncertain and heavy.

Yet God gave them something to carry into that broken world: hope.

Like a seed planted in dark soil, the promise did not yet look like victory. It would take centuries before its meaning became clear.

But the seed had been planted.

And once a seed is planted, the future has already begun to change.

## **Personal Application**

Sometimes God’s promises look small or distant when we first receive them. We may not see immediate change. We may still feel surrounded by darkness.

But the presence of a promise changes the story.

Hope is not based on visible circumstances—it is based on the character of the God who speaks.

## **Reflection Questions**

1. Why do you think God revealed His plan gradually throughout history?
  2. How does the idea of hope as a seed help you understand faith during difficult seasons?
  3. What promises of God are you currently holding onto?
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# **Day 3 — Light in the Darkness**

## **Scripture**

Isaiah 9:2

“The people walking in darkness have seen a great light.”

## **Key Truth**

God sustains hope even during long seasons of waiting.

## **Reflection**

Centuries passed after the promise in Genesis. Humanity did not fix the problem of sin. Israel did not succeed in bringing the world back to God. Instead, history seemed to confirm how deep the brokenness truly was.

Into that reality, the prophet Isaiah spoke a message of hope.

He described the world as walking in darkness—a powerful image for life separated from God. Darkness in Scripture represents confusion, spiritual blindness, and estrangement from the Creator.

Yet Isaiah announced that a great light would appear.

The light would not come through political power or military victory. Instead, Isaiah revealed something surprising:

“For to us a child is born...” (Isaiah 9:6)

God’s rescue would arrive in the form of a person.

This child would bring light to the darkness of the world.

The seed planted in Genesis was beginning to take shape.

### **Personal Application**

We often expect solutions to come through strength, control, or human achievement. But God’s pattern is different.

Again and again, God brings hope through unexpected means.

The arrival of Jesus reminds us that God works even when circumstances appear darkest. The light of Christ shines precisely where the darkness seems strongest.

### **Reflection Questions**

1. What forms of “darkness” do people experience in the world today?
  2. Why do you think God chose to bring salvation through a child rather than through power or force?
  3. Where do you most need the light of Christ in your life right now?
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## **Day 4 — The Suffering Savior**

### **Scripture**

Isaiah 53:4–6

### **Key Truth**

The rescuer defeats evil not by destroying enemies but by bearing our sin.

### **Reflection**

The prophets revealed something shocking about the promised Savior.

He would suffer.

Isaiah 53 describes a servant who is rejected, despised, and wounded. But his suffering is not meaningless.

“Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering... He was pierced for our transgressions.”

This passage reveals the heart of God’s rescue plan. The deepest problem of humanity is sin, and sin carries consequences.

Instead of leaving humanity to bear that weight alone, God’s Servant would carry it for us.

The serpent would bruise his heel.

But through that suffering, the power of sin would be broken.

Jesus did not defeat evil through domination. He defeated it through sacrifice.

### **Personal Application**

The cross shows the seriousness of sin and the depth of God’s love. Our reconciliation with God came at a cost—one willingly paid by Christ.

Understanding this truth reshapes how we see grace.

Forgiveness is not cheap. It is a gift purchased through extraordinary love.

### **Reflection Questions**

1. What does Isaiah 53 reveal about the nature of God’s love?
2. Why is it important to understand that Jesus suffered for our sin personally?
3. How does the cross change the way you view forgiveness?

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## **Day 5 — The Promise Fulfilled**

### **Scripture**

Luke 1:68–75

### **Key Truth**

The arrival of Jesus fulfills the promises spoken throughout Scripture.

### **Reflection**

When Zechariah speaks in Luke 1, he recognizes that something extraordinary is happening. “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people.”

Zechariah understands that the birth of Jesus is not an isolated event. It is the fulfillment of promises spoken “by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old.”

The promise in Genesis.

The hope proclaimed by Isaiah.

The longing carried through generations.

All of it was pointing to this moment.

God had not forgotten His people. He had been faithfully working throughout history to bring redemption. And the purpose of that salvation is beautifully simple: that we might “serve him without fear.”

Through Christ, the separation between God and humanity is healed.

The distance is removed.

The exile is ended.

The door home has been opened.

### **Personal Application**

The empty tomb proves that God keeps His promises.

If God fulfilled His promise to defeat sin and death through Jesus, then we can trust Him with every promise He has made.

Easter hope is not just a past event—it is a present reality.

### **Reflection Questions**

1. How does the fulfillment of prophecy strengthen your trust in God?
2. What does it mean to “serve God without fear”?
3. How can the hope of Easter shape the way you live this week?