

# Hope on Ash Heaps

by Duane Troyer

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*This sermon emphasizes the theme of finding hope and redemption in times of destruction and despair, showcasing how God's power is often revealed when we are at our lowest points and fully yield to Him. It highlights biblical examples like Moses, Naomi, and Job, who experienced restoration and blessings after facing immense trials. The message encourages a deep reverence and fear of the Lord, emphasizing the importance of seeking peace, doing good, and trusting in God's deliverance.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 34:17, Romans 5:3, Genesis 35:1, 1 Corinthians 13:13, Proverbs 3:5, Hebrews 12:1, Psalm 27:13, 1 Corinthians 10:13, James 1:2, 1 Peter 5:6

**Topics:** "Hope in Despair", "God's Power in Restoration"

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## Description

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## Transcript

I just want to greet everybody this morning in Jesus' name. I'm very, very thankful for all of you. Very thankful for this opportunity.

As we go through life, there's there's normal things, there's normal times where we can just say things are good or things are normal. Then there's stuff that happens that makes us exceedingly sad or and then there's and then there's things and they're often on the heels of those things that if we walk in uprightness that make us exceedingly glad. Anyway, I am just real thankful to be here.

I just want to give a short devotional here for an opening. Let's stand for a word of prayer. Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.

And your kingdom come, and your will be done, here on earth as it is in heaven. Lord, we pray that your will be done in our midst. We pray that you would be with us.

We thank you for this day, for brothers and sisters to gather with. We ask for your spirit to abide with us. We pray that all we do and say today could be in your name, bring glory to your name.

I pray, Lord, that that could be our goal or what we endeavor for is always to lift up your name. And so help us. Bless each one here.

Believe that thine is the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen. My devotional this morning is out of the 33rd Psalm.

But before I read that, I'll share a little story. I was looking up a little bit of history on the country of Poland. And for many centuries after Poland started in the... I think Poland maybe became a country in like year 1025 or something like that.

And for many centuries it was the most religiously tolerant country in Europe. And so a lot of Jews went and settled in Poland because so many of the other European countries were persecuted and expelled Jewish people. But they found a little refuge there.

Some sources say that by the 16th century, nearly three-fourth of the Jewish population in the world lived in Poland. But in the 17th century, their government, the power in the Poland government started to falter and started deteriorating from the inside. And a whole bunch of these little separatist movements grew up and fought for control and power over the territory.

And then there was this always, ever present in Europe was this conflict, this battle between the Catholic and Protestant Christians, you know, politically fighting for power. By the end of the 18th century, it was a pretty tumultuous time for the Jews in Poland. They became the hated.

Entire Jewish villages got wiped out, got burned, got destroyed. Anyway, the one story I came across said that one night an entire village, an entire Jewish village got burned and destroyed. Nothing was standing anymore.

And the next morning as the sun was coming up, an old Jewish man hammered some boards together and made himself a cellar stall. And he sat there as if this was just another market day. And a young man passed by and in disbelief, he looked at him and said, What are you going to sell among these ruins? And the old man smiled and said, I'm selling hope.

He said, the best place to sell water is in a dry desert and the best place to sell hope is on the ash heaps of destruction. God has done many great things on the ash heaps of destruction. In fact, God cannot really demonstrate his power in us until we're yielded to him.

And stubborn people as we are, we're often not yielded to him until we get to the very end of ourselves. Until all the things that we would like to pursue fall in utter ruin. And finally, we turn to him and he can build something glorious out of that ash heap of destruction.

Moses had all kinds of ideas of how to deliver Egypt or Israel from the Egyptians. But it wasn't until he had lost everything and his plans were utterly ruined. He had no fame.

He had no political power. He had no army to back him up. He didn't even have a sword in his hand, nothing but a staff and someone else's sheep that he was taking care of.

It was then that God was ready to say, Moses, we're going to do this great thing. Naomi's family dreams were shattered. Her husband was dead.

Her sons had died. She was in a foreign land. When she came back home, she said, don't call me Naomi, call me bitter, for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me.

She had no clue how her name would ring through the ages as being a great woman. And that her daughter-in-law would contribute to bringing the Savior into the world. Job literally was brought to the ash heap of destruction.

To that point in his life where he was like, why was I even born? Cursed be the day when they said a man-child was born. Why didn't they carry me from the womb to the grave? That's how out of it he was. Not only did God raise him up to be a great man, but to this day, his patience has inspired many men to be like him.

Paul says in Romans 5, we glory in tribulation because tribulation worketh patience and patience experience and experience hope. Let's read, if you have a Septuagint, it's the 33rd Psalm. If you have the Masoretic Texts, it's the 34th Psalm.

I will bless the Lord at all times. His praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul shall be praised in the Lord.

Let the gentle hear and be glad. O magnify the Lord with me and let us exalt his name together. I sought the Lord and he heard me and he delivered me from all my sojourning.

Come to him and be enlightened and your faith shall never be ashamed. This poor man cried and the Lord heard him and saved him from all his afflictions. The angel of the Lord shall encamp around those who fear him and he will deliver them.

O taste and see that the Lord is good. Blessed is the man whose hope is in him. Fear the Lord, you his saints, for there is no want for those who fear him.

Rich men turned poor and went hungry, but those who seek the Lord shall not lack any good thing. Stop right there for a little bit. The repeating theme here, especially here in the last part, is that there is safety in those who fear him.

The fear of the Lord is something we want to keep before our eyes all the days of our life. Tertullian said fear is the foundation of salvation. Presumption is an impediment to fear.

More useful then is it to apprehend that we may possibly fail than to presume that we cannot. For apprehending will lead us to fear and fearing to caution and caution to salvation. On the other hand, if we presume, there will be neither fear nor caution to save us.

Continuing to read in verse 12, he says, Come, you children, listen to me. I will teach you the fear of the Lord. Who is the man who desires life, who loves to see good days? Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking deceit.

Shun evil and do good. Seek peace and pursue it. The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous and his ears are upon their supplications.

The Lord's face is against those who do evil so as to destroy their remembrance from the earth. The righteous cried and the Lord heard them and he delivered them from all their afflictions. The Lord is near those who are brokenhearted and he will save the humble in spirit.

The Lord is near those who are brokenhearted and he will save the humble in spirit. I was reminded this week of something that happened in Jacob's life. The account is in Genesis and Jacob was having a miserable time with his family.

He had just bought a piece of land outside the city of Salem and he pitched his tents there and was raising his cattle there. His daughter, Dina, went out to visit the daughters of the land and this young man named Shechem in the city desired her and defiled her. Then they came to Shechem's father Hamar and Shechem came to Jacob and said, Hamar said, my son loves your daughter, please let us marry your daughters and we'll let you marry our daughters and let's share the land together, let's be together.

Jacob didn't answer right away until his sons came in from the field and when his sons heard what happened they were exceedingly upset. Simon and Levi figured out a deceitful plan and Shechem and Hamar said, just ask what you want, ask what you want of us to make this agreement. That's how much Shechem loves Dina.

And Simon and Levi said, we can't give our daughters to you, you're uncircumcised people, this one thing you'll do, if everybody, if all the men in the city are circumcised in the flesh then we'll do it. And they were like, that sounds good, we'll do it. And three days later when all the men were in pain and in misery, Simon and Levi girded their swords and went in and just killed all the men in the city.

Plundered the city, took the spoil, took the women, took the children. And when Jacob heard this he said, you have made my name to stink. He was distressed.

They dealt so deceitfully with him, here his daughter just got defiled, his sons just murdered a whole city full of men. And Jacob was severely distressed. But this is what God said to him.

Chapter 35 verse 1 he says, Now God said to Jacob, arise, go up to Bethel and dwell there, and make an altar there to God who appeared to you when you fled from the face of Esau your brother. God is very, very interested in communicating with us in our lowest state. He's very, very interested in having us or being able to talk to us, to reach us in a very low state.

He goes on in verse, if we skip down to verse 9 he says, Then God appeared to Jacob, this was after he went over there to Bethel where God told him to go and raise this altar. And then God appeared to Jacob again when he came from Mesopotamia and blessed him. And God said to him, your name is Jacob.

Your name shall not anymore be called Jacob, but Israel shall be your name. God also said to him, I am your God. Increase and multiply.

A nation and a company of nations shall proceed from you, and kings shall come from your body. The land I gave Abraham and Isaac I give to you and to your seed after you. I give this land.

Then God ascended from him in the place where he talked with him. So Jacob set up a pillar in the place where he talked with him, a pillar of stone, and he poured a drink offering on it, and he poured oil on it. Thus Jacob called the name of the place where God spoke to him, Bethel.

Bethel means the house of God. Let's read these last few verses in Psalm. Verse 20.

Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but he will deliver them from them all. The Lord shall guard all their bones. Not one of them shall be broken.



another day, Come to Him, who made this land, Mercy, surrender, All the people, Christ, and faith. Now to Him, returning, ready, burning, Scent of the fire. For the night is dead, The end of God ascended, With His head I'll ascend.

Then that evening I wake, The old and the unfolded, Every cold burns within, Every stake ashamed, Cross over and discover, And discern each deed of sin. On God's free gift, Love, use not, life, refuse not, But His Spirit voice obey. For the Holy Gospel says, Though all other gifts shall vanish, Charity will never fail.

Though we see it far and darkly, Someday it shall be unveiled. Now while faith and hope are violent, There remain these blessed three, But the greatest of them all Is the gift of charity. Thou my vision, O thou to me saying that Thou art, Thou findest love by day or by night.

Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light. Be Thou my wisdom and Thou my true word, I ever with Thee, and Thou with me, Lord. Thou my great Father, I Thy true son, Thou in me dwelling, and Thou for shield, Lord, for the Christ.

Be Thou my dignity, Thou my delight, Thou my soul's shelter, Thou my high tower. Praise Thou me and worth, O power of my power. Vicious I be, Thou norm and empty praise, Thou my inheritance, Thou and always.

Thou and Thou only, first in my heart. High King of Heaven, my treasure Thou art, High King of Heaven, my victory won. May I reach Heaven's joys, O bright Heaven's sun.

Heart of my own, my whate'er, still be my vision, O ruler of all. When I die, O strange, poor pilgrim, will I not your brethren know? Some are dried through fires of blessing, some are dried through floods of woe. Jesus knows our strength and weakness, understands we are but frail.

Girds us up and will forgive us if we falter, if we fail. Lay hard then, my weary brother, though you suffer shame and loss. In your present life's affliction, God is wending you from draws.

Fairest brother, kindest sister, see the church that's gone before. Though the cross destroy the body, yet the soul it will restore. Hear the witnesses that cheer us as we tread the road they draw.

Can we do safe from what may fall? I will say of my God.

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