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Expecting: Hope and Sinfulness

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Expecting: Hope and Sinfulness

Abstract

"Even as we expect Christ's coming during this third week of advent, we also are aware of our need for a Savior to atone for our sins."

Posting about Christ's birth foreshadowing His death from *In All Things* - an online hub committed to the claim that the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ has implications for the entire world.

<http://inallthings.org/expecting-hope-and-sinfulness/>

Keywords

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Disciplines

Christianity

Comments

In All Things is a publication of the [Andreas Center for Reformed Scholarship and Service at Dordt College](#).

Expecting: Hope and Sinfulness

 [inallthings.org/expecting-hope-and-sinfulness/](https://allinallthings.org/expecting-hope-and-sinfulness/)

Sarah Moss

What should expectation during the Christmas season look like? Should we view it as being mixed with both hopefulness for our redemption and sadness for our sinfulness?

In [1 Samuel 3](#), Samuel must have felt anticipation and hope as he left Eli's room to return to the house of the Lord. Surely he expected that, on that third time returning to the ark of God, the Lord would speak to him and that this time he would have the words to respond. What hope he must have felt as he walked those dark hallways back to the house of the Lord, anticipating a conversation with the Lord.

However, expectation can also have elements of sadness and acceptance, a sense of what is inevitable. In Eli's case, expectation becomes both probable and imminent. After listening to Eli's demands, Samuel tells Eli exactly what the Lord said: Eli has disobeyed God by ignoring His warnings: "For I told him that I would judge his family forever because of the sin he knew about; his sons blasphemed God, and he failed to restrain them" (verse 13).

It's almost as if Eli expects this news from Samuel; perhaps hearing the words from Samuel is the best way for Eli to come to grips with his sinfulness. This is not the outcome that Eli would have hoped for, but he does not lash out or continue to ignore God's instructions. Instead, Eli responds, "He is the Lord; let him do what is good in his eyes" (verse 18). He must have felt anguish knowing that, because of his sin, "the guilt of Eli's house will never be atoned for by sacrifice or offering" (verse 14). However, he comprehends that he must face the consequences for his actions.

Samuel expects—hopes and anticipates—that he will hear from God as he returns to the house of the Lord. Eli expects—comprehends and accepts—that he will be punished for his sinfulness.

Even as we expect Christ's coming during this third week of advent, we also are aware of our need for a savior to atone for our sins. Like Eli, we should pay the price for our sinful behavior; we know that we are in desperate need of God's grace. However, through Christ's birth, we can have hope for redemption.

During the Christmas season we wait with expectation to hear the Lord's voice, to remember the birth of His son. But we must not forget the reason why Christ came to earth in the first place. Christ's birth foreshadows his death on the cross.