

TO HELP YOU NAIL DOWN TRUTHS IN THE BIBLE

One of our goals here at Bethlehem is for you to spend time with God daily - this **HAMMERTIME** Card can help. It is designed to help you spend 15 minutes (or more) with God, 4 days a week. Here is an example of how to use this card. Study notebooks are available in the Bethlehem lobby.

Read the Bible verses (4 min)

- Read through one time, then re-read and underline any key points.

Read the card/think about it/write in your notebook (6 min)

- Write down some of the main ideas from the passage.
- Write down a “key for me” that is your main point that day.

Pray (5 min)

- Write down some of the things you are praying about that day.

Current Series: “HOPE”

Current Message: “Men of the Old Testament”

Designed to supplement Pastor Dickie Spargo’s current Sunday series.

- ◆ **Listen to this message** (or other messages in the series) again online at <http://www.bethlehembc.com/mediacenter.htm>.
- ◆ **Study Notebooks & Audio Message CD’s** available at ‘Above the Grind’ Bookstore for purchase.
- ◆ **HAMMERTIME Cards** - available Sundays at Bethlehem Church or online at www.bethlehemtoolbox.com.
- ◆ Contact Matt Vanderbilt, Connections Pastor, at mvanderbilt@bethlehembc.com or 704-823-5050 x104 for additional information.

Day 1: Abraham

Read: Genesis 17:1-2; 21:1-7; 22:1-19

Read the two background sections in Genesis 17 and 21. You can get an idea of how special this son was that God had given to Abraham and his wife Sarah. This will help you understand how crazy (and painful) it must have sounded to Abraham when God told him to climb a mountain and sacrifice his son. But Abraham’s relationship with God was built on faith and that foundation of faith helped him to keep his focus on the hope that he had in God.

Do you have times when it seems like there cannot possibly be an answer to your problem? Does it seem like God is quiet, distant - or even there? Abraham must have wrestled with some of those emotions as he climbed the mountain, as he and Isaac went further on their own, and especially when he pulled out the knife to do the unthinkable.

Read the rest of Abraham’s story and then see how his lineage continues and becomes an important part of history, especially through the rest of the book of Genesis. God knew what He was doing all along, but Abraham needed to have a strong relationship with God...to build up hope in God...to help him through what seemed to be an impossible situation. **Spend time with God daily so you can build the relationship which will be your foundation for hope.**

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Day 2: Joseph **Read:** Genesis 37:1-9 & 23-28; 39:1-23; 41:39-40

Joseph loved God and wanted to be used by Him. So why was Joseph thrown into a pit? Why was he sold into slavery? And why was he cast into prison? Even when circumstances improved, Joseph had to stay in prison, waiting much longer than he thought necessary. But Joseph's faith in God never wavered. Look closely at Genesis 39:20-23; see how God was working in Joseph's life. God was shaping Joseph's character as he went through these difficult trials. In God's timing, Joseph was given great responsibility and influence (Genesis 41:39-40). Joseph was ready to handle this authority, because he had allowed God to shape and prepare him.

When you go through trials, especially the kind that seem last too long, ask God what He wants you to learn during those trials. God may/may not have allowed the trial, but He does want you to learn and to grow during that trial. Ask Him to teach you, shape you, and build your hope.

Day 3: Elijah **Read:** 1 Kings 18:1-45; 19:1-18

Elijah had just experienced a tremendous victory! Read chapter 18 and see how God worked through Elijah to do something incredible, even in the midst of intense pressure. What happened to Elijah right after that? Elijah was scared, he ran, and may have been depressed. All followers of God experience ups and downs and Elijah was no different. How did Elijah make it through this trial?

Elijah retreated, went to a place where he could meet privately with God and asked Him to renew his faith and hope. Carefully read 1 Kings 19:11-13 and see how God revealed Himself. Not in power, not in fire, but in the quiet. Elijah had to be quiet enough to hear the whisper of God. As you create habits in your life to build faith and ultimately hope, **be sure to have times of quiet where you can listen for God** - He is right there wanting to talk with you!

Day 4: Daniel **Read:** Daniel 1:1-17; 6:4-23

Daniel was just a teenager when he was carried off into captivity. He was a young man with great potential and he was committed to being a man of godly character (1:8). Early on (chapter 1), it is easy to see that Daniel was a man that stood for what he believed. He allowed God to shape what he believed.

In chapter 6, the tension rises, as Daniel's beliefs come into conflict with the popular opinion of that day. He knew the risk of continuing his faithful walk, especially his time of prayer with God. Yet, Daniel was willing to suffer the consequences because his faith was strong and he had a firm vision of the hope that God gave him. His friends had this same vision (see 3:16-18) and together, their lives modeled hope that only God can give. How did Daniel get this strong hope? It appears Daniel's years of daily habits that strengthened his relationship with God. Even when faced with a deadly situation in the lion's den, Daniel's hope carried him through. You, too, can have this type of hope. **Surround yourself with friends who live with a view of God's hope and commit to spending time daily talking with God through prayer.**

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