



Devotional Study Guide Journal



January 1st

New Beginnings

Think of how lovely it was of God to create for us so many new beginnings. We have new years, new months, new weeks, and new days. We also have birthdays, anniversaries, and other holidays, all of them giving a chance to begin again. Did you waste your whole day doing meaningless chores? Tomorrow is a new day. Was last year mostly a mess or difficult or one of loss? We hope this new year will be better. God made sure that we would always have something to look forward to.

In fact our God is the God of Hope.

Romans 15:13

Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Greek word for hope is ἐλπίς (elpis). It means “to anticipate, usually with pleasure; expectation or confidence: faith, hope.” Hope means to joyfully anticipate or to expect.

In Spanish and other languages, the word “hope” and “wait” are the same. “Esperar” in Spanish means to hope, but it also means to wait.

The English definition of “hope” is “a feeling of expectation and desire for a particular thing to happen.”

We have an expression in English: “I hope so.” This is quite often used to express the exact opposite of “hope.” It almost means, “That would be nice, but I doubt it will happen.” Bible hope is assurance, so much so that it is “joyful” expectation.

We also sometimes tell people to “not get your hopes up.” We do this to prepare them for the possibility something won’t happen. But in the Lord, we have reason to get our hopes up. Our God is the God of hope. He keeps His promises and He doesn’t disappoint us.

Romans 5:5

Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

So, let’s get our hopes up. God is good and He is faithful. We can trust Him to be who He says He is and to do what He promises to do. Yesterday cannot be changed, but we can choose to begin again today. We have reason to hope because God’s love was poured out in our hearts by His Holy Spirit.

❖ **What are your thoughts about new beginnings?**

❖ **What are you joyfully anticipating from God?**