

“Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a dream fulfilled is a tree of life.

It is pleasant to see dreams come true, but fools refuse to turn from evil to attain them.” Proverbs 13:12, 19 NLT

lectio // Proverbs 13:12-25

Hope is one of those words that is easy to feel and even recognize when you have it or when you don't. But, defining it, that's hard. Here in Proverbs the wisdom writers connect the word to dreams. Good dreams of something better ahead. Good thoughts that meander through your mind while you sleep at night or even daydream as you sit and stare out over the ocean. Thoughts of what could be, maybe even wishes for a better life, a better job or just a better anything. It may be a wishful thought about a relationship with just the right girl or a chance to date that really nice guy. It's observing an old couple, in their twilight years, walking hand in hand down the sidewalk and hoping you have that kind of love late in life. The wisdom writers also mention this dark or foolish attainment of dreams via evil ways. Obtaining dreams through manipulation, power, lies, schemes and deceit. Those are not fulfilling, not like a tree of life. I don't think everyone has hope or maybe even dreams. Their views and foundational framework crushed their early understanding when powerful and selfish adults modeled nothing but pain and recurring broken promises. Hoping and dreaming for some became such a cycle of pain that they choose to just quit trying. I believe hope can be fragile to some and extremely strong in others.

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Dad,

As you know I used to dream often as a child, then very little as I got older. You taught me to hope again. You showed me how to dream once again and learn to trust you. Even still, I don't let my dreams just run out to far ahead, that proved painful a few years ago. I put them in check now, cautiously hoping for good. I've become more of a realist, seeing signs and coincidences as just fun moments of curiosity or joy, but not putting any stock in their outcome. I'm just not a fan of reading too many “tea leaf” experiences nowadays. I'll just be content trusting you and letting you guide my life. I still dream and hope, just much more refined ways.

contemplatio

rest in the presence of God, allowing the words revealed to take root