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(2020, December 7). Hope and memory. In D. Timms (Ed.), *Guided by hope: An Advent devotional*. Rocklin, CA: William Jessup University. Retrieved from <https://jessup.edu/2020/12/hope-and-memory-pearl-harbor-day>.

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*“For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and advent of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For when he received honor and glory from God the Father, and the voice was borne to him by the Majestic Glory, ‘This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased,’ we ourselves heard this very voice borne from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain” (2 Peter 1:16-18).*

My mother has no firsthand memories of Pearl Harbor Day, but she does recollect it every December 7, with remembrances constructed from the direct accounts of her mother, father, and sister.

My grandfather served at the time in the United States Army, stationed with his family (including my 13-month-old mother) at Schofield Barracks, 16 nautical miles from Pearl Harbor.

At 8am on that date which will live in infamy—December 7, 1941—Japanese fighter planes filled the skies, blitzing Americans below.

During the raid, a bomb landed in my mother’s backyard. It did not detonate. Yet its impact shattered windows, cracked stucco, and reverberates still in my family’s lore.

The attack on Pearl Harbor gutted nearly 20 U.S. warships and over 300 military aircraft. 2,403 Americans lost their lives, and some 1,000 others suffered injuries. Graciously, my family was spared.

Remembering an epic event may entail witnessing it firsthand. Yet often times, as in my mother’s case (and mine), others inform us.

Hearing or reading repeated accounts of eyewitnesses grafts us into their gripping stories, as if we were there. The shock and fear of the survivors becomes our own. Their testimonies of resiliency and hope strengthens us and ours, too.

In this Advent season, we remember: we were not present when Christ was born. We did not see him transfigured “on the holy mountain” (2 Pet. 1:18). We did not behold the Lord, lifeless, on the cross. He did not appear to us outside the empty tomb, nor comfort us in the locked room.

Yet receiving the Word proclaimed through eyewitnesses like Peter helps us believe and remember: Jesus is our God of hope, too, who was born, suffered, died, and rose from the dead.

And through faith in Jesus as Lord, all believers too, will one day rise—a hopeful truth to remember in light of Pearl Harbor Days past and present, and on every day yet to come.