

The Hope of the Hopeless

By Doug Hamilton

Job 13:15 “Though He slay me, I will hope in Him. Nevertheless I will argue my ways before Him.”

Background of the account of Job

- These were the words of a man named Job. He was a man that had everything going for him. He had religion, righteousness, riches, respect, reputation and relatives. He was living a life for God and possessed a great hope in Him.
- In chapter 1:6 it states that the angels had presented themselves before God and Satan also came. The devil was looking to cause someone to sin and stop bringing glory to God. The devil believed that if God removed His hedge of protection from Job that in return Job would curse His Maker. God knew that Job was genuine and would not curse Him. The hedge of protection was removed and Job lost it all. His cattle was stolen, his property wiped out and the death of his seven children from a terrible storm. This was devastating to Job, but he held true to God.
 - Job 1:21 He said, “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, And naked I shall return there. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away. Blessed be the name of the LORD.”
- He still has his health and hope in God, but even that would be shorted by one. Again the angels of God presented themselves before God and Satan came as well, looking for someone to sin and stop bringing glory to God. Being reminded of faithful and patient Job, the devil said that a man can still hang onto God if he has his health. The devil said that is Job lost his health that He would curse God to his face, but God knew that Job would not do such a thing. God said that He would withdraw his protection over Job’s health for such a test.
 - Job 2:6–7 So the LORD said to Satan, “Behold, he is in your power, only spare his life.”⁷ Then Satan went out from the presence of the LORD and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head.
- In all this Job still did not curse God. His wife was not an encouragement. His three “friends” Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar were not a comfort to him. At least he still had his hope in God, but that was teetering. As he suffered from the loss of his family, wealth and health throughout most of the remaining chapters, his hope in God was tested.
 - Job 7:6 “My days are swifter than a weaver’s shuttle, And come to an end without hope.
 - Job 14:19 Water wears away stones, Its torrents wash away the dust of the earth; So You destroy man’s hope.
 - Job 17:15–16 Where now is my hope? And who regards my hope? ¹⁶ “Will it go down with me to Sheol? Shall we together go down into the dust?”
 - Job 19:10 “He breaks me down on every side, and I am gone; And He has uprooted my hope like a tree.
- In the midst of these moments of a fading hope. His friends were calling Job into question, saying he brought these events on himself. His hope was being eaten away while he struggled in defense from them.

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Hope is an Absolute of the Christian

- Ephesians 4:4–6 *There is* one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; ⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶ one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.
- In this section of Ephesians Paul is addressing the uniqueness of the covenant of Christianity. It is not a covenant of relativism, but one of absolutes. In fact there are seven absolutes that define our covenant.
 - 1) There is one BODY of the Christian covenant and that is the universal body of believers called the church.
 - 2) There is one Spirit of the Christian covenant and He is the Holy Spirit of God.
 - 3) There is one Hope of the Christian covenant that defines our great anticipation for His people.
 - 4) There is one Lord of the Christian covenant and His name is Jesus Christ.
 - 5) There is one Faith of the Christian covenant and it is in His death, burial and resurrection from the grave on that first day of the week.
 - 6) There is one Baptism of the Christian covenant and that is by water for the remission of sins in the name of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit.
 - 7) There is one God of the Christian covenant and He is our Holy Father in heaven.
- We are in a covenant of absolutes. One cannot be a Christian and fail to possess the seven uncompromised realities of clarity. It is in the third ONE on this list that I wish to focus on this morning, for our HOPE must be clearly understood and embraced if we are ever going to survive this place called the world.

What is HOPE?

- *elpis* (ἐλπίς, 1680), in the NT, “favorable and confident expectation”. –Vine’s
- It has to do with the unseen and the future. “Hope” is the happy anticipation of good to come. It is not a baseless feeling such as a bad sports team hoping somehow they win the championship, but that of a good team that has realistic promise to pull off the same.
- We must remember that there is only one hope for the Christian according to the apostle Paul. It is not to say that a person does not hope to buy a house or a car, hope to go on a vacation or even hope to gain a new job. These are all things that people might have a hope for, but concerning Christianity there is one supreme HOPE that dwarfs all others.

What is this one HOPE of the Christian covenant?

- Titus 1:1–3 Paul, a bond-servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the faith of those chosen of God and the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness, ² in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised long ages ago,
- It is the hope which was promised in the gospel message. *Col 1:5 because of the hope laid up for you in heaven, of which you previously heard in the word of truth, the gospel*
- This was clearly promised to Abraham in the OT.
 - Genesis 15:5-6 And He took him outside and said, “Now look toward the heavens, and count the stars, if you are able to count them.” And He said to him, “So shall your descendants be.” ⁶ Then he believed in the Lord; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.

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- Genesis 22:16-17 “By Myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this thing and have not withheld your son, your only son,¹⁷ indeed I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens and as the sand which is on the seashore...”
- Romans 4:18 In hope against hope he believed, so that he might become a father of many nations according to that which had been spoken, “SO SHALL YOUR DESCENDANTS BE.”
- This promise is for the Christians as well.
 - Hebrews 6:13–20 For when God made the promise to Abraham, since He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself,¹⁴ saying, “I WILL SURELY BLESS YOU AND I WILL SURELY MULTIPLY YOU.”¹⁵ And so, having patiently waited, he obtained the promise.¹⁶ For men swear by one greater *than themselves*, and with them an oath *given* as confirmation is an end of every dispute.¹⁷ In the same way God, desiring even more to show to the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose, interposed with an oath,¹⁸ so that by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have taken refuge would have strong encouragement to take hold of the hope set before us.¹⁹ This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a *hope* both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil,²⁰ where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.”
- Jesus paid for us to have this hope within us. *1 Timothy 1:1* “Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus according to the commandment of God our Savior, and of Christ Jesus, who is our hope...” He entered the veil of the temple and offered Himself as the sacrifice for our sins so that we might have eternal life.
 - Titus 3:5–7 He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit,⁶ whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,⁷ so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.
 - 1 Peter 1:20–21 For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you²¹ who through Him are believers in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.
- As sure as there is one church, one Spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism and one God, there is one hope and that hope is eternal life. Our Hope is in Jesus Christ to grant us eternal life when this life is over. Without eternal life we have nothing; with it we have it all. All that we will ever have in the afterlife goes under the heading of our Hope of eternal life.

We will have a New Body with an Eternal Warranty.

- 1 John 3:2-3 Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.³ And everyone who has this hope *fixed* on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

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- Phil 3:20-21 "...the Lord Jesus Christ ²¹ will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself."
- 1 Cor 15:52-53 "...in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. ⁵³ For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality.

Satan is constantly assaulting our hope through various means: sin, doubt, materialism, sickness and depressing moments of life. He would love nothing more than to have us a hopeless people with nothing concrete to look forward to in the end. We need to deeply embed into our hearts the words of Job:

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Three Ways to Always have the Hope of God within you.

1) Always keep it on the forefront of our minds.

- 1 Thessalonians 5:8 But since we are of *the* day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation.
- Ephesians 6:17 And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.
 - Notice that of all the spiritual armor of God that it is the arsenal for the Christian, it is salvation with God that covers our head. When a person has the hope of God on His mind there is no discouragement in him.
- Romans 15:4 For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

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2) Always keep it at the forefront of our conversation

- 2 Cor 3:12 Therefore having such a hope, we use great boldness in our speech,
- 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18 But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. ¹⁴ For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. ¹⁵ For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of *the* archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore comfort one another with these words.

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3) Always keep it at the forefront of our actions.

- 1 Corinthians 9:10 Or is He speaking altogether for our sake? Yes, for our sake it was written, because the plowman ought to plow in hope, and the thresher *to thresh* in hope of sharing *the crops*.
- 1 Timothy 6:17–19 Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy. ¹⁸ *Instruct them* to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, ¹⁹ storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed.
- Galatians 5:5 For we through the Spirit, by faith, are waiting for the hope of righteousness.
- Col 1:3 “...constantly bearing in mind your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the presence of our God and Father...”
- 1 Tim 4:10 For it is for this we labor and strive, because we have fixed our hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers.
- Heb 3:6 but Christ *was faithful* as a Son over His house—whose house we are, if we hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope firm until the end.

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If we can face the challenges of life with this thought always deep in our heart, then we will never let go of the hope that empowers us until the end. Hang on to your hope even in the darkest of times and you will make it through.

Always keep the hope of God at the forefront of our minds, our words and our actions. You will be so glad you did.

1 Peter 1:3–5 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to *obtain* an inheritance *which is* imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, ⁵ who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.