

# From hopelessness to hope

October 2, 2013

## Hope turned to faith - Abraham's example (Rom 4:16-22)

### In hope against hope he believed (Rom 4:18)

Heb 11:1 Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

#### He turned hope into faith through:

##### The Word of God:

4:16, 20, 21 the promise

4:17 as it is written; 4:18 that which had been spoken

##### Who God is and what He does:

4:17 who gives life to the dead; and calls into being that which does not exist.

4:21 God ... was able also to perform

#### My definition of hope:

"Looking to the future with a confident expectation of good."

#### Hope receives the unseen promises of God

2Cor 5:7 for we walk by faith, not by sight (2Cor 4:16-18; Rom 8:24-25).

#### Abounding in Hope

Rom 15:13 Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

"so that you will abound in hope" which basically means "over and above." (from R. J. Utley)

Paul uses this term (abound; over and above) 26 times in his epistles:

#### Abounding in Grace enables us to abound in Hope

Grace abounds to mankind through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

Rom 5:15 For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many.

God's lavished (makes to abound) His grace on us (Eph 1:7-10)

Eph 1:7-8 ...according to the riches of His grace which He lavished on us ...

Abound in hope (Rom 15:13)

## Hopelessness - the work of the enemy

**An absence of hope** - leads to a loss of vision, a sense of despondency and ultimately to despair (from Dictionary of Bible Themes)

Prov 13:12 Hope deferred makes the heart sick, But desire fulfilled is a tree of life.

Prov 15:13 A joyful heart makes a cheerful face, But when the heart is sad, the spirit is broken.

Prov 17:22 A joyful heart is good medicine, But a broken spirit dries up the bones.

Prov 18:14 The spirit of a man can endure his sickness, But as for a broken spirit who can bear it?

## **Sheol is a place that has no hope!**

Isa 38:18 "For Sheol cannot thank You, Death cannot praise You; Those who go down to the pit cannot hope for Your faithfulness.

## **Great trials can make us despair and feel hopeless**

**We have hope** - we are justified by God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ

Rom 5:1-2 Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.

**We have tribulations** - which are to lead to hope, the Holy Spirit and the love of God.

Rom 5:3-5 And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

**Excessive tribulation can lead to despair, hopelessness and grief**

2Cor 1:8-9 For we do not want you to be unaware, brethren, of our affliction which came to us in Asia, that we were burdened excessively, beyond our strength, so that we despaired even of life; 9 indeed, we had the sentence of death within ourselves so that we would not trust in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead; (Ac 27:20)

1Thes 4:13 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.

## **Bible examples:**

### **Wilderness Examples**

1. **The bad report of 10 spies** discouraged Israel to take the land (Num 13:25-33).
2. **The request of 2 1/2 tribes** to remain on the east side of Jordan v(Num 32:1-15).

### **Restoration Examples: - The enemy seeks to discourage the people through fear.**

#### **1. From restoring the Temple**

Ezra 4:4 Then the people of the land discouraged the people of Judah, and frightened them from building (Ezra 4:1-5).

#### **2. From rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem**

Neh 6:9 For all of them were trying to frighten us, thinking, " They will become discouraged with the work and it will not be done." (Neh 6:1-9)

## **Jeremiah**

He encourages the nation to follow God, their reply was; " No! It is hopeless!" (Jer 2:25).

He lived through the atrocities of the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple (Lam 3:1-18).

Lam 3:18 I say, "My strength has perished, and so has my hope from the LORD."

His hope is restored as he remembers God's mercy and grace.

Lam 3:20-24 Surely my soul remembers and is bowed down within me. 21 This I recall to my mind, therefore I have hope. 22 The LORD'S lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, for His compassions never fail. 23 They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. 24 "The LORD is my portion," says my soul, "Therefore I have hope in Him."

He prophesies of their promised restoration

Jer 29:11-14 'For I know the plans that I have for you,' declares the LORD, 'plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope. 12'Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. 13'You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart. 14'I will be found by you,' declares the LORD, ...

Jer 31:16-17 Thus says the LORD, "Restrain your voice from weeping and your eyes from tears; For your work will be rewarded," declares the LORD, "And they will return from the land of the enemy. 17 "There is hope for your future," declares the LORD, "And your children will return to their own territory ...

## **Ezekiel - The vision of the valley of dry bones (Ezk 37)**

He is taken to Babylon as a captive, where he lives and prophesies for the rest of his life.

Ezk 37:1-10 he prophesies to the valley of dry bones; they come to life and become a great army

Ezk 37:11 Then He said to me, "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel; behold, they say, 'Our bones are dried up and our hope has perished. We are completely cut off.'

Ezk 37:12-28 this is fulfilled in the New Covenant through Jesus (David My servant).

## **Hosea** (from The Outline Bible)

Hosea 1-3; God tells Hosea to marry a prostitute, so some of her children will have been born from other men. Why? To illustrate the way God's people have been untrue to him. Then even when Hosea's wife goes and sins again, Hosea is to take her back and love her - demonstrating God's never-failing love for his people.

Hosea 4-10; Hosea describes Israel's rebellion, ruin and repentance

Hosea 11-14; Hosea explains God's case against Israel, then shares God's invitation to and hope for Israel.

Hos 2:15 "Then I will give her vineyards from there, and the valley of Achor as a door of hope.

**Achor** - that is "trouble." As formerly Israel, after their tedious journey through the wilderness, met with the trouble resulting from Achan's crime in this valley, on the very threshold of Canaan, and yet that trouble was presently turned into joy at the great victory at Ai, which threw all Canaan into their hands (Jos 7, 8); so the very trouble of Israel's wilderness state will be the "door of hope" opening to better days. The valley of Achor, near Jericho, was specially fruitful (Is 65:10); so "trouble" and "hope" are rightly blended in connection with it.  
(from Jamieson, Fausset, & Brown)

## **Habakkuk** - Habakkuk searches for answers to two questions and is reassured by God.

**Q1:** Will Judah be punished? (1:1-4)

A: Judah will be punished (1:5-11)

**Q2:** Will Babylon be punished? (1:12-17)

A: Babylon will be punished (2:1-13, 15-20)

**God speaks** to Habakkuk a NT truth ...

But the righteous will live by his faith (Hab 2:4)

**Habakkuk declares** - In hope against hope:

Though the fig tree should not blossom and there be no fruit on the vines, though the yield of the olive should fail and the fields produce no food, though the flock should be cut off from the fold and there be no cattle in the stalls, 18 Yet I will exult in the LORD, I will rejoice in the God of my salvation. 19 The Lord GOD is my strength, and He has made my feet like hinds' feet, and makes me walk on my high places (Hab 3:17-19).

**Two disciples on the road to Emmaus** (Lk 24:13-35).

Lk 24:21-23 "But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, it is the third day since these things happened. 22 "But also some women among us amazed us. When they were at the tomb early in the morning, 23 and did not find His body, they came, saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said that He was alive.

**Paul -**

Excessive trials led to despair

2Cor 1:8 we were burdened excessively, beyond our strength, so that we despaired even of life;

Hope (in Christ) delivered him

2Cor 1:10 who delivered us from so great a peril of death, and will deliver us, He on whom we have set our hope. And He will yet deliver us,