

# GRACE GAZETTE

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*Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.*

*Hebrews 12:12-13*

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## SAVED BY HOPE

*For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? Romans 8:24*

The English language is a very descriptive tongue, yet often times the same word can have different meanings dependent upon the context in which it is used. Sometimes men forget this fact and try to force the notion that a particular word means the same thing each time it is used. Confusion is sure to follow when the rule of context is ignored and a monolithic definition is insisted upon.

Many study the Bible as if it was a mere collection of words rather than a collection of thoughts which were written by men as they were given utterance by the HOLY GHOST. We are certain that there are no "words" which are out of place in that utterance, but we are equally certain that the LORD designed the whole of the scriptures and not simply the individual words which can be taken without a proper consideration of the purpose for which these words are set forth in the testimony of truth.

The study of HIS truth is further complicated (humanly speaking) by the fact that the scriptures (as they were originally) written have been translated into various subsequent languages. It is remarkable, and a true testament, to the veracity of those scriptures that the coherence of the thoughts contained in those scriptures have been preserved down through the ages in such fashion that the saints in the present age, without any knowledge of the original languages in which the scriptures were written, can discover their meaning as the SPIRIT reveals the truth to them, quite without the necessity of the scholarship of men.

This is not to say that the LORD has not used the instrumentality of men, (after a fashion) in the preservation and clarification of those scriptures, but rather to simply point out that HE does supernaturally preserve HIS truth to all generations, and that no man can, by his own natural understanding, grasp the truth hidden in the pages of the Holy Scriptures which we call the Bible. *"Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."* (2Pet 1:20-21)

Thus the LORD told HIS disciples that HE would send forth HIS SPIRIT to lead them into all truth, quite before the scriptures were completed. *"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come."* (John 16:13) Now that we have the completed scriptural record, (see Rev.22:18;19) the same SPIRIT does readily perform the same function in those to whom HE is sent to enlighten.

The English word "hope" appears 129 times in the KJV. There are several different words which are translated from the original languages as "hope" in English. In practically all of them the basic meaning of the word is "anticipation usually accompanied by a pleasurable expectation."

In many cases, the word “hope” is synonymous with “faith” and is expressed clearly as the believers rest in CHRIST HIMSELF. As Paul says in the salutation of his epistle to Timothy, “*Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope.*” (1Tim 1:1) He also alludes to this concept when he writes to the Colossians, “*Christ in you, the hope of glory.*” (Col 1:27) This is clearly speaking of a HOPE which is not “of” the believer but rather is that ONE in whom the saints believe and rest, confident of that which HE has performed in the behalf of HIS elect. CHRIST is our HOPE.

Paul says to the Romans that we are “*saved by HOPE*”. I believe there is more than one facet of this glorious gemstone. Surely we are “*saved by HOPE*” in the very sense in which we have just spoken, i.e.; CHRIST is our SAVIOR. All of our expectations are wrapped up in HIM, HIS performance, and HIS promises. We do not need another “HOPE” for HE is perfectly suited to our needs and HE has determined to save HIS people. We look for no other.

Yet there is an activity of “*hope*” which is stirred up in the sons of GOD by the very SPIRIT who would teach us that CHRIST is our PERFECT SALVATION. This is that activity which Paul describes as not yet fully realized. “*but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?*” (Rom 8:24) This is that longing for full deliverance which we have not yet experienced. Paul describes this in the prior chapter, when he said, “*O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*” (Rom 7:24)

There is also the “*hope*” that is expressed by the awakened sons of GOD as they are clearly acquainted with their own innate corruption and unbelief, contrasted with the sovereign work of GOD in the salvation of HIS people. Paul said it like this, “*Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended.*” (Php 3:13) The sons of GOD cannot always “read their title clear” and in such times of doubt and fear, speak of that “*hope*” which they cling to. John Newton wrote of it in one of his hymns, “Tis a point I long to know, (Oft it causes anxious thought), Do I love the Lord, or no? Am I his, or am I not?”

Modern “Christianity” (so called) knows little of this exercise which Newton expresses, since for the last one hundred and fifty years there has been an emphasis placed (among the rank and file) on man’s free will decision to follow CHRIST rather than a recognition of the necessity of a work of grace. Most of those who claim to be the followers of CHRIST simply do not “doubt” their standing with the LORD since they are convinced that their standing with HIM rests in their own ability and willingness. Others believe that an expression or confession of “faith” is synonymous with the possession of it. These are the places where fools do not fear to tread.

Edwin Mote wrote these words, “My Hope is built on nothing less than JESUS’ blood and righteousness.” Many in these modern times of light-hearted “Christianity” would agree with Mote but they nonetheless err because they fail to see that true “hope” is built on nothing more either.

Then there is that activity of “*hope*” in the souls of GOD’s people which is said to be their “salvation”. This is the application of the truth of the Gospel to the “hearing ear” by the SPIRIT of GOD as “*life and immortality*” are “*brought to light*” by the preaching of the gospel, which they believe according to the measure of faith which the LORD is pleased to give them.

They are made aware of the glorious redemption which is revealed in the gospel and it is like drinking from a well springing up into everlasting life. Hope is active in their bosom and they gladly confess that JESUS CHRIST is the SON of the LIVING GOD, the SAVIOR of sinners just like those Gentile believers in Antioch, “*And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.*” (Act 13:48) Or as the Ethiopian Eunuch who went rejoicing on his way. This is indeed that “*hope of the gospel which ye have heard*” (Col.1:23) and “*the hope of HIS calling,*” (Eph. 1:18)

“*But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.*” (1Thes 5:8-9) “*Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.*” (Tit 3:7)