

GRACE GAZETTE

Volume V

Issue 10

Published occasionally for Zion's mourners

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.

Hebres 12:12-13

HOPE

Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil.

Hebrews 6:19

One thing that you will not find on a motorized racing boat is an anchor. These craft are built for speed and beauty and an anchor is nothing but added weight and is useless for the purpose for which they are constructed. However, in those craft which are built for normal everyday use, an anchor is a desired piece of equipment for the purpose of keeping the craft from drifting away from a desired spot in the water where a person might want to fish or enjoy the scenery. It is also mandatory for safety's sake, to stabilize the vessel if caught in inclement weather or in the case of mechanical difficulties with the propulsion system. If the anchor is not of sufficient strength and design for the particular vessel in which it is carried then it would be useless for the purpose for which it is aboard. So we can conclude that a proper anchor is not only to be desired but it is an absolute necessity for any vessel which would venture upon the uncertain seas of this world.

Faith and hope, in the scriptures, are closely related but they are not one and the same. It is impossible to have true hope unless one possesses true faith. The ground and basis of ones faith is the same as the ground and basis of one's hope. One can possess faith, however, and still be somewhat lacking in hope. Also, one can possess a false hope when the basis of ones faith is faulty. It is not within the ability of men to give themselves faith nor is it possible that a man can cause himself to have a sure and steadfast hope. Both are indeed the gift of GOD. (see Rom.15:13; II Thes.2:16)

The faith of GOD's elect has its glory and power totally outside of man's experience. Now by saying that we do not mean that faith is not granted to men, because the scripture plainly says that it is in Eph. 2:8. The faith of GOD's children, however, is totally based outside of themselves as far as it relates to their ability to feel. While we say that we believe in CHRIST, the reality is that we believe in CHRIST because we believe CHRIST himself. Faith is not a feeling or an experience so much as it is the cognizant grasp of the truth concerning the revelation of JESUS CHRIST. When Peter said, "*THOU art the CHRIST, the SON of the living GOD*" (Mat.16:16) he was not expressing his feelings but was testifying of something he understood to be true. The LORD said to him, "*Flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto you, but my FATHER which is in heaven.*" (v.17) Feelings may come or go but the "faith" of GOD's children is steadfast and sure. "*Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.*" (Isa.28:16) It is impossible for those who have been given this faith to abandon it on the basis of any feeling one way or the other. As Peter testified again, "*Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.*" (John 6:68)

Hope, on the other hand, is more closely tied to the experience of the believer and is something that can wax and wane. I believe it to be the manifestation of the operation of faith in a man as he is encouraged by the HOLY GHOST to lay hold upon the promises of GOD. As a man is given a greater grasp of faith, the firm foundation of JESUS CHRIST, then hope can also increase in a direct proportion. Yet it pleases the LORD to grant to some greater experiences of hope than HE does to others. Hope is that which is a blessed substitute for sight because when we “see” something we do not need to hope for it any longer. *“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?” (Rom 8:24)* Now when he says we are “saved” by hope, he surely does not mean that our record in heaven is altered by it. Rather he means that our present enjoyment of that which has been purchased for us is clearly seen. Hope and assurance go hand in hand (see Heb.6:11; 10:22) Therefore one does not “hope” that the LORD JESUS purchased salvation for HIS elect. Faith causes him to “know” that to be the case and to desire no other salvation. Hope, however is that state wherein a man, sometimes more boldly than at other times, expects to be included in that number and appropriates an anticipation of the benefits of the sons of GOD. A beggar may lay at mercy’s door without this hope, but he cannot perish there. What a blessing for the sons of GOD when faith and hope are met. *“Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is.” (Jer 17:7)*

The scripture uses several adjectives to describe the hope which the LORD gives:

One HOPE. *“There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism.” (Eph 4:4-5)* This describes the very basis upon which the HOPE of the LORD’s children is based. There is only one sure ground upon which true hope can rest, HIS name is the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

A good hope. *“Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, Comfort your hearts, and establish you in every good word and work.” (2Thes.2:16-17)* That hope which HE gives is like a breath of fresh air or a cool drink from a deep well which springs up into everlasting life, filling the soul with gladness and peace.

A blessed hope. *“Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ.” (Titus 2:13)* The anticipation of our LORD’s return is indeed a blessed hope for those who love HIS appearing. There are some who have erred from the faith saying that the resurrection is past and that CHRIST has already come. (see II Tim.2:18)

A better hope. *“For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God.” (Heb 7:19)* The ground and basis of our hope is not built on anything which must be accomplished by sinful men. JESUS CHRIST has fulfilled the law in its jot and tittle and has offered one sacrifice for sins forever. HE is now seated at the right hand of the FATHER making intercession for HIS own. The law could never make us righteous nor can it now bring us into condemnation. *“For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.” (Rom 8:2)*

A lively hope. *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” (1Pet 1:3)* Our hope is “lively” (i.e.; living) because HE is alive and has placed within us, the hope that we too shall be raised from the sleep of death and shall put on immortality in an incorruptible body like unto HIS. This hope is at the very heart of our desire. *“If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.” (1Cor. 15:19-20)*