

30 October

Hope Involves Waiting Patiently, Resting & Trusting

This is our first study on the word *hope* in the Holy Scriptures. Today is an introductory teaching.

The word *hope* occurs 130 times, *hoped* 11 times and *hopeth* once. So this will be fairly lengthy series of teachings.

According to the online Oxford dictionary hope means “*a feeling of expectation and desire for a particular thing to happen; a person or thing that may help or save someone; grounds for believing that something good may happen.*”

Let us establish the meaning of the word in Holy Scripture as work our way through this study. We will cover 4 points which include;

1. The word hope includes waiting
2. The word hope incorporates patience.
3. The word hope embodies resting
4. The word hope encompasses trusting

Let us add a little more detail to the above;

1. The word *hope* includes waiting

Rom 8:25 *But if we hope for that we see not, [then] do we with patience wait for [it].*

See also Gal 5:5, Pss 39:7, Lam 3:26 & Eze 19:5

In Ps.39: 7 David asks, what does he wait for? He answers the question in the same verse, with he hopes in the Lord. So by inference, to hope includes waiting.

The Oxford online dictionary does not allow for a meaning of the word hope to include a component of waiting. Yet, even though that is the case, we have examples of late that would suggest there is a sense of waiting in the worldly understanding of hope.

Take for example the recent rugby world cup event and the build up. During the build up the fans would have been hoping that their teams won and as part of that process they would have waited. Whereas, as we have seen, the Holy Scriptures are clear, when it speaks of hope, there is a component of waiting. And perhaps that is because the things that a Christian places their hope in are not of this world but relate to eternal things that a Christian waits for, and therefore there is a need to wait whilst having hope, on a daily basis.

The word *wait* in its various forms occurs 154 times in the Holy Scriptures, but we will not be covering this in our teaching.

Closely associated with this point, is how we are to wait, whilst we hope.

2. The word *hope* incorporates patience.

1Thes 1:3 *Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;*

See also Rom 5:4, 8:25 & 15:4

Remember our previous point showed a close relationship with waiting as part of hope. Well this point takes that a little further and suggests that the bible meaning of hope also includes patience. In some verses, like 1Thes.1: 3 there is a link between hope and patience (see also 2Thes.3: 5), without the word waiting, and there are other verses like Rom.8: 25 which use the phrase “*patience wait*”. We see this link between patience and waiting also in James 5: 7, but here it also uses long patience with waiting.

The word *patient* occurs 49 times in its various forms but will not be covered in this teaching.

Again, if biblical hope is on things eternal then our waiting will need to be patiently and at times with long patience. The worldly meaning of *hope* does not incorporate patience.

Closely associated with this point is how we are to be, whilst hoping patiently.

3. The word *hope* incorporates resting

Acts 2:26 *Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope:*

See also Pss 16:9 & Job 11:18

Although the word hope can incorporate waiting and patience, neither of those infer resting. But according to the Scriptures, there is a sense which hope can also incorporate *resting*. The clearest link between these words is in our verse Acts 2: 26 and Ps. 16: 9 where our flesh rests in hope. And so it won't surprise you not to see this being a component in the dictionary meaning. It is not until we get to our next point that we see any similarity between the biblical meaning of hope and that of the dictionary meaning.

Out of interest, the word *rest* occurs 388 times in the Holy Scriptures, and so is excluded from this teaching.

4. The word *hope* encompasses trusting

Pss 71:5 *For thou [art] my hope, O Lord God: [thou art] my trust from my youth.*

See also Job 8:14 & Jer 17:7.

The word *hope* in the bible encompasses the word *trust* as it does when you consider the dictionary meaning. The Oxford online dictionary writes, "archaic a feeling of trust." The hard covered Oxford dictionary includes "feeling of trust" as part of its general meaning rather than relegating it to being old or archaic.

The word *trust* occurs 188 times in the Holy Scriptures, we leave this for a separate study.

Notwithstanding a separate teaching on *trust*, we will look briefly at the its meaning,

When you trust, you believe in something or someone. The online Oxford dictionary says, "firm belief in the reliability, truth, or ability of someone or something." Therefore when a person has hope, it is often in someone or something.

The Holy Scriptures speak of a person having hope in God or material things. For example an saved person does not place their hope in God but in material things, whereas as a saved person has hope in God.

For the heathen see Acts 16:19 *And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew [them] into the marketplace unto the rulers,*

For the Christian see 1 Thes 1:3 *Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;*

Outside of the Scripture we see hope as being a key human instinct when people are lost or on a raft at sea. There isn't much else that a heathen can do but to hope, beyond hope that he will survive in such circumstances.

And what we place our hope in, determines whether or not our hopes will come to pass. For example if we are on a raft and we have no water and days from land but the human instinct of hope kicks in and so we hope for hope sake, then there is a 50/50 change that we will be safe, that our hope will be fulfilled. If you live in Auckland and you trust or hope it to rain you might have a higher percentage of your hope

being realized. One thing is certain, if you hope in that which changes you are more likely to be disappointed.

If a rich man places his hope of happiness in his riches, then his hope will be in vain, he will be disappointed. Just read about the wealthy movie stars in Hollywood who go from one partner to another in the search of happiness (see Job 32: 24-28).

We can also hope in people, trusting that they will provide us with the truth, because they have Professor or Doctor before their name. One example that is still clear in my mind, is Bible College. Where men and woman like Karen and I went to learn about the Bible, to study it and learn from men who had spent their lives researching the Scriptures. Just like any other degree, you pay your fees...10, 15, 20 or upwards of \$25,000, and you would hope to learn that which is truthful. Well, that not what Karen and I found.

I remember in our first year sitting under Dr. Chris Marshall in New Testament studies, and he gave out all this amazing detail of unlocking the mystery of the Scriptures. For example if we read the epistles like a letter they would make sense. Everyone in the class was mesmerized by this new learning, this new understanding of the Scriptures. But then in my last year, outside of the college, I learnt a different truth that contradicted what we were paying our money to learn, in contradicted those great men that we trusted and hoped in for our learning. I learnt the truth of the Authorized Bible, a text that has not changed for 400 years in 2011, whilst the various version of the Holy Scriptures, change and leave our verses from one edition to the next. I remember in the last month at college asking a fellow student in my class, what he was going to take back to this church from his learning at college and he told me, he would teach them that the bible has errors. That is the fruit of the teaching of the Bible College of New Zealand, the place where we trusted, where we hoped to provide us with the truth of the bible.

So, remember, that we can trust people, we can place our hope in them but ultimately when they do wrong (as all have sinned) and our hope is dashed, we have hoped in vain. BUT when a man places his hope in the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, he trusts in the one who fulfills every one of His promises (see our previous teaching on the word promises and Tit 1:2 *In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began*);).

Having hope in something or someone involves trust.

What and who do you hope in, uncertain riches (1Tim. 6: 17), or the living God (1Tim. 6: 17).

Clearly, the word hope includes trusting.

Having said what we have said, let us say it again. In this our first study of the word hope in the Holy Scriptures we have covered 4 points;

1. The word hope includes waiting
2. The word hope incorporates patience.
3. The word hope embodies resting
4. The word hope encompasses trusting.