

The Hope We Have

I am currently leading a study at work dealing with the prophecies dealing with Jesus' first coming. Recently, we looked at Psalm 110 speaking about Messiah's offices and one of those his priestly office. This led to a look at him as a priest after the order of Melchisedec. One of the areas of Scriptural references we looked at was in Hebrews chapters six and seven.

Why all this introduction talking about Jesus' first coming and him being a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec? In a round about way, I wanted to draw our attention to Hebrews 6:19 and the subject of that verse in particular.

Jesus first came to sacrifice himself for the sins of the world. For the Jew first, and then the Gentile. God, the Father, sent His only begotten Son, because He so loved the world that He offered His only begotten Son that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life! That is our hope. Romans 8:24 - 25 tells us,

²⁴ 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?

²⁵ But if we hope for that we see not, *then* do we with patience wait for *it*.

So, since we are all sitting here, it is obvious we have not seen Jesus yet. That being the case, let's take a look at Hebrews 6:19 for a few minutes and see what it says about hope.

Hebrews 6:19

¹⁹ Which *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;

When studying Scripture, the use of a good dictionary is helpful. Careful study of the King James Bible when often show us that it is indeed a great dictionary in and of itself. But, if I go to an outside source, I find Noah Webster's 1828 American Dictionary of the English Language the best source available.

Four words need to be defined here.

Hope,

Anchor,

Sure,

Stedfast.

Since we're looking at hope, let's start with it and see where we go!

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Hope

1. A desire of some good, accompanied will at least a slight expectation of obtaining it, or a belief that it is obtainable. *Hope* differs from *wish* and *desire* in this, that it implies some expectation of obtaining the good desired, or the possibility of possessing it. *Hope* therefore always gives pleasure or joy; whereas *wish* and *desire* may produce or be accompanied with pain and anxiety.
2. Confidence in a future event; the highest degree of well founded expectation of good; as a *hope* founded on God's gracious promises; *a scriptural sense*.
3. That which gives hope; he or that which furnishes ground of expectation, or promises desired good. The *hope* of Israel is the Messiah.

The Lord will be the *hope* of his people, Joel 3:16.

As we read in Romans 8:25, we patiently wait for that which we hope for. Jesus' return is the object of this hope that we have. We can have confidence in this future event because we base this hope on the well founded expectation that what God promises, He does! Jesus said he would be killed, and he was. Jesus said he would be buried, and he was. Now, just based on these two facts we really don't have that confidence our hope is based on because everyone else before us has done the same. But, Jesus said he would be resurrected three days later and he was! No one has done that.

The great escape artist Harry Houdini had spent much of his time debunking those who claimed to be spiritualist. Those who would talk to a person's departed loved ones. Before Harry Houdini died, he and his wife, Bess Houdini, agreed that if should Houdini's spirit come back to earth, he would utter "Rosabelle believe" as a secret codeword to prove that it was actually him. This was a phrase from a play that Bess performed in when the couple first met. Bess Houdini, the magician's widow, held yearly [séances](#) on [Halloween](#) for ten years after Houdini's death, but "Houdini"'s spirit never appeared and communicated the passphrase. In 1936, after a last unsuccessful [séance](#) on the roof of the [Knickerbocker Hotel](#), she put out the candle that she had kept burning beside a photograph of Houdini since his death, later saying in 1943 that "ten years is long enough to wait for any man." She and others, including many modern day magicians had hoped that Houdini's spirit would communicate with them. They based their hope on something that they could not be confident in. Ten years went by and neither Houdini nor his spirit ever came back. But we have confidence in our hope because Jesus returned after three days in the tomb as promised. We have confidence that he will return for His church as promised.

It is this hope that the Word of God says we have as an anchor of the soul.

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Look with me for a moment at 1 Corinthians 1:7 – 10,

⁷ And our hope of you *is* stedfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so *shall ye be* also of the consolation.

⁸ For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life:

⁹ But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead:

¹⁰ Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver *us*;

Paul here brings out this idea again about our hope. Our hope is not in man, as the world tells us it should be. Bess Houdini is the one who said, “ten years is long enough to wait for any man.” Our hope is in God, who raiseth the dead. He is the one who delivered us from so great a death and does deliver us and in whom we trust he will yet deliver us. Before we were saved, we were dead in our sins. Jesus death, burial and resurrection saved us from the death sentence we deserve for sinning against God. We are in the process of sanctification at this point as Christians. The Holy Ghost lets us know when we have sinned and we can ask God for forgiveness right then and there. We are going to be saved from the wrath of God when He judges the world.

Anchor

2. In a *figurative sense*, that which gives stability or security; that on which we place dependence for safety.

Which hope we have as an *anchor* of the soul, both sure and stedfast. Heb. 6:19.

Noah Webster used the very verse we are studying to illustrate anchor in its figurative sense. Stability and security are used in this description. That on which we place dependence for safety.

There have been some that have argued that the word *hope* is the wrong word here in Hebrews 16:9. Hope is spelled out in italics in this verse, after all. Their contention is that consolation is the better word to have used here. They refer back to the previous verse Hebrews 6:18 which says,

¹⁸ That by two immutable things, in which *it was* impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:

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If this is the case, then verse 19 would start out, “which *consolation* we have as an anchor of the soul,…” It would mean our consolation is the anchor which would be sure and steadfast.

Let’s take a look at the definition of consolation to see if it sheds any light on the subject.

Consolation

1. Comfort; alleviation of misery, or distress of mind; refreshment of mind or spirits; a comparative degree of happiness in distress or misfortune, springing from any circumstance that abates the evil, or supports and strengthens the mind, as hope, joy, courage and the like.

From this definition, it is clear that consolation comes as a result of hope. Hope is what produces consolation. Verse 18 states “we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the **hope** set before us. If consolation were the anchor, why would we lay hold upon the hope? Wouldn’t we lay hold upon the consolation if it is the anchor set before us? But, Scripture is clear that we **might** have a strong consolation should we lay hold upon the hope set before us. Hope is the right word used here in verse 19 and is italicized because the actual word hope is carried forward from verse 18. It is there to make it clear hope is the very thing that is there to provide stability, security, and is that on which we place our dependence for safety. Remember once again, Paul said in Romans 8:24, “For we are saved by hope.” This hope, our salvation because of the finished work of Jesus Christ at Calvary, does provide us consolation.

This anchor which hope provides is described with two words that fit together nicely. Hebrews 6:19 says this hope we have that serves as an anchor for our soul is both sure and steadfast. Let’s look at the definitions of both these words.

Sure

1. Certain; unfailing; infallible.

The testimony of the Lord is *sure*. Ps. 19.

We have also a more *sure* word of prophecy. 2 Pet. 1.

2. Certainly knowing, or having full confidence.

We are *sure* that the judgment of God is according to truth—Rom. 2.

Now we are *sure* that thou knowest all things. John 16.

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3. Certain; safe; firm; permanent.

Thy kingdom shall be *sure* to thee. Dan. 4.

4. Firm; stable; steady; not liable to failure, loss or change; as a *sure* covenant. 2 Sam. 23. Neh. 9. Is. 28.

5. Certain of obtaining or of retaining; as, to be *sure* of game; to be *sure* of success; to be *sure* of life or health.

6. Strong; secure; not liable to be broken or disturbed.

Go your way, make it as *sure* as ye can. Math. 27.

7. Certain; not liable to failure.

Stedfast

STEAD´FAST, STED´FAST, *a.* [*stead* and *fast.*] Fast fixed; firm; firmly fixed or established; as the *stedfast* globe of earth. *Spenser.*

2. Constant; firm; resolute; not fickle or wavering.

Abide *stedfast* to thy neighbor in the time of his trouble. *Ecclus.*

Him resist, *stedfast* in the faith. 1 Pet. 5.

If I am going to grab hold of something, such as hope talked about in Hebrews 6:18, I want that to be strong and unbreakable, firmly fixed and established, constant, not fickle or wavering. Something certain, unfailing and infallible.

When reading about the Titanic something interesting struck me. The Titanic was a huge ship capable of comfortably carrying well over 2,000 passengers. It was designed and built by top notch professionals using the best equipment and technology available to them in those days. It was even reported this ship, the Titanic, was unsinkable. The fifth day into her maiden voyage, it was proven just how wrong this statement was. We've all heard and read of the accounts of how the Titanic sank after hitting an iceberg, but did you know a little less than a third of the people on the Titanic's maiden voyage actually survived. Those folks had placed their hope in a man-made ship they were being told was unsinkable. It was so huge, how could it possibly ever sink? That is exactly what the world is doing when they refuse to have Jesus Christ as their hope. They are putting their hope on a man-made ideal that says, "I can save myself from the wrath of God by ..." and a list of ways is then given.

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We read earlier in Romans 8:25, that

25 But if we hope for that we see not, *then* do we with patience wait for *it*.

We have not yet seen the return of Jesus, but we believe He will return and we patiently wait for His return. Paul was continually reminding the churches about the need for this patience. He commended churches because of their patience in waiting for the return of Jesus Christ, all the while showing this patience by the exercising of their faith. He commended them on remaining patient even in the face of extreme adversity, suffering persecution all the time. Let's take a moment and look at 1 Thessalonians 1:2 – 10,

² We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers;

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;

⁴ Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.

⁵ For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.

⁶ And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost:

⁷ So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.

⁸ For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing.

⁹ For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God;

¹⁰ And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, *even* Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.

These folks from Thessalonica were going after idols, other gods, but they turned from that and Paul is able to commend them so highly here. Paul shows how their turning from these idols and waiting patiently on the return of Jesus saved them from the wrath to come. That wrath is still yet a future event. Jesus' return is still a future event. Are you patiently awaiting Jesus' return to be saved from the wrath to come?

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King James Bible believing Christian puts their hope in the work of Jesus Christ alone. Christians, meaning those who have believed on the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ as their only means of salvation, will be saved from God's wrath. Jesus took that for us already! We will not have to endure a Titanic sinking to be saved. Scripture tells us that those who are left behind and go through the Great Tribulation will only be saved if they endure unto the end. Guess how many that will be. Scripture tells us only a third of the entire world's population will survive that time. Just like the Titanic, two thirds of the passengers on this earth at that time will be destroyed. Everyone that takes the mark of the beast will be destroyed, but there will be a remnant of survivors that will make it.

We are told we have hope, and that hope is Jesus Christ. Will you take your chances by taking a ride on the Titanic, or will you use wisdom and believe on Jesus Christ's finished work on the Cross as your salvation? The choice, once again is yours!