

# Hope for Heaven



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Jeremiah 29:11 *"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."* The hope we have is the kingdom of God for all believers. *"This I recall to my mind, Therefore I have hope. NKJ Lamentations 3:21-23 Through the LORD's mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness."* God will be faithful to give what He has promised (the kingdom) if we believe and trust Him.

The apostle spoke of faith in Christ that leads to Heaven Titus 1:2, *"a faith and knowledge resting on the hope of eternal life, which God, who does not lie, promised before the beginning of time."* God 3:5-7 *"saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life."*

Everyone needs hope but it has to be centered on Christ. Everyone hopes for change or improvement in some situation or person. This hope is not just wishful thinking, but a Bible assurance that God's Word and promises will be fulfilled for those who keep trusting Him.

*"Faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see"* Hebrews 11:1.

Perfect faith in the perfect sacrifice keeps hope alive. Hebrews 10:22-23 *"Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty [evil NKJ] conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. 23 Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful."* God has kept all past promises, so He is sure to keep all future ones as well.

Our trust in what the atonement of Christ accomplished provides a living hope that we will be healed, a situation will improve, our needs supplied each day, an attitude changed, or a loved one protected. God gives the Holy Spirit for the asking so we can say, *"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me"* Philippians 4:13 NKJ.

People in the world place their hopes on plans of the world (which eventually fail) because they are not based on trust and faith in Christ. The world says that sooner or later things will improve, but they do not have to improve and often do not. The world's hope is uncertain because it is based on the ever-changing circumstances of life, but the believer's hope is very certain because it is based on the never-changing God of the universe Malachi 3:6.

The believer's living hope is based on a living Savior. If our hope for salvation is founded on a trusting faith in Christ, our destination is sure. Jesus paid the price for sin and destroyed Satan's power, so our hope for heaven is assured. John 14:3 *"If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am."*

That hope is based on Jesus being God in nature. *"He is before all things, and in him all*

*things hold together"* Colossians 1:17. 19-20 *"For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross."* We must believe that, and trust God every day, because unbelievers are *"without hope and without God in the world"* Ephesians 2:12.

The promises of God are guaranteed by the resurrection of Christ. God's power can accomplish anything. 1 Peter 1:3-4 *"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade--kept in heaven for you."* Our hope is based on the blood of Christ to cleanse our heart from all past sins.

God promised Abraham (when he was 75 and Sarah 65) Genesis 12:2 *"I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing."* Many years had passed and the Lord appeared again when Abraham was 99. Genesis 15:5-6 *"Look up at the heavens and count the stars—if indeed you can count them. So shall your offspring be.' Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness."*

Abraham's hope was based on God's promises. Romans 4:18 *"Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, 'So shall your offspring be.'" NKJ 20-22 "He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform. And therefore 'it was accounted to him for righteousness.'" God will consider anyone*

righteous if they will believe and trust Him like Abraham.

If our trust is on the living God and our faith is in the resurrection of Christ, leaving this life means going to a heavenly one. Near the end of his ministry 2 Timothy 4:6-8 the apostle wrote, *"The time has come for my departure. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed [and hope] for his appearing."*

God's divine love and grace gives constant hope and assurance. Titus 2:11-14 *"The grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope -- the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good."* Doing good things begins with loving and trusting God in faith.

The *glorious appearing of our God and Savior* approaches with each passing day. God's chosen people (the Jews) have held on to their own identity through the worst of persecution, and today they have their own homeland in Israel. Enemy Arab states surround them and are doing everything to destroy them (but will not succeed).

NKJ Zechariah 12:3 *"On that day that I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone for all peoples; all who would heave it away will surely be cut in pieces, though all nations of the earth are gathered against it."*

Spiritual apathy and disinterest of spiritual things (on a global scale) is another sign that Jesus is at the door. Multimillions have not one thought in a day about God or Jesus (and certainly not about faith or trust for salvation). The world in general is totally indifferent to (and completely rejects) the atonement work of Christ that could cleanse their heart of sin and give real hope for heaven. Jesus spoke on trusting God for finances and getting rid of laid up money (here on earth)—saying Luke 12:34 *"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."*

He then spoke on being ready by trusting Him every moment of every day. 35-36 *"Be dressed ready for service and keep your lamps burning, like men waiting for their master to return from a wedding banquet, so that when he comes and knocks they can immediately open the door for him."*

Many times Jesus said He would return at some future time for those who truly believe in Him and have trusted on God for all that He mentioned in the gospels—(health, healing, provisions, protection, avenging wrongs, selling treasures, showing compassion, following Him, and on so many other issues involving faith).

If our faith is in the atonement work of Christ, God accepts us as His child. WEY Romans 8:23-24 *"We ourselves inwardly sigh, as we wait and long for open recognition as sons through the deliverance of our bodies. It is \*in hope\* that we have been saved. But an object of hope is such no longer when it is present to view; for when a man has a thing before his eyes, how can he be said to hope for it?"* We trust in an unseen God but He is faithful to save.

The hope for heaven is a reality by real trusting faith in the atonement work of Christ. *"Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through*

*our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God"* Romans 5:1-2.

The apostle was on trial and explained the hope he had for God's kingdom. Acts 24:14-16 *"I admit [he said] that I worship the God of our fathers as a follower of the Way, which they call a sect. I believe everything that agrees with the Law and that is written in the Prophets, and I have the same hope in God as these men, that there will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked. So I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man."*

Everyone has sinned, but we all have hope for Heaven through faith in the cleansing work of Christ. Romans 6:23 *"The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

Hope for Heaven is based totally on our faith in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ to forgive our sins and to cleanse our heart of rebellion. Colossians 1:27 *"Christ in you, the hope of glory."*



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