

Two Hopes 09-23-18 AM

Revelation of Hope

Before the coming of Christ, what was hope? Job spoke about hope often; in Job 17:15-16 he asked if hope was something that could survive death. He says in Job 13:15 that even after death his hope might remain. This leads up to his great declaration in Job 19:25-27: *"As for me, I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last He will take His stand on the earth. Even after my skin is destroyed, yet from my flesh I shall see God; whom I myself shall behold, and whom my eyes will see and not another. My heart faints within me!"*

Job was not alone to have a hope like this in the Old Testament. David expressed it in Psalm 16:10; he hoped God would not leave his body to decay (a prophecy of Christ). Daniel was promised something in Daniel 12:2 – that he would awake to everlasting life. Isaiah had a hope that the dead might live again as stated in Isaiah 26:19. But how was this hope established? It was not a promise on which they could point to an evidence. Their hope was not certified, as nothing given in proof of this hope. This was true until the revelation of the Gospel.

In Romans 1:16-18 we are told that the Gospel brought something new to the table. It contained (it was) the Power of Salvation; that salvation was from the wages of sin (death). It also contained two new messages: the revelation of life by Faith and the revelation of the wrath of God. To characterize this, we need to remember that according to 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, the Gospel boils down to Jesus' death (and burial) and His resurrection. This message becomes the hope of all – that Jesus' resurrection is the certification of our hope of a life beyond this one (1 Peter 1:3). His resurrection is the source of our resurrection (1 Corinthians 6:14).

This means that when men went out preaching the Gospel, they preached two messages: the coming wrath of God and the hope of a resurrection. We see that very message in places such as Acts 23:6, Acts 24:15, or 1 John 3:2-3. This hope is something that we hold now, but will not be revealed until the end of all things (Titus 2:13). This hope is not here, but is in heaven (Colossians 1:5); it is a hope not yet seen (Romans 8:24-25). As stated in Ephesians 4:4, this is the one hope of those who are in Christ.

Nature of Our Hope

Our hope has a marvelous nature. We are told that it can be used to anchor us (Hebrews 6:18-19). It is described as a helmet that can protect us in our spiritual warfare (1 Thessalonians 5:8). Because of its priceless nature, it can give us joy in any circumstance (Romans 12:12). When we are faithful, we are giving it to others for us too (1 Thessalonians 4:13).

What is the Other "Hope"

Many in the world say that they too have hope. But is this the same hope? They might say "I want to go to heaven", and what they mean is "I hope I go to heaven". They may believe it, but not because it has been certified by the Gospel. Instead, their hope is merely the result of a desire. Their hope is like a lottery ticket (a used one at that!); imagine someone planning their retirement

on such. So it is with the world and the hope of life after this one. What is the other “hope”? The other hope is hopeless!

Remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world - Ephesians 2:12

So in a sense, there are two hopes around us today. There is the genuine hope of eternal life; it is effected through the Gospel promise. Then there is the hope of the world, which is quite hopeless before God. All men have only one or the other! How can we have this genuine hope? Hope begins with Christ in us (Colossians 1:27). Indeed, Hope is only found in Christ (Romans 6:23). THEREFORE: only those in Christ have real hope!