

Hope Unlimited

The King James Version of the Bible uses the word “Hope” 129 times in 121 verses. The first use of the word “hope” in the Bible is found in Ruth 1:12, it is not used again until it is found in Ezra 10:2. But in the book of Job it is used 15 times. Think about this, Job had been a steadfast servant of God, but God allowed Satan to take everything except his life. He lost his wealth, his family and his health. But he remained a faithful servant of God, full of hope. But Job came to understand what it felt like to be without hope. We can understand that clearly when we read **Job 7:1-6 (KJV)** “Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth? are not his days also like the days of an hireling? As a servant earnestly desireth the shadow, and as an hireling looketh for the reward of his work: So am I made to possess months of vanity, and wearisome nights are appointed to me. When I lie down, I say, When shall I arise, and the night be gone? and I am full of tossings to and fro unto the dawning of the day. My flesh is clothed with worms and clods of dust; my skin is broken, and become loathsome. My days are swifter than a weaver’s shuttle, and are spent without hope.” In the end, God restored his health, his wealth and his family to even a greater degree than he originally had. His lack of hope didn’t prevent him from remaining steadfast in his belief and trust in God.

Contrasting Job which is about lost, and then regained, hope, the Psalms mentions hope 22 times and each case was positive. David says in **Psalm 16:8-11 (KJV)** “I have set the LORD always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.” Then in **Psalm 146:5-6 (KJV)** the psalmist says “Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the LORD his God: Which made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that therein is: which keepeth truth for ever:” Moving to Proverbs, hope I mentioned only seven times. Solomon tells us that the righteous can have hope, but the expectations of the unrighteousness will disappear. **Proverbs 10:27-28 (KJV)** “The fear of the LORD prolongeth days: but the years of the wicked shall be shortened. The hope of the righteous shall be gladness: but the expectation of the wicked shall perish.”

In the New Testament hope is a significant theme. While Jesus doesn’t use the word, His teachings are full of hope. He teaches about hope in the parables he used. He teaches about a lost hope in the parable of the rich farmer. **Luke 12:16-21 (KJV)** “And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.” This person had placed all his hope in his possessions. He planned to build bigger barns and his hope was high in a life of wealth, but he lost all including hope when his life was forfeited. He teaches about a lost and regained hope in the parable of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32). The prodigal son was filled with a misplaced hope when he set out into the world. This hope was extinguished after he had used up all his inheritance. At the bottom of his life, tending pigs and wanting to eat what they ate but no one would even give him even the food that the pigs ate. He realized that his fathers servants had more than the life he was then living. So going back to his fathers house expecting to be treated as a servant, his hope of at least regular meals was rekindled. As he approached his home, his father recognized him because he had been waiting and watching. When his father met him, the hope of both father and son was reborn.

Paul when speaking to King Agrippa in Acts 26 talks about hope. **Acts 26:6-7 (KJV)** “And now I stand and am

judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers: Unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews." Paul was telling Agrippa that the hope of the promise that God made to the Abraham, to bless all nations through him.

Genesis 18:18 (KJV) *"Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."* **Genesis 12:1-3 (KJV)** Because of this, we can have hope today.

We can have real hope, not just a wishful thought. One that anticipates with gladness the judgement, hope that will never fade or fail us. But to access this hope we have to get into Christ; *"Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."* **Romans 5:18-21 (KJV)**. Jesus will give us a real hope, one that is based in the Lord and His promises. A hope that is unlimited, all we have to do is reach out and take it. And we do this with real commitment, not a half hearted commitment, to God.