**Hope, the Opposite of Fear**

COVID-19 is a serious pandemic. It has rapidly spread throughout the world and has taken the lives over 5400 people

**2 Tim. 1:7** “For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.”

There is a war going on in the spiritual realms and we are stuck in the middle, on the battlefield. Our time here on earth is the closest we will ever experience hell if we are going to heaven, and the closest thing we will ever experience to heaven if we are going to hell.

**Eph** For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

So don’t be surprised if your emotions are sometimes troubled over things stirring around you that you can’t seem to identify.

Don’t feel that there’s something wrong with you if you feel you’re not experiencing constantly tranquility and peaceful bliss every moment of every day.

When you DO have those moments times, savor them, but remember they are not the norm. You are in a battle and are the target of the enemy’s fiery darts.

So what do we do?

Should we freak out and sound the alarms all the time, or desperately try the best we can to fight the enemy at every turn?

No. We have to learn to trust the Lord even when the battle is raging all around us.

1 John 4:**4** You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world

Greater is He that is in us, than he that is in the world.

We need to be confident NOT in our own ability to defend ourselves but God’s power in us to overcome the enemy.

**2 Kings 6:13-17**“Go, find out where he is,” the king ordered, “so I can send men and capture him.” The report came back: “He is in Dothan.” **14**Then he sent horses and chariots and a strong force there. They went by night and surrounded the city.

**15**When the servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city. “Oh no, my lord! What shall we do?” the servant asked.

**16**“Don’t be afraid,” the prophet answered. “Those who are with us are more than those who are with them.”

**17**And Elisha prayed, “Open his eyes, Lord, so that he may see.” Then the Lord opened the servant’s eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

We can have peace through any trial we face, not because we are so strong or have all the answers, but GOD does.

**Exodus 14:14** “The LORD will fight for you; you need only to be still."

Psalm 46:**7 -9**

**7**The Lord Almighty is with us;
    the God of Jacob is our fortress.

**8**Come and see what the Lord has done,
    the desolations he has brought on the earth.
**9**He makes wars cease
    to the ends of the earth.
He breaks the bow and shatters the spear;
    he burns the shieldswith fire…

What is the next verse???

Psalm 46:10 “He says, “*Be still,* and know that I am God”

“The **opposite of fear** is **hope**, defined as the expectation of good fortune not only for ourselves but for a group to which we belong.

**Fear** feeds anxiety and produces anger;

**hope**, breeds optimism and feelings of well-being.

... **Fear** pushes away; **hope** pulls others closer” (Jon Meacham)

**HOPE**

What is it? How do you get it?

Once you get it how do you keep it?

Is it good to have hope? Or is it wrong to have hope?

Did you ever really really hope for something and not get what you’d hoped for? (Pony, Motor-Cycle, exciting Career, relationship?)

Hope : Biblical Definition: "confident expectation”

“Confident Expectation” – Where is our confidence and what are our expectations?

***ISAIAH 40***

Chapter 40 in Isaiah is the turning point. Isaiah’s words go from harsh prophecies to comfort and encouragement. The first words are “ Comfort, comfort my people,
    says your God.”

Much like the 66 books of the Bible, there is a stark difference between the first 39 and the final 27. So it is with Isaiah’s first 39 vs. his last 27chapters.

***Isa 40:31***

**31**They that “wait upon” the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint. (KJV)

31 Those who trust in the Lord will find new strength.
    They will soar high on wings like eagles.
They will run and not grow weary.
    They will walk and not faint. (NLT)

31 Those who “hope in” the Lord will renew their strength.
They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint. (NIV)

They that WAIT UPON / HOPE IN / TRUST IN. The Lord will renew their strength…. Isa 40:31

* WAIT UPON – Remaining in a state of anticipation and expectation
* TRUST IN – Have Faith in, to believe.
* HOPE IN - expect something beneficial in the future.

All of these require Faith.

We need to trust the Lord to wait upon Him and **hope** in him, But when we do…something wonderful happens…

We will:

* renew their strength;
* mount up with wings as eagles;
* run, and not be weary;
* walk, and not faint.

This is the lifestyle God wants for us. Not to be defeated and worn out, but to be strong and active.

The problem is, that many of us have faced repeated disappointments and our strength and faith have suffered as a result.

This is What happens when we “lose Hope”

***Prov 13:12* - Hope deferred makes the heart sick,**

**but a longing fulfilled is a tree of life.**

Hope Deferred….

Deep disappointment. Often leading to doubt and lack of Faith.

I believe that there are many Christians who are walking around with “Heart Sickness”.

They hoped for something they thought was of God and it turned into a disappointment.

Now they are not as eager to trust God, have lost faith and are afraid to hope.

***Jer 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.

As much as it depends on Him, that will take place… (We’ve got to believe that)

HOWEVER, when we put our hope in People, Things or anything other than God’s promises. We are at risk of disappointment.

We need to put our Hope in the Lord.

***PSALM 27:13-14*** (NIV) DAVID

**13**I remain confident of this: I will see the *goodness of the Lord
    in the land of the living.* **14**Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord.

WANT WHAT *GOD WANTS* FOR YOU.

***PSALM 37:4*** (NKJV) Delight yourself also in the Lord,
And He shall give you the desires of your heart.

Delight yourself in the Lord,

He won’t necessarily give you your heart’s desires, he will give you the desires of your heart. Not the object of your desires, but the desires themselves, then He will fulfill them all.

***Col 3:2*** **2**Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

(Set your affections on things above NOT on things of the world)

***[ Joyce Ricert]***

Hope is not presumption

We can’t just conjure up our own selfish aspirations and then say we are hoping in the Lord.

If we place our hopes on our own desires, instead of hoping in God, We are bound to wind up disappointed with God.

If we’ve lost our ability to hope, we can find it again.

***ROMANS 5:1a-4a*** …we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. 3And not only *that,* but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; 4and perseverance, character; and character, **hope**.

Tribulations 🡪 Perserverence 🡪 Character 🡪 HOPE!

Don’t be afraid to HOPE.

***PSALM 42:5*** Why, my soul, are you downcast?
    Why so disturbed within me? Put your ***hope*** *in God,*
    for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.ope

Tikvah (Heb) HOPE

## The Jewish People who trusted in God’s promise to return them to their Homeland kept hope alive for nearly 2000 years. They were chased out of Isdrael in 70AD by the Romans. They believed that someday their hope to return and worship in Jerusalem would be fulfilled. Every year they end Passover with the phrase “ L’shanah haba’ah b’Yerushalayim!”

The Israeli National Anthem: Hatikvah (The Hope) was written 70 years before Israel was given back their land, and sung throughout the Holocaust by European Jews.

(Verse 2)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *‘Od lo avdah tikva-tenu,**Hatikvah bat shnot ’alpayim,**Lihyot ‘am chofshi be’artzenu,**’Eretz-Tziyon virushalayim.* | Our hope is not yet lost,The hope two thousand years old,To be a free nation in our land,The land of Zion and [Jerusalem](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jerusalem). |

Hope is very important, it is very closely related to faith.

***1 Cor. 13:13*** And now these three remain: faith, *hope* and love. But the greatest of these is love.

HOPE - “confident expectation”

***Heb 16:9*** We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure

The glorious riches of this mystery…

**Col. 1:27 “God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is…**

**…Christ in you, the hope of glory.”**

*Let’s not base our hope in circumstances and current situations.*

*Let’s base our Hope on God’s promises to us…*

HOW DO WE HOPE AGAIN?

LET JESUS BE OUR HOPE!

**Jesus does not just give us hope,**

**He IS our hope!**

[SAR SHALOM]