

The Hope of the Christian

The Bible based hope of the Christian can be summed up in 4 words. When the Apostle Paul was a chained prisoner in Rome, he was asked what his Hope was all about. He told his fellow countrymen – unbelieving Jews, as recorded in Acts 28:20: @>

... because for **the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain. Acts 28:20**

So what did Paul mean by this phrase? It was that what he believed was exactly that of his Jewish compatriots. @ The Greek word for hope is elpis – meaning to anticipate, one's expectation. Israel was of course God's nation. So what was the Hope of the Jews? A few months earlier, Paul had been standing trial before King Agrippa in Caesarea in Israel. He told the King as recorded in Acts 26:6,7: @>

And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God to our fathers.

To this promise our twelve tribes, earnestly serving God night and day, hope to attain. For this hope's sake, king Agrippa, I am accused by the Jews. Acts 26:6,7

Paul told King Agrippa before whom he was being tried, that his hope lay in the fulfilment of the promises God made to the Jewish Fathers – Abraham, Isaac, Jacob. They were waiting for the promise of a descendant of Abraham, who would be the Messiah, the redeemer and King of Israel. God made 7 Promises to Abraham. The 7th one sums them all up. Having shown his obedience in following God's command to offer up Isaac, fully believing in the resurrection, God made this promise. We read of this in Gen 22:16-18: @>

By Myself I have sworn, says the LORD, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son -

17 "blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies.

18 "In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice. Genesis 22:16-18

If in any doubt as to whom God was referring to as Abraham's seed or descendant, the apostle Paul made clear in Gal 3:16: @>

Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but of one, "And to your seed," who is Christ.

Galatians 3:16

We know the Jewish nation for Millenia has been waiting for their Messiah to come. Sadly, when 2,000 yrs ago he did come, his own nation refused to believe him. They were looking for a Messiah as a King to free them from the hand of the Romans. What they didn't appreciate was that before he came as a king, he was coming as the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world. But he is coming back as Israel's King. We

can see the force of the angel Gabriel's words to Mary before she conceived the Lord Jesus Christ. Luke records these stirring words which have such meaning to a Bible believer's understanding of the Hope of Israel. Luke 1:31-33: @>

"And behold, you will conceive in your womb, and bring forth a Son, and shall call his name JESUS.

"He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of his father David.

And he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end. Luke 1:31-33

This hasn't happened – yet! The Bible Christians knows it will, when Christ returns, this time to be accepted by his Jewish nation. He will their king, and not only over Israel but the whole world. The Bible Christian looks forward to this time, because this is when the Lord Jesus will raise his dead saints and gather his living followers to stand before him. Those who have striven to walk in ways acceptable to him will be granted everlasting life. To be Christ's workers throughout the Kingdom Age and his companions for eternity. The Bible Hope is a real hope, a worthwhile hope, to be privileged to live in God's Kingdom on earth. This is what Bible Christians are praying for when they say the Lord's Prayer as recorded in Luke 11:2 @>

Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven. Luke 11:2

It will be a time of wonderful blessings. Isaiah the prophet tells of this time in ch 2:2-4. @>

Now it shall come to pass in the latter days That the mountain of the LORD'S house Shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And all nations shall flow to it.

3 Many people shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

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He shall judge between the nations, And rebuke many people; They shall beat their swords into plowshares, And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war anymore. Isaiah 2:4

This is my Hope, I would love it to be yours too! Its all found here in God's Good Book! Thank you for listening. END