

# Hope – Both Precious And Treacherous

Every human being is endowed with hope, it is part of our nature.

Just because hope is so common to life, we accept it as a matter of course, without realising how precious and how treacherous it can be.

Without hope life would be unbearable.

Without hope our zest for life would disappear almost at once.

Without hope one hour of adversity would break our spirit and drive many to suicide.

Without hope the race of humanity would die out altogether in a very few years.

Without hope even the procreative drive and the instinct for self-preservation would hardly be strong enough to stop the extinction of humanity.

Hope is a nurse and comforter and enables us to go on after every visible reason for continuing has disappeared.

In the dealings of God with humans, hope has always held a noble place.

**The expectation of the coming of the Messiah cheered Israel in her years of victory and kept her from despairing in her periods of captivity and dispersal.**

**Hebrews 11:32-38** [NIV] *“And what more shall I say? I do not have time to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel and the prophets, who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised; who shut the mouths of lions, quenched the fury of the flames, and escaped the edge of the sword; whose weakness was turned to strength; and who became powerful in battle and routed foreign armies. Women received back their dead, raised to life again. Others were tortured and refused to be released, so that they might gain a better resurrection. Some faced jeers and flogging, while still others were chained and put in prison. They were stoned; they were sawn in two; they were put to death by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and ill-treated, the world was not worthy of them. They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground.”*

Those who feared and obeyed the Creator God have often found life painful.

Only the strength of a great expectation enables suffering Christians to hold out to the end.

**Romans 8:16-25** [NIV] *“The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs, heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory. I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what he already has? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.”*

Both the physical creation that has suffered greatly at the hands of rebellious humanity and the spiritual creation, redeemed Christians await eagerly in hope of a new world tomorrow that will start with the return of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

**Romans 15:13** [NIV] *“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”*

**Remember that this letter full of hope was sent to the Christians who were enduring great persecution in Rome under the cruel hand of Nero.**

True faith is always confidence in the character of the Creator God of the Christian Bible.

Hope is the joyful anticipation of desirable things in a new world promised by the same faithful Creator God but **not** yet realised.

**2 Thessalonians 2:16-17** [NIV] *“May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word.”*

The Christian’s hope is sound because it is founded upon the character of the God who cannot lie [**Titus 1:2**] and the redeeming work of His Son Jesus Christ.

**1 Peter 1:3-6** [NIV] *“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, who through faith are shielded by God’s power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials.”*

Peter called the Christian hope a “*living*” hope because it rests on the character and power of the eternal God.

This hope is a reality and **not** a wishful dream.

How then can I say that hope can be treacherous?

Is this a contradiction?

Why is hope thought to be both good and bad?

Why is hope both full of joy and deceitful?

Hope has told the mother that her son missing in action was surely still alive and has kept her watching for his return for the end of her days.

She waits for that message from him that will never come because her son has long been asleep in an unmarked grave on some foreign shore.

Hope has cheered a thousand victims of cancer and other terminal diseases with whispers of promised return to health that they will never know.

Hope that has **no** guarantee of fulfilment is a false friend that comforts us a while with flattery then leaves us to our enemy.

**Only a true Christian has the right to hope, for only they have the power of the Creator God to give substance to their hope.**

Every human being who has hope must see if their anticipations conform to the revealed Word and Will of our Creator God, the Christian Bible.

Only then can we have nothing to doubt or fear in life and death.

**Hebrews 6:17-20** [NIV] *“Because God wanted to make the unchanging nature of his purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised, he confirmed it with an oath. God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope offered to us may be greatly encouraged. We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, where Jesus, who went before us, has entered on our behalf. He has become a high priest for ever, in the order of Melchizedek.”*

Hope without the great High Priest, Jesus Christ, is a false hope.

Yet millions of humans go on in life in human hope that all will work out well, when they have never known the forgiving love of their Creator God nor even sought His approval.

They have a worldly-minded hope that they are created children of God **without** proof that is only found in God’s Word the Christian Bible.

Life on earth is bearable because there is false human hope.

Hell, separated from the Creator God, is unendurable because all hope has fled.

**Psalms 71:5, 14-15** [NIV] *“For you have been my hope, O Sovereign LORD, my confidence since my youth.” ... “But as for me, I shall always have hope; I will praise you more and more. My mouth will tell of your righteousness, of your salvation all day long, though I know not its measure.”*

Can we truthfully say these words in prayer to the Creator God as did the anonymous writer of this Psalm?