

- Module** : Foundation or Elementary Doctrines of Christ
- Session** : Faith's Confidence Trust, Confession and Patient Endurance in Hope
- Focus** : Key Elements of Faith - Confidence, Confession, Endurance (patience) and Hope
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Recall that one of the meanings of the Greek word, **hupostasis**, translated as '**substance**' in Hebrews 11:1 is "**that quality which leads one to stand under, or endure**". In this session we explore **confident trust**, which is usually reflected in our speech (confession of faith) and **patient endurance in hope** as two vital **elements of true biblical faith**.

THE ISSUE OF ENDURANCE AND CONFIDENCE - A PRELUDE TO UNDERSTANDING FAITH

Hebrews 11 is generally called the 'faith' chapter. In it, faith is defined and demonstrated in the lives of many Old Testament saints. Before you read Hebrews 11 with a view to understanding faith, it is good to read the entire book of Hebrews as a whole. Specifically, we need to briefly examine the latter part of Hebrews 10, the preceding chapter as a prelude to understanding biblical faith. So before the writer of Hebrews 11 would open that chapter by saying, "Now faith is ...", he would first say the following ...

Hebrews 10:32-39

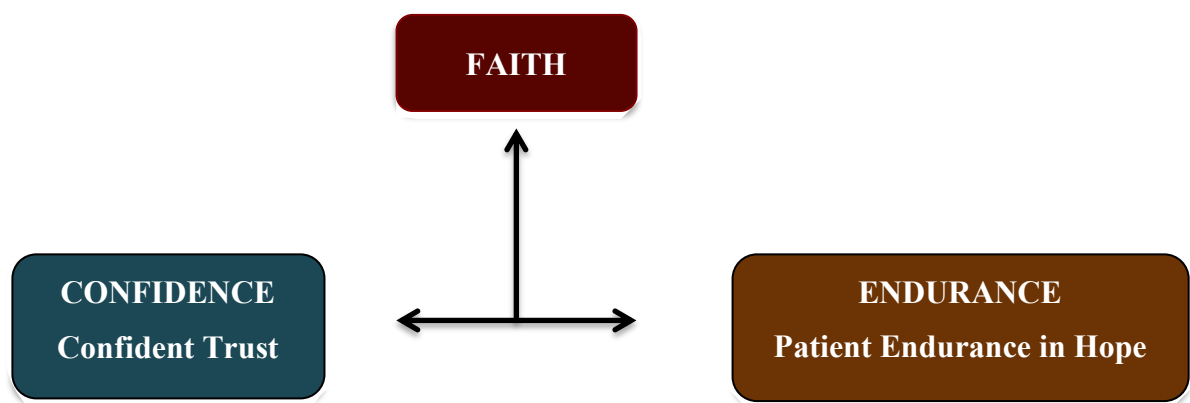
- 32_ But remember the former days, when, after being enlightened, **you endured a great conflict of sufferings**,
- 33_ partly by being made a public spectacle through **reproaches and tribulations**, and partly by becoming **sharers with those who were so treated**.
- 34_ For you showed sympathy to the prisoners and **accepted joyfully the seizure of your property**, knowing that you have for yourselves **a better possession and a lasting one**.
- 35_ Therefore, **DO NOT THROW AWAY OUR CONFIDENCE**, which has a **GREAT REWARD**.
- 36_ For **YOU HAVE NEED OF ENDURANCE**, so that when you have **DONE THE WILL OF GOD**, you may **RECEIVE WHAT WAS PROMISED**.
- 37_ FOR YET IN A VERY LITTLE WHILE, HE WHO IS COMING WILL COME, AND **WILL NOT DELAY**.
- 38_ **BUT MY RIGHTEOUS ONE SHALL LIVE BY FAITH**; AND IF HE SHRINKS BACK, MY SOUL HAS NO PLEASURE IN HIM.
- 39_ But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, **but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul**.

In this record, people joyfully accepted the seizure of their property because they functioned at a higher level than the earthly dimension. They looked for a better and lasting possession. Faith caused them to do this - to transcend earthly concerns. The driving passion within them was doing the will of God (verse 36). Note that in the fulfillment of the will of God, there comes a reception of things promised.

When you have faith to pursue the execution of God's will, there will come persecution and opposition, which is designed to dampen faith and cause some to shrink back to a position of unbelief or doubt, and ultimately not effect the will of the Lord for their lives. Thus the writer of Hebrews highlights the following two issues as a preface before he defines and demonstrates faith in chapter 11:

- The issue of **Confidence** (verse 35)
- The issue of **Endurance** (verse 36)

Amongst other factors, two key elements of true biblical faith is 'confidence' (confident trust) and 'endurance' (patient endurance). With these two thoughts in mind, viz. confidence and endurance, the writer of the book of Hebrews proceeds to define faith - "NOW, Faith is ..."



(1) Do not 'Away your Confidence (Heb. 10:35) : CONFIDENT TRUST

Confidence = parrhesia = Freedom in **speaking**, unreservedness in speech
Speaking openly, frankly, i.e. without concealment
Speaking without ambiguity or circumlocution
Speaking without the use of figures and comparisons
Free and fearless confidence, cheerful courage, boldness, assurance¹

Confidence or boldness is a key ingredient of faith. It implies being assertive, acting with conviction, being outspoken or having uncompromising courage. Casting away this confident position is the opposite of faith. A high degree of confident conviction in God and His Word is required. Confident faith ultimately expresses itself in bold acts of obedience, but usually as a prelude to this, and as indicated by the meaning of the Greek term, 'parrhesia', **confidence will manifest itself in one's SPEECH. Faith has it's own specific and unique language.** You will speak **without contradiction** of the promise of God you hold to. Your speech will be **clear, unambiguous, frank, candid, without blurs, without fear, doubt or unbelief, but full of cheerful courage, boldness and complete assurance.** Your speech will always **agree with God's Word** on any matter, even in the face of contradictory circumstances.

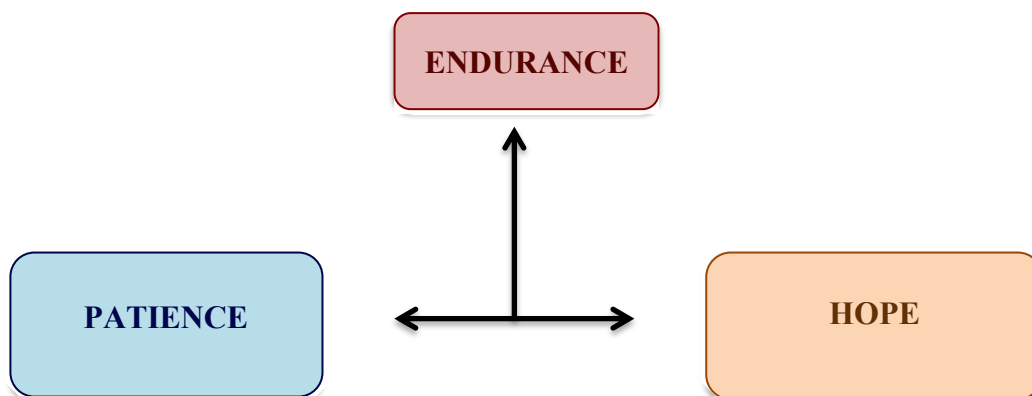
(2) You have Need of Endurance - Heb. 10:36 : PATIENT ENDURANCE IN HOPE

Endurance = hupomone = To stay up under
To patiently **persevere** and not to **swerve from the path**
A bearing up under, patience, endurance as to things or circumstances²
Patient continuance (waiting)³

Endurance or patience is also a key component of biblical faith that causes us **not to shrink back to a position of unbelief** nor to swerve off the path of confidence. Patient endurance is motivated by a sense that the task will be completed and the promise of God fulfilled. It causes you to push through your present difficulties and to focus on the 'end' or goal of your faith - the fulfillment of His promise. Endurance is **"that quality of character which does not allow one to surrender to circumstances or succumb under trial"**⁴.

The same word, 'hupermone' is used in both instances.

'ENDURANCE' has two associated principles. The two issues are intrinsic to any capacity to endure. They are PATIENCE and HOPE.



PATIENCE :

Often the word 'endurance' is translated as patience, as in the verse below. FAITH PRODUCES PATIENCE OR ENDURANCE.

James 1:2-4 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into **various trials**, knowing that the **testing of your faith produces patience**. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. (NKJV)

James 1:2-4 Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter **various trials**, knowing that the testing of your **faith produces endurance**. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. (NASB)

Note in the text above here also that it is within the context of trials and sufferings, which designed to test and develop the quality of our faith, that endurance (including patience) is developed.

Rom. 5:3-5 And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; and **HOPE DOES NOT DISPPPOINT**, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

Hope is the product and evidence of good godly character. This character is forged in the fire of tribulation, which develops perseverance.

Endurance suggests a protracted period of time that seems unending to the one who has to 'endure'. Hence, the one who is called upon to endure, is not to be carnally hasty or impatient, although they have an internal disposition that what they have faith for and hope for, will soon be realised. **Patience implies a 'waiting' for God's timing.**

Heb. 6: 10-12

- 10 For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown toward His name, in having ministered and in still ministering to the saints.
- 11 And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end, so that you will not be sluggish,
- 12 but imitators of those who through **FAITH and PATIENCE inherit the PROMISES.**

Abram and Sarai, through impatience, produced Ishmael, who is representative of an outcome of a lack of faith, because of the absence of PATIENCE to wait for God's way in which the promise would be realised. Abraham and Sarah (note the change in their names) expressed patience and learned the art and discipline of waiting for God's promise to be manifested in God's way and according to His time.

Heb. 6:13-15 For when God made the promise to Abraham, since He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, saying, "I will surely bless you and I will surely multiply you." And so, having **patiently waited**, he **obtained the promise**.

A claimed faith without the element of patience, is no faith at all. Patient faith relies solely on God to enact the fulfillment of His promise HIS WAY within HIS TIME. Abram was 75 years old when God gave him the promise that He would make of him a great nation. Abraham was 100 years when Isaac was born. He waited 25 years for the promise to be fulfilled.

Patience is necessary because God usually has multiple agendas with you whenever He makes a promise to you. Fulfilling the promise is no problem to God. He can do it in an instant. What God is far more concerned about is the development of your character after His likeness, than just merely giving some gift or fulfilling some promise. Very often God will take His time to prepare you to be sufficiently able to steward or handle the fulfillment of His promise to you. God is more into shaping you than giving you something. What aids patience is the realization that God is at work within us in very profound ways, far deeper than we can ever imagine, in order to make us ready for all He has in store for us to steward. So usually, in the wake of a significant prophetic promise, will come a series of trials and tests, all uniquely tailored by God to prepare your inner self and nature. During these times, it usually seems like these trials and the circumstances they generate actually are taking further away from the realization of the promise than closer to it.

It is vitally imperative that we do not be discouraged in these moments and seasons, but hold unswervingly on to the Word that God gave to us. The things that God teaches you during a trials cannot be taught to you in a Bible Study, but also, there things you learnt in a Bible Study that will arm you with knowledge and understanding so that you have the requisite grace to endure the trial. In every trail, God is trying to teach you something. Listen out for it and learn the lesson as quickly as possible, so that that kind of trial need not be repetitive in in life. “When in trials and suffering, the immature son asks, ‘GOD WHY ME?’. But mature son asks, ‘FATHER, WHAT ARE TRYING TO TEACH ME’. “ (Sam Soleyn).

Faith and hope must FIRST be focused upon the imbibing and assimilation of the nature and character of God within us, so that we progressively grow with increased momentum into the fullness of the stature of Christ. **Faith’s first priority is “God MAKE me”, and not “God GIVE me”.** The younger son in the parable of the ‘PRODIGAL SON’ recorded in Luke 15, wanted his share of his inheritance from his father prematurely, before he had the requisite character and nature to steward that inheritance. The younger sons request was ‘Father, GIVE ME’

Luke 15:12 The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, **GIVE ME** the share of the estate that falls to me.’

Later, when you came to his senses after having squandered his inheritance on riotous living, he returned in repentance to his father with the intent of saying, ‘Father MAKE ME’ one of your servants.

Luke 15:19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son; **MAKE ME** as one of your hired men.”

Note the change in language, from ‘GIVE ME’ to ‘MAKE ME’. The truth is that God will readily GIVE you anything for which He has already MADE you and equipped enough to handle and steward. God’s blessings can destroy (kill) you spiritually, and displace you spiritually to an inaccurate location or environment, if you are not ready to steward them in maturity. This is what happened to the younger son, for his father said he was dead but on his return he is alive, and he was lost but now found.

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This is prophetic for someone. Many of you have been tried and tested by God deeply, invasively and significant through a range of trials and sufferings of varying types and degrees. You have passed the test, now position yourself for the associated reward.

Significant provisions come to those whom God had sufficiently processed and prepared. God must 'process' you before He 'provides' for you. The deep processing was necessary for you to handle the great level of provision. If God gave you massive provision, without having prepared you in either skills and character to adequately manage it, then He would be an irresponsible Father giving something that would destroy you. I love my firstborn grandson, 'Levi', just 3 years old. But as much as I want to, I cannot give him the keys to my car for him to drive. It will kill him. If Father God does not sufficiently prepare you through trials to efficiently and adeptly administrate and manage a high level of material or spiritual blessing, He eagerly desires to give, then His provision will pulverize you.

Consider God's language when he first made a promise to Abram.

Gen. 12:2 And I WILL MAKE YOU a great nation, And I WILL BLESS YOU ...

Note, God first says to him I will MAKE you a great nation, then afterwards I WILL BLESS YOU. This word MAKE is in Hebrew **āsāh**, meaning to do, to make, to accomplish, to complete. This Hebrew verb conveys the central notion of performing an activity with a distinct purpose. God is saying to Abram, "You are incomplete, but I will complete you by subjecting you to a series of tests and trials specifically designed to MAKE you the father I called you to be". God did test Abram variously and invasively in order to make him the man God wanted him to be. The name 'Abram' was changed to 'Abraham', denoting a deep change in nature and character, is that he is not just "exalted father" (Abram), but now can "Father nations" (Abraham).

Co-operate with the 'processing' and preparation of God in your life so that HE can trust you with powerful provisions from His hand.

#DoubleForYourTrouble

#Retsore

#Breakthrough

The same will apply to you and I today. Allow God to MAKE you, so that you have the requisite character and maturity to administrate and steward magnanimous practical blessings He longs to GIVE you.

#MakeMe

Later when his name was changed to Abraham, meaning father of nations or a multitude, God used a different word, saying “I have made you a father of multitudes”

Gen. 17:5 “No longer shall your name be called Abram, But your name shall be Abraham;
For I HAVE MADE you the father of a multitude of nations.

Made = Nathan = to place; to constitute; to place specifically for function (eg. Gen 1:17 – the sun and moon in the sky to give light)

When Paul quoted in the N.T. he used the Greek term **tithemi = to set forth as a foundation.**

Abraham as a father over nations had to be prepared by God, completed by God, be cast as a foundation of fathering for all families in the earth. Foundation work involves digging and excavating. These refer to penetrative process of God’s direct dealings with Abraham. Before he would be blessed to be a blessing, he had to comply with God’s making of him.

While you wait, endure with great hope (Heb. 6:11), and do not become ‘SLUGGISH’ (Heb. 6:11) nor discouraged in your works of faith or acts of obedience relative to your faith, knowing GOD is not unjust (Heb. 6:10) so as to FORGET your labour of love and diligence.

Sluggish = nothros = Dull, slothful; implications of laziness and idleness

In the process of patiently waiting for the realisation of a promise from God, guard against discouragement and become slack or slothful in respect to continued focus on the accompanying works of faith. Faithfulness is proof the person’s faith is still fervent and active.

Heb 6:12 **NIV** : **We do not want you to become lazy**, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised.

Eccl 3:11 He has made everything beautiful in its time.

Beautiful = Lovely, Appropriate

WAITING AND WORKING *(The following paragraph here below by Shaun Blignaut)*

Isa. 40:31 "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength"

Waiting brings RENEWAL OF STRENGTH: physical, emotional, spiritual!

Isa. 64:4 "Neither has the eye seen, O God, beside Thee, which works/acts for him that waits for Him"

These two verses show the connection between waiting and working! There is a co-equal relationship between waiting and working! **Firstly**, we see that **waiting brings the needed strength for working**... unwearied work! "For they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up on Eagles' wings; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint" Waiting on God makes us strong in work for God!

Secondly, **the secret of this strength is: "God works for him that waits for Him"** So, the WAITING ON GOD secures the WORKING OF GOD FOR US and IN US, out of which our work must spring. Waiting on God lies at the root of all true working for God! Some wait without working! Some work without waiting!

Faith is not Easily Discouraged

While patience endures, the strong faith that produces it sees the accomplishment of God's promise and will abide through the process. Faith with patience prevents the heart from getting discouraged and 'sick'.

Prov. 13:12 Hope deferred makes the heart sick, But desire fulfilled is a tree of life. (NASB)

May you all have a 'SUDDEN GOOD BREAK that will TURN YOUR LIFE AROUND!

Prov. 13:12 Unrelenting disappointment leaves you heartsick, but a SUDDEN GOOD BREAK can TURN LIFE AROUND. (Msg Bible)

Leaders must exhibit Patience and Faith

Timothy followed Paul's faith and patience.

2 Timothy 3:10 **Now you followed my** teaching, conduct, purpose, **faith, patience**, love, perseverance, persecutions, and sufferings, such as happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium and at Lystra; what persecutions I endured, and out of them all the Lord rescued me!

Heb. 13:7 Remember **those who led you**, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, **imitate their faith**

2 Pet 1:5-7 Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, **in your faith** supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge, and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness, and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love.

Perseverance here is translated patience in the (KJV) and is the Greek term, **hupomone**, meaning **endurance**.

HOPE :

The Greek word translated '**endurance**' is also closely related to the **idea of HOPE**.

For example, ...

1 Thess. 1:3 Remembering without ceasing your **work of FAITH**, and **labor of love**, and **PATIENCE of HOPE** in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father; **(NASB)**

The word '**patience**' in the text above is '**endurance**' (Grk. - 'hupomone').

1 Thess.1:3 We remember before our God and Father your **work produced by FAITH**, your **labor prompted by love**, and your **ENDURANCE inspired by HOPE** in our Lord Jesus Christ. **(NIV)**

Note above that 'HOPE' is what inspires 'ENDURANCE'.

Many believers are aware of Ephesian chapter six's description of the breastplate as righteousness and the shield as faith. But also, faith, with **PATIENT ENDURING HOPE**, is presented in Scripture, both as a **BREASTPLATE** and a **SHIELD**.

Eph. 6:14 Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the **breastplate of righteousness**

Eph. 6:16 in addition to all, taking up the **SHIELD OF FAITH** with which you will be able to **extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one**.

1 Thess. 5:8 But since we are of the day, let us be sober, having put on **the breastplate of faith and love**, and as a **helmet, the hope of salvation**.

The **believers' BREASTPLATE** is referred to as **both righteousness and faith**. There is no contradiction here, since righteousness is by faith. Positional righteousness is attained by simple faith in Christ Jesus. Practical righteousness is developed through outward expressions of obedience, bringing perfection or completion to our faith.

In **Thess. 5:8**, faith is described as a **breastplate** which protects the area around the **heart and vital organs**. Hope is described as a **helmet**, which protects the head - the mind. Thus faith exists in the heart, and hope relates to the mind. Faith includes hope.

Heb. 11:1a Now faith is the substance of things **HOPED FOR** ...

Psalm 39:7 “And now, Lord, for what **do I WAIT**? My **HOPE** is in You.

Hope is a mental attitude of expectancy concerning the future. Faith is a firm condition of the heart - a strong internal conviction that you possess NOW, in the present (“Now faith is ...”). When you have faith, you have hope also. You may have hope without faith, BUT hope based on faith will stand. Faith includes hope.

Psalm 42:5 Why are you in **despair**, O my **soul**? And why have you become disturbed within me? **Hope in God**, for I shall again **praise Him** For the **help of His presence**.

Hoped = elpízō = To hope, **EXPECT WITH DESIRE**.⁵

Hope = elpis = **Desire of some good with expectation of obtaining it**⁶.

Although the idea of hope infers that one’s mind is cast towards the future, faith brings hope’s focus into the present. Faith, which includes hope, is a firm condition of the heart - a strong internal conviction that you possess NOW in the present (“Now faith is ...” - *Heb. 11:1a*). **Faith’s dominant position in the heart dictates to, directs and leads hope’s position in the mind. Faith in the heart inspires hope in the mind.**

Unfortunately, the general English usage of the Word ‘hope’ is not as the biblical one. The ordinary English usage has degenerated into hope having an element of ‘chance’ or ‘probability’, and more akin to words like ‘perhaps’ or ‘maybe’. These words are often employed when one does not wish to be too definite or assertive in the expression of a thought, idea or belief. But, biblical or Godly Hope is not a mindset that perceives the mere **POSSIBILITY** of an outcome, but rather the **CERTAINTY** of the outcome, and hence as a result (as the Greek word ‘elpis’ suggests) hope **EXPECTS WITH DESIRE, and consequently, in faith, will ACT WITH DESIRE, fully expecting that it shall OBTAIN that for which it hopes**. The person of faith is filled with HOPE too. Faith is not hope-less, but hope-ful.

Consider Abraham’s sense of hope in his faith.

Rom. 4:18 Even when there was **NO REASON FOR HOPE**, Abraham **KEPT HOPING – BELIEVING** that he would become the father of many nations. For **GOD HAD SAID** to him, “That’s how many descendants you will have!” **(NLT)**

Rom. 4:18a

Wuest Who, being **beyond hope**, upon the **basis of hope** believed, ...

Nasb **In hope against hope** he believed ...

NiRV When there was **no reason for hope**, Abraham believed because **he had hope**

The fact that God who made you a PROMISE is FAITHFUL, causes you to HOLD FAST (endure) to your CONFESSION (confidence) of ... H O P E ... without WAVERING. Hold on your HOPE!

Heb. 10:23 Let us hold fast the confession of our **HOPE without wavering**, for **He who promised is FAITHFUL**

The two key ingredients of ENDURANCE, viz. PATIENCE and HOPE are absolutely essential in your life. While you endure, 'holding and staying up under pressure', you patiently WAIT, unhurriedly and un-anxiously, because you have a resident HOPE. This HOPE fills your mind with FERVENT DESIRE and an EXPECTANT CERTAINTY (not 'maybe' or 'perhaps'), that at the end of the process, you will have a positive and God-determined outcome. "For YOU HAVE NEED OF ENDURANCE, so that when you have DONE THE WILL OF GOD, you may RECEIVE WHAT WAS PROMISED" (Heb. 10:36). **Patience is your position of waiting; hope is your internal disposition, while you wait. In waiting, as you practice patience, your posture is one of hope, with eager expectation and rejoicing.**

Rom. 8:24 For **in hope** we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he already sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, with **perseverance we wait eagerly for it.**

To 'endure' implies holding on until the desired outcome, however long it takes. Hope has staying power. It holds on until the end. Note the phrases, **'hope UNTIL THE END'** in the verses cited below.

Heb. 3:6 but Christ was faithful as a Son over His house – whose house we are, if we **hold fast** our **confidence** and the boast of our **HOPE FIRM until the END.**

Heb. 6:11,12 And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of **HOPE UNTIL THE END**, so that you will not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through **FAITH and PATIENCE inherit the PROMISES.**

While hope endures, it rejoices.

Rom. 12:12 **NASB:** **REJOICES** in **HOPE**, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer
NKJV: **Rejoicing in HOPE**, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer;
NHEB: **Rejoicing in HOPE**; enduring in troubles; continuing steadfastly in prayer;

CEV: Let your **HOPE** make you **GLAD**. Be patient in time of trouble and never stop praying.

Hope is not SAD. Hope is GLAD and REJOICES because it has great expectation of obtaining a positive outcome. Hence, the hopeful person is also PATIENT in TRIBULATION and PERSISTENT PRAYER. Hope in God saints, and while you do, REJOICE JOYFULLY in faith as though you have already realised the thing for which you have hoped.

Rom. 12:12 **Cheerfully Expectant.** Don't quit in Hard Times; Pray all the Harder. (Msg. Bible)

Prov. 10:28a **NLT** : The hopes of the godly result in **happiness**.

NASB: The hope of the righteous is **gladness**.

How you REJOICE evidences the HOPE you have. True biblical HOPE has an innate JOY embedded deep within it. The opposite is true : the absence of REJOICING, even amidst serious TRIAL and TROUBLES, is indicative of the absence of HOPE. Also, HOPE maintains its fervency by STEADFAST, INSTANT and PERSISTENT PRAYER.

The Psalmist David, and others, knew this. David never had the word, 'FAITH', in his vocabulary, yet Heb 11: 32,33 indicates that David functioned by faith. He not once said 'by faith', but he often used words like 'TRUST', 'HOPE' and 'WAIT'. For David his faith was expressed as TRUSTING IN GOD and HOPING in God.

Psalm 38:15 For **I HOPE in You**, O Lord; **You will ANSWER**, O Lord my God.

This verse below merges the ideas of **FAITH, HOPE, ENDURANCE, and PATIENCE**.

Ps. 27:13-14 I would have **DESPAIRED** (*without HOPE*) unless I had **BELIEVED** (*in Faith*) that I would **SEE** the **GOODNESS** of the Lord In the land of the **LIVING**. **WAIT** (*Patience*) for the Lord; Be **STRONG** and let your **HEART** take **COURAGE** (*Endurance*); Yes, **WAIT** (*Patience*) for the Lord.

God's Word – the Source and Strength of Hope

Do not ignore the Scriptures. It is through the patience and comfort of the SCRIPTURES that we have HOPE! The entirety of the Old Testament was written and recorded for our benefit, that WE MIGHT HAVE HOPE!

Rom. 15:4 For whatever things were written before (i.e. in the Old Testament) were written for **our learning**, that we through the **patience** and **comfort of the SCRIPTURES** might **have HOPE**.

Hope is a core ingredient of faith. Faith's firm persuasion is anchored in hope's expectant confidence. But Hope is so assured and unwavering because it too is rooted something sure and utterly reliable, viz. God's Word. Hope is not wishful thinking and carnal ambitious or self-centred desire. Hope does not vest its trust in anything earthly, especially money or riches, but in the living God through His Word.

Hope must be FIXED or SET on God:

2 Cor. 1:8-10 For we do not want you to be unaware, brethren, of our affliction which came to us in Asia, that we were burdened excessively, beyond our strength, so that we despaired even of life; indeed, we had the sentence of death within ourselves so that **we would not trust in ourselves**, but **in God** who raises the dead; who delivered us from so great a peril of death, and will deliver us, **HE ON WHOM WE HAVE SET OUR HOPE**. And He will yet deliver us ...

1 Tim. 6:17 Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to **FIX their HOPE** on the uncertainty of riches, **but on God**, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy.

Hope arises from and vests in God's Word, the well-spring and source of true hope.

Psalms 130:5-7 I **WAIT** for the Lord, my **soul does WAIT**, And in His **WORD do I HOPE**. My **soul waits** for the Lord More than the watchmen for the morning; Indeed, more than the watchmen for the morning. O Israel, **hope in the Lord**; For with the Lord there is lovingkindness, And with Him is abundant redemption.

When all you have is a Word from God, then despite trying and testing trial and circumstances, HOLD ON FOR DEAR LIFE to that Word. This promise, and the your view of the One WHO promised as FAITHFUL FATHER, will keep you buoyant amidst on the stormy seas of life.

Psalms 119:49-50

NASB: Remember the word to Your servant, In which You have made me hope. This is my **comfort in my affliction**, That Your word has revived me.

NLT: Remember your promise to me; it is my **ONLY HOPE**. Your promise **revives me**; it comforts me in all my troubles.

MSG: Remember what you said to me, your servant - I hang on to these words for dear life! These words hold me up in bad times; yes, your promises rejuvenate me.

When all you have to hold on to as your HOPE for the FUTURE is A WORD FROM GOD, it is really ALL YOU NEED to continue to patiently endure in faith, until His PROMISE to you is realised. God will honour your faith and trust IN HIS WORD. As an old mother in the faith used to say, "Keep on Keeping on!"

Do you feel like a TREE CUT DOWN to nothing, whilst everybody is so upbeat. Do not despair. THERE IS HOPE!

Job 14:7-9 "For there is **HOPE** for a tree, When it is cut down, that it will sprout again, and its shoots will not fail. "Though its roots grow old in the ground and its stump dies in the dry soil, At the **SCENT OF WATER** it will **FLOURISH** And put forth sprigs like a plant.

Water is a consistent symbol of God's Word. At the scent of the water - the Word, a 'hope-less' cut down tree to its stump, is able to suddenly FLOURISH again.

A tree is symbolic of people. The man in Psalm One is likened unto a tree planted by the rivers of water that consistently flourished in all seasons. We are trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord (Isaiah 61:3).

If your life, as tree, for whatever reason, seems CUT DOWN to nothing. You have been growing for a season, but through circumstances, your own neglect or disobedience, are cut down to the ground. You have lost the height you once had. THERE IS STILL HOPE FOR YOU. You might be 'cut down', but do not 'stay down'.

Your faith laced with hope is able to get you back to the place you once were. BUT, the requirement is: Position yourself near WATER - the WORD, because at the scent (aroma or smell) of water, you will begin to grow and flourish again.

This verse does not just indicate that there will be hope for you to grow again, but more importantly that this hope is accessed and activated by your love for and proximity to God's Word.

START TO GROW AGAIN! Hope again. SMELL the scent of God's Word again! Position yourself under the sound of God's Word! Begin to Flourish again!

There is HOPE for you, TREE of God!

The Hope-less soul, is a Word-less soul. The Hope-ful soul, is a Word-ful soul. No Word, no Hope; less Word, less hope; more Word, more hope.

Jer. 17:5-8

- 5 Thus says the Lord, “Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind And makes flesh his strength,
And whose heart turns away from the Lord.
- 6 “For he will be like a bush in the desert And will not see when prosperity comes, But will
live in stony wastes in the wilderness, A land of salt without inhabitant.
- 7 “Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord And whose trust is the Lord.
- 8 “For he will be like a **tree planted by the water**, That extends its **roots by a stream** And will
not **fear when the heat comes**; But its **leaves will be green**, And it will not **be anxious in a
year of drought** Nor cease to yield fruit.

No fear or anxiety during times of economic recession, but unceasing fruitfulness instead.

Psalms 92:12-15

- 12 The righteous flourish like the palm tree and grow like a cedar in Lebanon.
- 13 They are planted in the house of the Lord; they flourish in the courts of our God.
- 14 They **still bear fruit in old age**; they are ever full of sap and green,
- 15 to declare that the Lord is upright; he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him

Ezek. 19:10 Your mother was like a vine in your vineyard, **Planted by the waters**; It was fruitful
and full of branches **Because of abundant waters**

Psalms 1:3 sets out the blessing attendant with the man who loves God's Word, consistently meditates on it and obeys it. These blessings are briefly examined here as outcomes of meditation:

Psalms 1:3 He will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in its
season and its leaf does not wither; And in whatever he does, he prospers

Fruit in Season:

Meditation results in a fruitful life – in many aspects and respects. Fruit in the Bible indicates many things. Some examples are ...

- Fruit of the Womb - Children (Psalm 127:3)
- Fruit of the Thoughts - Ideas (Jer. 6:19)
- Fruit of the Mouth - Words (Prov. 18:20)
- Fruit of your hands - Works (Prov. 30:31)
- Fruit of the Spirit - Character (Gal. 5:22)

Leaf Does Not Wither: HEALTH TO NATIONS

Leaves indicate divine health and healing – both naturally and spiritually. It alludes to one's capacity to bring SPIRITUAL AND PHYSICAL relief, restoration and reformation to any context that is out of sync with God's will and nature.

Rev 22:1,2 Then he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the middle of its street. On either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the **leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations**

God's Word brings hope that sustains you. His word, is credible and reliable, your trust in it too will not bring you to a place of being ashamed or disappointed.

Psalms 119:116

NASB: Sustain me according to Your word, that I may live; And do not let me be **ashamed of my hope.**

NLT: Lord, **sustain me as you promised**, that I may live! Do not let my **hope be crushed.**

Gen.49:22-24 "Joseph is a fruitful bough, A fruitful bough by a spring; Its branches run over a wall. "The archers bitterly attacked him, And shot at him and harassed him; But his bow remained firm, And his arms were agile, From the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob (From there is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel).

HOPE DOES NOT DISAPPOINT

God's Word brings hope that sustains you. His word, is credible and reliable, your trust in it too will not bring you to a place of being ashamed or disappointed.

Psalms 119:116

NASB: Sustain me according to Your word, that I may live; And do not let me be **ashamed of my hope.**

NLT: Lord, **sustain me as you promised**, that I may live! Do not let my **hope be crushed.**

Rom. 5:5 and **hope does not disappoint**, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us. **(NASB)**

Rom. 5:5 And hope maketh not ashamed ... **(KJV)**

Ashamed = kataischúnō = To shame, make ashamed, confound, dishonor, disgrace.⁷
To frustrate one's hope, disappoint.⁸

The son of God who places his HOPE in God, His Word, His Person, His Promises and His Purposes, will never ever be disappointed. The Word disappoint in Greek means to be put to shame, confounded, dishonoured or disgraced. Hoping on God will not result in this at all. Hope APPOINTS; it does not DISAPPOINT!

Rom. 5:5 emphatically indicates why hope does not disappoint. It is because of God's love.

The love that God has for us, is shed abroad within our hearts, by the Holy Ghost. Hence His love for us which seeks our good and the enhancement of our welfare, is the basis upon which we exercise hope, for which we will not be ashamed, confounded, disgraced. The infallibility of God's Word, and His love for us are two great reasons why we can look forward to the future with great hope, that will not be confounded.

Psalms 22:4-5 In You our fathers **trusted**; They trusted and You delivered them. To You **they cried** out and **were delivered**; In You **they trusted** and **were not disappointed**.

Psalms 119:31 I cling to Your testimonies; O Lord, do not put me to shame!

Now we can understand why the Scriptures say faith comes by HEARING GOD's WORD. Hope is not focused on information that lacks substantive basis. It is not foundationed on limited and unreliable human attempts at prognosis regarding the future. No not at all. Rather, hope is fastened upon the KNOWLEDGE concerning God's person, God's Promise or God's Purpose - all of which arises from GOD's WORD.

1 John 3:2,3 Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. **We KNOW** that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is. And everyone who has **THIS HOPE fixed on Him** purifies himself, just as He is pure.

Note the Scripture above that communicates the certainty (not the probability), that when Jesus literally appears again, that WE KNOW we be like Him completely. Note the emphasis on the absolute confidence with which this idea is framed in the text. Then the following sentence references this certain knowledge as a 'HOPE'. Hope believes, because hope KNOWS. And hope knows, because hope trust God's WORD.

Note also the text then tells us that **the persons of hope will naturally engage in certain actions** :
"everyone who has **this hope fixed on Him, PURIFIES** himself, just as He is pure." It is the hope dynamic within faith, that prompts faith's actions. Hope is not passive – it is active and vital. Peter

references it as 'LIVING HOPE' (1 Pet 1: 3). Hope embarks upon the adoption of particular mindsets and manners, certain attitudes and actions. It is very demonstrable. As said earlier, hope ACTS with DESIRE, because it EXPECTS with DESIRE. It is sure that it will OBTAIN what it EXPECTS. The godly expectation of vision-ful hope breaks the limitation of human impossibility.

CF. **2 Cor. 3:12** Therefore having such A HOPE, we use great BOLDNESS in our SPEECH

God desires to GIVE you a FUTURE and a HOPE.

Jer. 29:11 For I **know the plans** that I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans for welfare and not for calamity to GIVE you **A FUTURE and A HOPE**.

Note first here, that HOPE is GIVEN. God, who is the 'God of Hope' (Rom. 15:13), is the only true source of HOPE.

Psalm 62:5

Nasb: My soul, wait in silence for God only, For my HOPE is from HIM.

Nkjv: My soul, wait silently for God alone, For my EXPECTATION is from Him.

While Hope is Divinely given, it must be actively received, and then appropriated and HELD ON TO:

Heb.6:18 so that by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have taken refuge would have strong encouragement **TO TAKE HOLD OF THE HOPE** set before us.

Along with Faith and Love, HOPE is one is three eternally abiding virtues.

1 Cor 13: 13 But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the **greatest of these is love**.

If hope is eternal, it implies its nature is vested within the very being and person of God Himself.

God's Word is the source and transmitter of HOPE within us.

Psalm 130:5 I wait for the Lord, my soul does wait, And in His word do I hope.

GLORY - HOPE'S CHIEF FOCUS:

HOPE'S focus is first Christ, His Person and work of salvation within us, before it casts its gaze upon attaining any promise of God or seeks to secure some purpose for God.

1 Pet 1:3-5 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to A LIVING HOPE through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain AN INHERITANCE which is imperishable and

undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

1 Pet. 1:13 Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, **fix your hope completely on the grace** to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

The '**BLESSED HOPE**', generally is a reference to the certainty **that Christ will return in glory**.

Titus 2:13 looking for the **blessed hope** and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus,

Our hope includes eternal life.

Titus 3:7 so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs **according to the hope of eternal life**.

For the believer, the primary focus of hope has a strong positive mental attitude we have that of the absolute certainty, that we will be fully like Christ in every way. Every other focus of the virtue of hope within us is secondary to this one. Glorification – total maturation into the fullness of image and likeness of Christ – is the ultimate target of our hope. Christ in us, is our HOPE of GLORY.

Col. 1:27 to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, **which is Christ in you, the hope of glory**.

Eph. 1:11,12 also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, to the end that we who were the first to **hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory**.

HOPE IN GOD'S PLANS FOR YOU

Jer. 29:11-14

- 11 For **I know the plans** that I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans for welfare and not for calamity to **GIVE you A FUTURE and A HOPE**.
- 12 Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you.
- 13 You will **seek Me** and find Me when you **search for Me with all your heart**.
- 14 **I will be found by you,**' declares the Lord, 'and I will **restore your fortunes** and will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you,' declares the Lord, 'and I will bring you back to the place from where I sent you into exile.'

Hope is rooted in God's plan's for us, not in our own plans for us. Hope's certainty is sure because it relinquishes being the architecture of its own destiny and in faith embraces God's plan

for your life. Many believers love Jer. 29:11, quoted above, but fail to exercise themselves in the requirements of verse 12 and 14. Seeking and searching after God in respect His revealed plans and purposes for your life equates to 'diligently seeking after Him' as stated in Heb. 11:6. Fervent prayer and an internal pursuit after God, His promises and purposes, is evidence of the HOPE you possess by faith within is.

Read the entire chapter of Jeremiah 31. It sets forth God's intent to restore His people. In doing so He first highlights His disposition as a FATHER over them and then indicates that they will have HOPE for their future.

Jer. 31:9 For I am **a Father to Israel**, And Ephraim is My **firstborn**."

Do not be anxious about the future!

Consider these two Scriptures

Jer. 31:17a There is **HOPE** for your **FUTURE** ...

Jer. 29:11 For I **know the plans** that I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans for welfare and not for calamity to **GIVE** you **A FUTURE** and **A HOPE**

Your future is given and predetermined by God and his plans for you. God GIVES you a FUTURE. Not only a future, but with it, a HOPE. He gives a FUTURE and a HOPE based on the plans He has for you (Jer. 29:11).

Because of this fact, there is HOPE for your FUTURE (Jer. 31:17). You have a God-planned future; therefore you can hope FOR the future because HE has given you a Future and a HOPE.

The person of FERVENT FAITH is also a person of positive HOPE regarding the FUTURE. Do not be anxious regarding the next decade and beyond. Smile at your future - there is hope for your future. God, your Father, who has given you a hope for your future is also the God OF your future.

Prov. 31:25b And she smiles at the future.

Smile! Have FAITH and HOPE in the GOD of your FUTURE!

Here is a prophetic impression, for you, the reader:

A Valley of Pain can become A Door of Hope : Read Hosea 2:14 – 23 (esp. v.15)

Hos. 2:14-15 Therefore, behold, I will allure her, Will bring her into the wilderness, And speak comfort to her. ¹⁵**I will give her vineyards from there, And the Valley of Achor as a**

DOOR OF HOPE; She shall SING there, As in the days of her youth, As in the day when she came up from the land of Egypt.

Achor means **‘trouble, tribulation or to make sorrow.’**

Achor is a valley in the Judean Desert and located between Judah and Benjamin (Josh. 15:7). Based on biblical references, **the territory and valley were barren or a wilderness** (Isa. 65:10; Hos. 2:15). Achan was executed there for his treason (Josh. 7:24–26). The name **‘Achor’ means “pain” or “trouble”** as does Achan’s name.

Achan impeded the forward movement of God’s purposes for Israel because he disobeyed Joshua by taking the devoted things from Jericho. God dealt with him by ordering his death in the Valley of Achor. So God’s judgement of Achan in the valley of Achor also represents **God’s just dealings with disobedience or any obstacle within a corporate company that prevents their advance into God’s purposes**. Once God has dealt with disobedience and error, there is a door of hope – an entrance into new expectations of a positive and glorious future in God.

Achan could also represent a person – i.e. associations and friendships that does not facilitate our acceleration into Divine purpose. Once these are removed, the valley of Achor (pain, trouble, sorrow) becomes a door of hope.

God is transforming the Valley of Trouble and Pain into a Door of Hope. The experiences that brought pain and trouble is actually going to be the point of access (door) and entrance into a brand new experience. Read the entire context of the verse above: **it relates to God bestowing supernatural provision from a place of wilderness. The wilderness becomes a vineyard.**

Anticipate new levels of abundance and provision from the Lord. Your ‘Achan’ characteristics can be removed through REPENTANCE and now the Achor Valley of pain, trouble, lack and wilderness becomes a door of healing, hope and abundant provision. Your wilderness will become a vineyard.

Note verse 15: **“She shall sing there, As in the days of her youth, As in the day when she came up from the land of Egypt”.**

God will cause such rejoicing as was present when He delivered Israel from Egyptian bondage – and He describes Israel in this phase of her journey with Him as being in her ‘youth’. At times, when we mature in God we often become faithless to trust Him for significant miraculous expressions of His power and ability to deliver. I just sense that in the present season there is going to be reminders of just how powerful He really is. Expect hope to rise from contexts of trouble and tribulation. You will sing again! Lift up your head!

Consider Joseph:

Gen. 41:50-52

Before the year of famine came, two sons were born to Joseph. Asenath, the daughter of Potiphara priest of On, bore them to him. Joseph called the name of the firstborn **Manasseh**. "For," he said, "**God has made me forget all my hardship and all my father's house.**" The name of the second he called **Ephraim**, "**For God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction.**"

Manasseh was so named for God's gracious and providential dealings in Joseph's life. God's dealings with him caused him to forget all the pain and trial attendant with the trouble his brothers brought him in his father's house. God made him fruitful (Ephraim). God allowed him to temporarily forget the pain of his father's house and blessed him, but before his prominent position in Egypt was to be used by God to effect divine purpose, he had to revisit the issue of pain from his brother's betrayal and hurt inflicted upon him – and he did this by forgiving them.

One's 'Ephraimic' purpose is only practically released to effect divine purpose, when one revisits and deals with one's 'Mannasehic' experiences. Forget the things which are behind and press forward for what lies ahead of you! Forgive your brothers who hurt you! Embrace a new level of double fruitfulness!

Sustained Hope in God's Word moves you into Double Restoration!

It is important for your hope to be vested within the Word of God. Hope not rooted in God and Word is not hope at all. That is just general positive thinking. In Zechariah 9, God promises to rescue prisoners from a waterless pit, signifying a dungeon, which is so, because of the absence of relevant WORD (water is a symbol of God's word).

Zech. 9:11,12 As for you also, because of the blood of My covenant with you, I have set your **prisoners free from the waterless pit. Return to the stronghold, O PRISONERS who HAVE THE HOPE**; This very day I am declaring that I will **restore double to you.** (**NASB**)

Zech. 9:11,12 Because of the covenant I made with you, sealed with blood, I will free your Prisoners from death in a **waterless dungeon**. Come back to the place of safety, all you prisoners **WHO STILL HAVE HOPE!** I promise this very day that **I will repay TWO BLESSINGS for EACH of your TROUBLES.** (**NLT**)

Those who have **maintain their hope** in the Word will in this season be returned to a **SAFE** place (depicting a household where the Word of Word is preached and taught). This **SUSTAINED HOPED** is essential to **move into a place of RESTORATION** of all that was lost.

There are many who are **prisoners of waterless pits**, households **without rhema word that cannot instill hope**. Yet there is a remnant who indeed seeks after current truth, and whose hope is still

alive being rooted in some authentic word previously heard. These will be led to the 'stronghold' or 'safe place' – relevant and accurate households of faith – there double restoration will take place. **The imperative is to hold on to your hope.** The NKJV indicates that such people, whilst seemingly in a prison of waterless pit, are simultaneously **prisoners OF Hope.**

Whatever circumstance you seem to be a prisoner of, if your greater reality is one in which you are a prisoner of hope, hope will eventually lead out of the prison of your circumstances. You might be in a pit, but whilst there, do not be a prisoner of the pit, but a prisoner of hope.

DOUBLE for each TROUBLE !

Note in Zech 9:12 God promises to restore DOUBLE measure to all that was lost in circumstances of trial and testing. Such is the hope we can have biblically.

Zech 9:12b

NASB: This very day I am declaring that I will **RESTORE DOUBLE** to you.

NLT: Come back to the place of safety, all you prisoners **WHO STILL HAVE HOPE!** I promise this very day that I will repay **TWO BLESSINGS** for EACH of your **TROUBLES.**

MSG.: Come home, hope-filled prisoners! This very day I'm declaring a **double bonus** - everything you lost returned **twice-over!**

Pray it with me: "Father God, give me a DOUBLE blessing for each singular expression of TROUBLE I had to endure. You did it for Job, restoring TWICE to him the things he lost; You can do it for me. I BELIEVE YOU FOR THIS. I AM FULL OF HOPE for this"

Job 42:10 "The Lord **RESTORED** the **FORTUNES** of Job when he prayed for his friends, and the Lord **INCREASED** all that Job had **TWOFOLD.**

Isaiah 61:7

MSG. Because you got a **DOUBLE** dose of **TROUBLE** and more than your share of contempt, your **INHERITANCE** in the land will be **DOUBLED** and your **JOY** go on forever" (Msg.)

NASB: Instead of your shame you will have a double portion, And instead of humiliation they will shout for joy over their portion. Therefore they will possess a **double portion** in their land, Everlasting joy will be theirs.

In Psalms 71:20-21, the Psalmist expresses great HOPE and CONFIDENCE in God that, even though God permitted TROUBLE in his life, that God would also REVIVE him in the midst of it, bringing him increased greatness, and thereby comfort him.

"You who have shown me MANY TROUBLES and distresses Will REVIVE ME again, And will bring me up again from the depths of the earth. May You INCREASE MY GREATNESS And turn to COMFORT me." (Ps. 71:20-21)

When God fulfills your hopes and dreams, usually from extremely trying and testing circumstances, you are raised to a position whereby you can instill hope in others. Whereas once, you were possibly despised, now you will be sought after.

Job 11:17-19

NASB: Your life would be brighter than noonday; Darkness would be like the morning. **"Then you would trust, because there is hope;** And you would look around and rest securely. "You would lie down and none would disturb you, And **many would entreat your favor.**

NLT: Your life will be **BRIGHTER** than the noonday. Even **DARKNESS** will be as **BRIGHT** as morning. **Having HOPE will give you COURAGE.** You will be protected and will **REST** in safety. You will lie down **UNAFRAID**, and **many will LOOK TO YOU for HELP.**

Trust = Batah = bāṭaḥ = To trust, to be **confident**, To feel **Secure**.
It expresses the feeling of **safety and security** that is felt when one can rely on someone or something else.
The state of being **confident, secure, without fear**.

God has an awesome future and destiny for you. He has plans to give you **a HOPE and future**. Do not let despair, discouragement and hopelessness take root within. **Like David did, learn the skill of encouraging yourself in the Lord.**

One essential skill you must master is the capacity to encourage yourself in the Lord in seasons of alone-ness or absence of support from people from whom you expected it.

1 Sam. 30:6 ... David was **GREATLY DISTRESSED**; for the people spoke of stoning him, ...: but David **ENCOURAGED HIMSELF** in the Lord his God." (KJV)

Your spirit should lead your soul (which tends towards despair at times) to focus on the Lord, to hope in Him and praise Him for the help He is. That is why the helmet of salvation is described as HOPE - it protects the mind from dropping into a state of despair, unbelief, fear, etc.

Psalm 42:5 Why art thou cast down, **O my soul?** and why art thou disquieted in me? **HOPE** thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance.

The soul includes the mind, will and emotions. The unrenewed soul , still in the process of maturation, is prone to vacillation. Hope is the effect is **ANCHORING THE SOUL**, granting it stability.

Heb. 6:19 This **hope** we have as an **anchor of the soul**, a hope both **sure and steadfast** and one which enters within the veil.

It is by the power of the Spirit that we abound in hope, as God, who is the God of hope fills us with joy and peace in our faith-filled belief in Him and His Word.

Rom. 15:13 Now may the **GOD OF HOPE** fill you with all **JOY and PEACE IN BELIEVING**, so that you will **ABOUND IN HOPE** by the **POWER of the HOLY SPIRIT**.

We are **ABOUND** in hope, i.e. hope must be profusely abundant and overflowing in our lives. It is 'IN BELIEVING', i.e. our **FAITH** posture that our God of **HOPD** fills us with all joy and peace. Joy replaces discouragement and peace displaces internal anxiety or unrest concerning the future.

Psalms 31:24 Be strong and let your heart take courage, **All you who hope in the Lord**.

Lift up your focus upon your God, who is Your Hope, and HE will fill you with joy and peace. Abound in hope by the power of the Holy Ghost. Start to do works, acting with fervent desire as you execute plans into action **BY FAITH** - so that you might do God's will attendant with your life.

As Faith comes by hearing the Word of God, so too must we keep our hope alive, we will

Rom. 15:4 For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the **encouragement of the Scriptures** we might have **hope**.

THE SHIELD OF FAITH : In **Eph. 6:16**, faith is described as a **SHIELD**, designed to protect the entirety of the person – all aspects of the person. There are multiple applications of this verse.

One is that faith is the principle that **extinguishes or quenches the effect of satanic intent to destroy us through severe trials and sufferings**. The 'fiery darts' (KJV) or 'flaming arrows' (NASB) of the evil one (satan) is a reference to sufferings. Fire is an imagery used to denote suffering and trials. Our faith position in Christ is what causes us to triumph in the midst of serious trials. Your response to satan's attacks through fiery trials is your Shield of Faith. It is your first line of defense.

Before the enemy can seek to erode your breastplate of faith (righteousness by faith), he will first attempt to destroy your shield of faith. When the enemy attacks you, your strength against his attacks is your faith position in Christ.

Shield = Thureos = A large shield (as door shaped)⁹

A door referring to a stone for **closing the entrance** of a cave. It came to refer to a shield in the form of a **large, oblong-shaped door** that acted as a cover for the entrance of a cave.¹⁰

As implied by the meaning of the word 'shield' in the Greek, this shield was not just a small piece of metal or wood held in the hand of a warrior. It was a literal door-like image, whose purpose was to **DENY ENTRANCE INTO a realm**. That realm is you and your defense, barring the destructive entrance of satanically induced trials, is your faith, i.e. your general belief in God and your specific belief in His Word or promise relative that which satan seeks to destroy in you.

The largeness of this shield also implies that faith is the first protective guard over all the aspects of the armour of God. Satan cannot get to the 'helmet of salvation', the 'belt of truth', the 'breastplate of righteousness', the feet equipped with preparation of the gospel of peace, unless he first neutralises the Shield of Faith.

That's is why Ephesians 6:16, starts '**ABOVE ALL**, taking the **SHIELD OF FAITH** with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one" (NKJV).

[Aside: Another application of shield is that it refers to apostolic fathers who serve as a shield over the people they provide oversight to; They are presented in scriptures as 'gates' or 'doors']

1 John 5:4 For whatever is born of God **overcomes the world**; and this is the **victory that has overcome the world - our faith**.

Our faith is 'world-overcoming' faith!

JESUS CHRIST ENDURED AND OVERCAME BY FAITH

The writer of the book of Hebrews, after listing the life of faith of various saints in Hebrews chapter 11, commences chapter 12 by centering our focus on **JESUS CHRIST**, the author and finisher of faith, and specifically cites **His example of ENDURANCE**.

Heb. 12:1-3 Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with **ENDURANCE** the race that is set before us **FIXING OUR EYES ON JESUS**, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the **JOY SET before Him ENDURED** the cross, **despising the shame**, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who has **endured such hostility by sinners** against Himself, so that you will **NOT GROW WEARY and LOSE HEART**.

Jesus endured the painful and shameful death on the cross. He actually despised the attendant shame, disregarded it as nothing – belittling its intended impact. WHY? His eyes or perspective was FIXATED on the JOY SET BEFORE (i.e. 'ahead of') Him. I believe this joy would be pleasing His

Father, and also the fact that multiple other 'sons' of God (you and I included) would come into relationship with His Father through His atonement for sin.

Heb. 2:10-12 For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in **bringing many sons to glory**, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings. For both He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified **are all from one Father**; for which reason He is **not ashamed to call them brethren**, saying, "I will proclaim Your name to My brethren, In the midst of the congregation I will sing Your praise."

When faith focuses on GOD and its outcome or reward, there is nothing that faith is not willing to endure. No pain is painful enough, no shame, shameful enough and no sacrifice, too costly for the person of faith to obey God completely.

Nothing compares to the realisation of God's nature (person), promise or purpose. Hence, as the writer of Hebrews puts it, **we do not grow weary, or lose heart' (Heb. 12:3)**. If you continue in faith, consistently expressing trust in God, and not succumb to discouragement and 'giving up', there awaits for you **A JOY, that is already SET - i.e. It is established and predetermined.**

Gal. 6:9 Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary.

An Old Testament equivalent for faith is TRUST. While you TRUST in God, continue with confident trust and patient endurance to DO GOOD. Do not just TRUST GOD. Prove this trust by also DOING GOOD without growing weary. God will reward you.

Psalm 37:3 **Trust** in the Lord **AND** do **good**; Dwell in the land and cultivate faithfulness. **(Nasb)**

Psalm 37: 3 Trust in the Lord and do good. Then you will **live safely in the land and prosper.** **(NLT)**

Even Jesus DID GOOD:

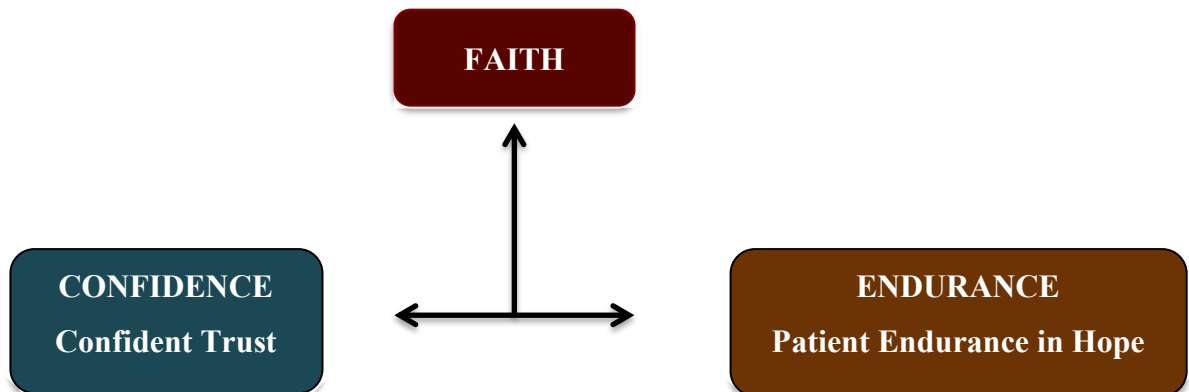
Acts 10:38 even Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power: who went about **DOING GOOD**, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him

Conclusion: The **NLT** renders Heb.10:35-36 beautifully:

Heb. 10:35-36 (NLT)

So do not throw away this **CONFIDENT TRUST** in the Lord. Remember the great reward it brings you! **PATIENT ENDURANCE** is what you need now, so that you will continue to do God's will.

Then you will **RECEIVE** all that he has **PROMISED**.



[To Be Continued]

By His Grace, God gives GOOD HOPE, comfort and strength in every GOOD WORK and WORD.

*Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father,
who has loved us and given us eternal comfort and
GOOD HOPE by GRACE,
comfort and strengthen your hearts
in every GOOD WORK and WORD.*

2 Thess 2:16-17

Psalms 33:17-18

A horse is a false hope for victory; Nor **does it deliver anyone by its great strength**. Behold, the eye of the Lord is on those who fear Him, **On those who hope for His lovingkindness**.

HOPE AND PRAISE:

Psalms 42:11 Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why have you become disturbed within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him, The help of my countenance and my God.

Psalms 71:14 But as for me, **I will hope continually**, And will **praise You yet more and more**.

HOPE AND SILENT WAITING

Psalm 62:5 My soul, **wait in silence for God** only, For my **hope is from Him**.

Psalm 71:5 For **You are my hope**; O Lord God, You are **my confidence from my youth**

Psalm 146:5 How **blessed** is he whose help is the God of Jacob, **Whose hope is in the Lord his God**

Psalm 31:24 **Be strong** and let your **heart take courage**, All you who **hope in the Lord**.

Acting wisely and not foolishly will ensure your FUTURE and your HOPE will NOT BE CUT OFF.

Prov. 24:14 Know **that wisdom is thus for your soul**; If you find it, then there will be a future,
And your **hope will not be cut off**.

Eph. 2:12 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**.

1 Thess 4:13 But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep,
so that you will not grieve as **do the rest who have no hope**.

Great Grace and Peace be multiplied to you,

Randolph Barnwell

By You I have been sustained from my birth; You are He who took me from my mother's womb; My praise is
continually of You - Yes, you have been with me from birth; from my mother's womb you have cared for me.
No wonder I am always praising you!

Psalm 71:6

STAY IN TOUCH VIA THE WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

'Follow' **Randolph Barnwell personally via Facebook, Instagram and Twitter** to receive regular inspirational and encouraging short posts and tweets highlighting key life principles from God's Word. You may also freely download notes and audio files of each session from www.randolphbarnwell.com. Additional materials on various topics are also available for download here. Visit and 'like' the '**GATE MINISTRIES Durban Central**' **Facebook and Instagram** page OR 'follow' Gate Ministries Durban Central on **Twitter** and keep informed as to themes that will be taught each week. To regularly receive our free bible study notes, ensure you are on our email distribution list – send a request to info@gatedc.co.za.

There are two **YouTube Channels** for video recordings of weekly teachings. You are encouraged to **SUBSCRIBE to BOTH** channels.

1. **Gate Ministries Durban Central Channel**. Weekly teachings are uploaded from each Sunday and Wednesday services. www.youtube.com/gateministriesdurbancentral

2. **Randolph Barnwell Channel** - this has teachings from my speaking at local and international conferences outside of our church, Gate Ministries DC. www.youtube.com/randolphbarnwell

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ENDNOTES

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