

“Prisoners of Hope”

Subtitled: *Hope: “The Anchor of My Soul”*

Text:

Zechariah 9:11 *As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy **prisoners** out of the pit wherein is no water. **12** Turn you to the strong hold, ye **prisoners of hope**: even to day do I declare that I will render double unto thee;*

Hebrews 6:17 *Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: **18** That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: **19** Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; **20** Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.*

Lesson Focus:

Now, faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen. (Hebrews 11:1)

Definitions:

- 1. Prisoner** - somebody confined in a place or prison as a punishment for a crime or while they are waiting to stand trial; somebody who cannot escape a situation or condition. (Captive, hostage, detainee, criminal, jailbird, a convict)
- 2. Hope** - to have a wish to get or do something or for something to happen or to be true, especially something that seems possible or likely; a feeling that something desirable is likely to happen; a chance that something desirable will happen or be possible; somebody or something that seems likely to bring success or relief; a feeling of trust.
- 3. Audacity** - to be daring or have a willingness to challenge assumptions and conventions or willingness to tackle something difficult or dangerous: (boldness, courage, bravery, nerve, overconfidence audaciousness.)
- 4. Covenant** - a solemn agreement that is binding on all parties; the promises that were made between God and the Israelites, who agreed to worship no other gods.
- 5. Zion** - one of the mountains or hills of Jerusalem, in biblical times emblematic of the house or household of God and later by extension the Jews and their religion; in Christian belief, the place where God lives and is worshiped on Earth or in the kingdom of heaven.
- 6. Jerusalem** - Called also Salem, Ariel, Jebus, the “city of God,” the “holy city;” by the modern Arabs el-Khuds, meaning “the holy;” once “the city of Judah” (2Ch 25:28). This name in the original is in the dual form, and means “possession of peace,” or “foundation of peace.”

Zechariah 9:9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.

10 And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off: and he shall speak peace unto the heathen: and his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth.

11 As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy **prisoners** out of the pit wherein is no water.

12 Turn you to the strong hold, ye **prisoners of hope**: even to day do I declare that I will render double unto thee;

13 When I have bent Judah for me, filled the bow with Ephraim, and raised up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece, and made thee as the sword of a mighty man.

14 And the LORD shall be seen over them, and his arrow shall go forth as the lightning: and the Lord GOD shall blow the trumpet, and shall go with whirlwinds of the south.

15 The LORD of hosts shall defend them; and they shall devour, and subdue with sling stones; and they shall drink, and make a noise as through wine; and they shall be filled like bowls, and as the corners of the altar.

16 And the LORD their God shall save them in that day as the flock of his people: for they shall be as the stones of a crown, lifted up as an ensign upon his land.

17 For how great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty! corn shall make the young men cheerful, and new wine the maids.

Church, the ancient Jews, concerning this prophecy of the coming of the Messiah, explained that the prophet Zachariah breaks forth into a joyful expression and display because of the “Good News”. Yes, my friends, Christ took the character of their King, when He entered Jerusalem amidst the Hosannas of the multitude of people. But contrary to their beliefs, His kingdom is a spiritual kingdom and it shall not be advanced by outward force or carnal weapons. Brothers and sisters, His gospel shall be preached to the entire world, and be received among the heathen.

Saints, a sinful state is a **state of bondage; it is a pit, or dungeon**, in which there is no water, no comfort where we are all by nature, prisoners in this pit. Church, through the precious **“Blood of Christ,”** many prisoners of Satan have been set at liberty, to freedom, from the horrible pit in which they must or else they will have perished without **hope** or **comfort**. My friends, while we admire Him, let us also seek and ask that His **holiness** and **truth** may be shown in our own spirits and conduct. You see, church these promises have complete success in the spiritual blessings of the gospel which we enjoy by Jesus Christ.

Now as the deliverance of the Jews was representative of our **Redemption** by Christ, subsequently this invitation speaks to all the language of the **Gospel** call. Church, sinners are prisoners, but **“Prisoners of Hope”** even though their case is sad, it is not desperate or hopeless; for there is hope in Christ concerning them. You see, my friends Christ is a **Stronghold, a Strong Tower**, in whom believers are safe. We must be reminded of;

1) The fear of the wrath of God.

Matthew 10:28 *And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.*

Philippians 2:12 *Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.*

2Timothy 1:7 *For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.*

Hebrews 2:14 *Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; **15** And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.*

1John 4:18 *There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath*

torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.

2) The curse of the law, and

Galatians 3:10 *For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. 11 But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith. 12 And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them. 13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: 14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith*

3) The assaults of spiritual enemies.

1John 3:4 *Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.*

Romans 4:15 *Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression.*

James 1:14 *But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. 15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.*

Romans 8:7 *Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.*

Church, to Christ we must turn with **lively faith**, to Jesus we must flee, and to Him we must trust in His name under all trials and sufferings. Saints, it is promised here in this scripture, that the Lord would deliver His people.

Brothers and sisters, this passage also refers to the **apostles** and the **preachers** of the gospel in the early ages because God evidently was with them as His words flowed from their lips and **pierced the hearts** and **consciences of the hearers**. Yes, they were miraculously defended in persecution, and were greatly filled with the influences of the **Holy Spirit**. Yes my friends, they

were saved by the **Good Shepherd** as His flock (Church), and honored as “**Jewels of His Crown**”. You see, my Christian friends, the **gifts, graces, and consolations** (comfort, solace, relief, support) of the Spirit, which was poured out into the world on the “**Day of Pentecost,**” in the second book of the Acts of the Apostles and in succeeding times, are here represented. Saints quick and sudden have these acts been, and they still will be the conflicts of **Zion's Sons**, but their **God** will give them complete success (**Shalom**). Therefore Church, the more we are employed, and satisfied with His goodness, the more we shall admire the beauty revealed in the Redeemer, Jesus the Christ. And whatever gifts God bestows on us, we must serve Him cheerfully with them; and, when refreshed with blessings, we must say, "*How great is His goodness!*"

Hebrews 6:11 *And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end:*

12 *That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.*

13 *For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself,*

14 *Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee.*

15 *And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.*

16 *For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife.*

17 *Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath:*

18 *That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:*

19 *Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;*

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Church as I began to bring to a close this message of hope, I want you to know that the hope here has been predestined, and it is a convinced hope and a positive hope as we look for the good things promised to us through Christ Jesus. Yes it is those promises given to us with love, great desire, and cost for each of them.

Now my friend, what's more important though not easily seen, is that **Hope** has degrees just as **Faith**. But the promise of *blessed hope*, is sanctified, and purified by God for believers, was, is, and will always be God's eternal purpose; that has been settled within the eternal **Godhead** - God the **Father**, God the **Son**, and God the **Holy Spirit**. Yes church, these promises of God may safely be depended upon because we have two things which cannot change the **counsel** and the **oath** of God in which; **1)** it is not possible for God to lie; Why? **2)** Because it would be contrary to God's nature as well as to His Will. Brothers and sisters, because He cannot lie; the destruction of the unbeliever, and the salvation of the believer, are equally sure.

Saints here you must observe, that those to whom God has given full refuge and the protection of happiness, are entitled to the promises by inheritance and birthright through Christ Jesus. Yes my friends, God's **consolations**, His comfort, His solace, and His relief, are strong enough to support is people under their heaviest trials. Church, here is a refuge for all sinners who flee to the mercy of God, through the redemption of Christ, according to the **Covenant of Grace**, laying aside all other confidences (beliefs). My friends, we are in this world as a ship at sea, a ship that is tossed up and down, and is in danger of being cast away. Therefore, we need an **Anchor of Hope** to keep us clear in your mind, steady in our actions and fully persuaded of **God's Love** for us. My brothers and sisters the **Gospel Hope** is our anchor in the storms of this world that we all

