

# BIBLE EXPLORATIONS

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...to know the love of Christ  
which passeth knowledge  
that ye might be filled with  
all the fulness of God Eph 3:19

## The Hopes Of God's People # 11

### Children of God

Earlier in this series, (Lesson #2) it was pointed out that Scripture speaks of God's people in two classes: "children" of God and those whom God made "sons". It was shown that all, who received God's gift of everlasting life, became "children" of God, and that God has called out some children and given them "adoptions", that is, positions of son-ship. The Lord said that He chose and called them out, not for any good in them, but for His own purposes.

We see this prerogative and practice of God's choosing in His dealings with the nation of Israel. He chose that one small nation out from among other nations to serve Him and be priests to the rest of the nations. He chose one tribe out of twelve tribes in the nation for special service, to be in charge of Israel's worship. He chose one family in that tribe to serve as Israel's priests. They were separated from the rest of the tribes and had a different inheritance. In the same way, God is the Father of all His children, but He has selected some for purposes He has planned.

In this series on the hopes of God's people, we have already considered the hopes of the three companies that God adopted as "sons". We have examined the hopes of (1) Israel, called the "Wife" of Jehovah (2) Over-comers of Israel's hope, called the "Bride of the Lamb" and (3) Today's calling of saints out of all nations, the Church which is the "Body of Christ". We found that God chose these families out from among other saints for specific purposes and gave each the promise of

a blessed future.

What we have not considered is the hope of "children" of God. What about that vast number of people throughout the ages who have trusted God as their Savior, who received eternal life, but who were not part of those three companies? What is their hope? What is their sweet expectation for the future? The answer to this question must be gleaned from Scripture that concerns those believers outside the three called out companies.

This raises the question, "What Scripture may we search that concerns believers outside the three companies?" We find that the first twelve chapters of Genesis concern people who lived before God called out any of the three companies and so we may search there for the answer. The Book of Job, believed to be the first and oldest book in Scripture, may lend some light on the matter. And finally, Christ's words to some believers outside the three callings will give the strongest evidence.

Looking now at the first twelve chapters of Genesis that speak of Adam and the people that descended from him, we ask, "What did saints such as Adam, Seth, Noah, etc. anticipate for their resurrection life? What did they know about for which they might yearn?" Adam knew the perfection of the Garden of God (Paradise) and the joy of walking and talking with Him there on earth. Do we read of any other place or joy that God promised Adam or others in those first chapters of Genesis? We find none.

No doubt Adam told his descendants of Paradise and the joy of walking and talking with God in the Garden. Those

who trusted in God as their Savior and who believed Adam's report must have yearned for the life Adam described. This is seen in one of Adam's descendants, a child of God, who longed expectantly for that life that Adam knew in Paradise. Job was sure that after his death he would be raised to earth and see God as Adam did. He cried confidently, "**For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another.**" (Job 19:25-27) Job's hope was not to go to heaven, but to rise from the grave and live with God on earth.

The most conclusive evidence, that believers outside the three callings have a hope and blessings different from the three companies, is found in the words of Christ. When a Syrophenician woman addressed Christ as the "Son of David" and sought a cure for her daughter, He did not acknowledge her request. Instead He replied, "**I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.**" (Mt. 15:24) Calling Him the "Son of David", the foreign woman had appealed to Him as the *King of Israel* and asked for a blessing that was promised only to Israel. When at last she acknowledged that she had no claim to that blessing, and worshipped Him calling Him "Lord," He said, "**O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt.**" (Mt. 15:28) Here we see a woman of faith who received blessing, but who

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## God Requireth That Which Is Past # 2

Ecclesiastes 3:15 tells us that, “**God requireth** (seeks) **that which is past.**” He yearns for His creation as it was when it came from His hand, perfect and holy; He longs for it as it was before it was spoiled by sin. (Job 14:15)

The heavens and earth became waste and void when Lucifer and his angels rebelled against God and later, when Adam sinned, the earth that God re-constructed for him was cursed. We read in Job 15:15, “**Behold, He putteth no trust in his saints** (angels); **yea, the heavens are not clean in His sight. How much more abominable and filthy is man, which drinketh iniquity like water?**” And, to Adam God said, “**...cursed is the ground for thy sake...Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee.**” (Gen. 3:17,18) Not only were the heavens, the earth, Adam, and all mankind polluted by sin, but even the lower creation was brought into bondage. The dread of man came upon all beasts and fowl. (Gen.9:2,3)

God created all things and they are His. David cried, “**...all that is in the heaven and in the earth is Thine.**” (1 Chron.29:11) Abraham and Melchizedek both declared God was “possessor of heaven and earth.” (Gen.14:19,22) All creation is God’s, but it has been defaced. However, He is bringing it back to perfection in the ages. Through the shed blood of Christ, the Lamb of God, He has begun a new creation to replace that which was lost. By the sacrifice of Himself, Christ bore the sin of man and rescued the world from bondage. He is making new creations of men and He will create a new heaven and earth to replace that which was ruined.

In our previous paper we stated that unregenerate man does not seek God, but that it is God Who seeks him. It was shown that even though man defies God, God does not abandon him; instead He draws men to Him so that He

might make them new creations.

The redemption of man from sin and death is of pointed interest to us because it concerns us. However, man is only part of God’s creation redeemed by Christ. Christ fulfilled every responsibility of a redeemer as it is portrayed in Scripture. In addition to delivering *man* from the bondage of sin, He accomplished another work of a redeemer as depicted in the Book of Ruth, and it has nothing to do with sin.

In the Book of Ruth we see that it was the responsibility of a redeemer (Hebrew “gaal”) to recover a lost inheritance. We read that Boaz, kinsman-redeemer of Naomi, fulfilled his responsibility and regained an inheritance that had been Naomi’s, but that was lost to her by death. In the same way, Christ has redeemed the creation, the possessions of God that were forfeited by Him at the entrance of sin and death. The difference is that Christ is not recovering the old and former property of God as Boaz did for Ruth, but Christ is making a new creation to be God’s inheritance. He is making new creations of men, and He will create a new heavens and earth. He is not remodeling men, nor will He reconstruct the earth and heaven of the same material as before; the former will pass away and all things will become new. (Rev.21:1,4)

We are apt to think that man’s welfare is God’s only concern, but we see His care for all His creation in the covenant He made after the flood in Noah’s day. We read that His covenant, not to destroy the earth by flood again, was not made with man only, but four times God said that His covenant was with all the creatures that survived the flood. Genesis 9:8-11 tells us, “**And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying, And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you; And with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle,**

**and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth. And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth.**”

All creation suffers from the sin of Lucifer, angels, and men. We read that the whole creation groans, waiting for its deliverance from bondage and death. Romans 8:20-22 reads, “**For the creature** (creation) **was made subject to vanity** (decay), **not willingly, but by reason of Him Who hath subjected the same in hope... the creature** (creation) **itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.**” “To say that the whole creation groans and travails is a figure of speech. Figures of speech are used to emphasize what is being said and here the misery that resulted from creation’s assault and ruin is emphasized.

“**God requireth that which is past**”, and He is recovering it in the ages. This leads us to ask, “What is His purpose in seeking a holy creation as it was before?” The full answer to this question awaits us in glory when the mind of God may be better understood by us, but His ultimate plan is revealed to us in part in the letters the Apostle Paul wrote from prison in Rome. In those letters we read of the secret that God revealed to Paul; we read of God’s plan made before sin entered His creation, *before the foundation* (overthrow) *of the world.*

In the next paper we will consider God’s goal for the time when “that which is past” is recovered.

J. Heltzinger

## Prayer

Among the mighty privileges that prayer gives us is *access* into the Holy Presence of our Heavenly Father. This will be more appreciated if we remember that during the period covered by the Old Testament the average Jew lived his entire life without once entering the Presence of God which was localized in the Tabernacle of Temple.

The Tabernacle was placed in the center of Israel's camp where it could be seen by all, yet only one Jew, the high priest, once in twelve months, was ever allowed by God to go inside it, draw aside the veil, and enter the Holy of Holies which contained the blazing Light of His glory over the cherubim, the ark and the mercy seat.

God was at pains to teach His people the solemnity and tremendous privilege of approaching Him and how impossible this was without sin being put away, which was symbolized by the shed blood of the sacrifice which the high priest took with him.

Now the reality has been offered, the One Sacrifice once for all, and the great barrier of sin swept aside. The redeemed can now have **"...boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus"**

(Heb.10:19) They can **"draw near"** (verse 22) and **"come boldly to the Throne of Grace"** (Heb.4:16) not once a year, but at all times and always receive a Divine welcome there.

We have been seeking guidance from the Word of God regarding prayer so that it may be really effective. We have seen that there must be an urgency and concentration about it; that it should always contain the element of thanksgiving; that, although we may not always know what to pray for, we have the almighty aid of the Holy Spirit making intercession for us (Rom.8:26-28); that there is no special time for prayer. We should pray without ceasing, remembering that it gives us the might privilege of access into the Holy Presence of our Heavenly Father.

We go on to note that effective prayer puts God first, others second and self last. In the Kingdom prayer of the Lord we have first of all three references to the Father. **"Thy Name...Thy Kingdom...Thy will"** (Matt.6:9,10) before there is any mention of the believer. The Apostle Paul's prayers are always a good model for us, specially those in the epistle to the Ephesians

recorded in chapters one and three. They are both taken up with the glories of the ascended Christ and then the need of the Ephesian saints to come to and experimental knowledge of these riches of revelation. Not until he gets to the last chapter does he remember his own needs and ask for prayer for himself. Even then he says first, **"praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints"** Not until he has stressed this does he say **"and for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the Gospel"** (Eph.6:18,19)

*Stewart Allen (1956)*

Selfishness is a blight on a believer's prayer life. May we all be delivered from it and go on to be more occupied with **"things above where Christ is seated"** (Col.3"1-3) and the need of others to get to know these wonders of God's will. We can then go on together in fellowship, witness and service in connection with the sacred stewardship entrusted to us.

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## A Word Of Testimony To God's Faithfulness

**"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."** (2Ti2:19)

Recently, I spent most of a work day with discomfort in my chest that appeared to be a respiratory problem. In the afternoon, when the pain intensified, as a precaution, a fellow employee called 911 and I was soon surrounded by paramedics. Although I knew something was seriously wrong, based on my medical history, age and diet, I had little reason to believe that it was cardiac related. I was taken to a nearby hospital and kept there overnight for testing. The next morning, an angiogram revealed that a main artery in my heart, (the LAD), was completely blocked. After a short procedure, the artery was opened and two stents were inserted and I immediately felt the flow of blood through that part of my heart and the pressure relieved from my chest.

There are hundreds of similar occurrences around the world daily where the lives of believers, nonbelievers, people

of different races and those of different religions are spared. We can certainly credit the progress of technology in the medical profession for this. But what I would like to attest to is the faithfulness of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I have known the Lord for as long as I can remember. Through the years, I have seen Him prove Himself over and over, under many circumstances and He has always remained faithful to His Word. From the moment I recognized something was wrong, I knew that He had complete control of my life. When I was wheeled into the emergency room, He comforted me and gave me peace, filling my mind with His Word. As I lay there, I rejoiced because He was so real to me. He clearly made His presence known. He was at my side.

The next morning, while I lay on the table watching the monitors that revealed the blocked artery, I fought back tears of rejoicing, once again having the full assurance that He was there at my side and that every moment was in His hands, regardless of the outcome. What peace He brings. I can look back now and see how He watched over me care-

fully in the months, weeks and days leading up to this event, how He directed every step. It was His perfect timing.

Only a few weeks before, while meditating on some of the writings of David in the Psalms, I had asked the Lord to put me in a position to sing His praises. He answered my prayer.

If there is one thing I want to express, it is the sweet, personal fellowship available to us from our Lord, Head and Saviour. Read the Scriptures. Treasure them. Taste His goodness. Every word is true. When difficult circumstances arise, He will confirm His faithfulness and draw near. There is no peace and comfort on this earth that can compare to that which He provides. I want to thank all of you for the prayers cards, emails and phone calls.

**"I will bless the LORD at all times: His praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul shall make her boast in the LORD: The humble shall hear thereof, and be glad. O magnify the LORD with me, And let us exalt His name together."** (Ps 34:1-3)

*B. Bagby*

## Hopes # 11 ...cont'd

could not claim Israel's hope.

On another occasion, when a malefactor being crucified beside Christ asked Christ to remember him when He came into His Kingdom, Christ denied his request. Instead He told the malefactor, "**Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with Me in paradise.**" (Lk.23:43) Here, Christ showed plainly that, while the man had no claim to part in the Kingdom promised to Israel (one of the 3 companies of "sons"), he was assured of the hope of being in with Him in Paradise.

There may have been many individuals outside the three called out companies who trusted in the One True God, but we find only a few mentioned. That is because the majority of Scripture is written to and about the three called out companies. Those writings from Genesis 12 to the end of the Book of Acts concern God's dealings with one nation, Israel. Other nations and individuals out of other nations are mentioned only as they have contact with or relationship to Israel.

The epistles concerning saints after the years of Acts are addressed to the third group summoned to a son-ship position. They are written to and for members of the Church which is the

Body of Christ. They do not concern those who are merely "children" of God.

Thus we see that there is little Scripture written to or about saints outside the three called out companies. From what we *do* have, however, we conclude that their hope is to be in Paradise. We do not find that the hope of Paradise, known to "children" of God from Adam onward, has ever been rescinded.

The Paradise that Adam knew was a real and idyllic realm. It was described by its location, "...**eastward in Eden,**" (Gen. 2:6) It was a realm of perfect bliss, without toil, sorrow or death. There was no lack there; instead there was fullness of joy as God dwelt with man. Access to that Paradise was lost when Adam sinned, but it will be restored in the future. We conclude that when sin and death are gone, the entire earth will be a Paradise again and the "children" of God will be raised to dwell with Him there.

In the next article we will explore the Bible for more on Paradise and compare our findings to what is taught today about Paradise.

*J. Heltzinger*

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### *We Remember our beloved Jerold Oaks*

On June 22, 2003, memorial services were held for Jerold Oaks at Glencroft Community Center in Phoenix, Arizona. Phillip Bagby ministered the good news of resurrection and shared the faithful witness of Jerold. He and his wife Ila have attended the Phoenix Bible conferences since 1976. For many years they dutifully served in preparing the Bible Explorations publication for mailing and attended the Phoenix Bible Study. Jerold is remembered for his zeal for life, his positive comments, and the many humorous quips he managed to include. He was a student of the Word and even in his last years admitted that he was still learning.

He is survived by his wife, Ila, three children, nine grandchildren, and nine great-grandchildren. Kathleen Cottrell provided a noteworthy musical accompaniment and Priscilla Monahan and Kelley J. Bagby sang a duet of "What a Friend we Have in Jesus." All in all, we look forward to seeing Jerold again in heavenly places.

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