

DAILY BIBLE READINGS - Week of April 13, 2008
Theme: “The Christian’s Hope”

Sunday Read Hebrews 6:11-20

“Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul...” The mariner most appreciates an anchor during a storm. When the waves crash and the winds blow, he has placed his faith in the certainty of the anchor. His peace of mind depends on his trust in his anchor. So it is with people. The storms of life will come, and they will have to place their faith in the anchor of their soul. This is where Christians have a huge advantage; the anchor of their souls is the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the Solid Rock! He is God! He has been tempted with every kind of situation and has come through victoriously (Hebrews 4:15). Our Hope is in Christ. Our salvation, an eternal pardon from the penalty of sin, depends on His finished work on the cross of Calvary. His blood was shed for the remission of our sins and satisfied the holy law of God, which required the shed blood of a spotless Lamb for forgiveness. Christians have the promises of God as recorded in the Word of God. Christians have the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit, which means they have the potential for fulness of joy. As with all people, Christians will be faced with many storms; the Christian life is not an easy road. Christians have the most formidable of enemies: the devil himself. But the faith of a Christian is the key to enjoying victory over the storms of life. The anchor of our soul is our hope in Christ. That is a sure hope. Let us not forget that the storms of life come!

Monday Read Proverbs 13:12-25

“Hope deferred makes the heart sick; but when the desire comes, it is a tree of life.” There is nothing quite so bad as a broken heart, a heart made sick by circumstance. The person who has no hope has to cope with hopelessness, the source of depression and despair. It is so important to keep the hope within us on the front burner. Never is a believer hopeless! Always the believer has hope. No matter how dire the circumstances, the Christian has an anchor for the soul - the Lord Jesus and the precious promises of God. However dark the gloom, the believer knows that God will show Himself strong on their behalf (II Chronicles 16:9). The Scriptures tell us this in Isaiah 26:3: *“Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee.”* The greatest enemy of man is death: Jesus conquered even death with His glorious resurrection. The devil is relentless in his attacks, trying to discourage the believer by having him think there is no hope. Believer, do not fall prey to this thinking. If your mind is causing you heartache, consider this: *“With God nothing is impossible.”* That was the encouragement the angel gave to Mary when she felt she was facing impossible circumstances. It was true in her life; it is true in your life!

Tuesday Read II Peter 1:2-8

“Whereby are given to us exceeding great and precious promises that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature.” Humans are born with a sin nature, slaves to sin. Christians have been born again by the Spirit of God that they might have the divine nature, children of God. As children of God, we have been given exceeding great an precious promises. These promises are innumerable. How vital for the believer to read the Bible daily and be reminded of these promises. Think of Isaiah 43:2-3: *“When you go through deep waters, I will be with you. When you go through rivers of difficulty, you will not drown. When you walk through the fire of oppression, you will not be burned up; the flames will not consume you. For I am the Lord your God...you are precious to me. I love you!”* We have the promise of a brighter day in Psalm 30:5: *“Weeping may endure for a night; but joy comes in the morning.”* We have the promise of deliverance from troubles in Psalm 34:19: *Many are the afflictions of the righteous; but the Lord delivers him out of them all.”*

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We have the promise that all things will work together for good and will be used to mold us into the image of Christ in Romans 8:28-29: "*We know that all things work together for good to them who love God and are the called according to his purpose...to be conformed to the image of his Son.*" We have the promise of God's grace and sufficiency in time of distress in II Corinthians 12:9: "*My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.*" We have the promise of an eternal home in John 14:3: "*I go to prepare a place for you.*"

Wednesday..... Read Philippians 4:13-19

"*My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in Christ Jesus.*" The promises go on and on. What a comfort to believers that God will supply all our needs. We must be reminded that God promises to meet our needs. There is no guarantee that we will have all our desires and cravings, but we know that when we are denied these comforts and luxuries, it is for our good. The love of money and the things they may provide is the root of all evil. Not all people can handle the excesses of material prosperity; they have a tendency to cause some to leave their first love and drift off into a worldly lifestyle. So it is not important that believers have all their wants and desires; they do have the assurance of God meeting their needs. Paul said it well in verses 11-12 of Philippians 4: "*I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound.*" The key to contentment is to be satisfied with what God allows us to have.

Thursday..... Read Psalm 112:1-7

"*His heart is fixed trusting in the Lord.*" A fixed heart is a healthy heart. The person who has made a total commitment to the Lord Jesus is a happy person. This individual does not waver and is not tossed about with every wind and doctrine. Making a decision to follow Christ makes all other decisions in life rather easy. If the heart is fixed, the temptations prove not to be so powerful. All the choices in life then become merely deciding what will honor our Savior. Saying "no" is a lot easier for a person whose heart is fixed. Life is greatly simplified if our commitment to Christ is genuine. There are those who may say that you have to give a little to make it in the world. If that "*giving*" is compromising our faith, there should be no giving. This is the beauty of the heart that is fixed. There will be no compromise of our faith. And God will honor that commitment. A fixed heart is essential in knowing the will of God. If we need to compromise a conviction to have something, then it can be assumed that it is something that is outside the will of God. In Romans 12:2, we read this: "*Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind that you may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.*" The person with a fixed heart toward the things of God will prove what is that perfect will of God for his or her life. There is no greater life than that!

Friday..... Read II Timothy 3:1-7

"*This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.*" It is interesting to see the development of our culture. A nation that had its beginning with deep spiritual values has become increasingly secular. This has led to what the Scripture calls *perilous times*. Notice the descriptions: lovers of self and greedy for things; boastful people and scoffers at God and His Word; disobedient and disrespectful to parents and authority; people will be unloving and unforgiving; people will call bad good and good bad; people will love pleasure more than God; there will be a great deal of learning, but much will be void of truth; there will be resistance to the truth. Is there any better description of what is going on today. This is sad, but

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it is exciting in that it indicates that the coming of our Savior is drawing closer and closer. It also means that our work of spreading the Gospel is increasingly urgent. When Jesus looked at the multitudes, he was moved with compassion because they were sheep without a shepherd; they were lost (Matthew 9:36). The responsibility of believers is great, and it is filled with drama. We are laborers together with God empowered by the Holy Spirit to reach out to a world in darkness. We have the truth. We are the defenders of the faith. Let us let our lights shine brightly in this world of spiritual darkness!

Saturday.....Read Titus 2:11-14

"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ." It is appropriate every day for the believer to think that this might be the day, the day that we shall be called up into the clouds to be with our Lord forever. Jesus had said that He would be coming back, but He did not announce the exact time. He did say that it would be as a thief in the night, at a time unannounced. He cautioned us to be ready and watching (Matthew 24:44). Being ready is, first and foremost, knowing Christ as personal Savior! If you have never asked Christ, the Savior of the world, into your life to forgive your sins and be your Savior, you are not ready for His return. You will be left to experience God's judgment and wrath. Secondly, being ready is conducting your life in a way that is consistent with God's expectations. If Christ returned on a Sunday morning, would He find you in a worship service? If Christ returned when you were on the job, would He find you working diligently as a witness for Him? When Christ returns, will He find you being faithful in conducting your life in a way that is pleasing to Him or would you have to be ashamed at His coming? Let us daily be looking for that Blessed Hope of His return. Let us be busy and occupy till He comes!