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Is Your Hope Real?

Ephesians 1:18: (NASB) *I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints...*



It has been said that humans can survive without lots of things for extended periods of time, but the one thing they cannot survive without is hope. What is hope? Where in this world can we find hope that is based in reality and grounded expectation, rather than hope that is based in our own personal preferences? Is there a universal hope for everyone, or does each individual create their own destiny and therefore build their own hope?

What is hope?

🔊) **One drop of water, *Born of Hope* (online movie, a prequel to *Lord of the Rings*), www.youtube.com**

One drop of water, of blood, and then another, can become a ripple, a river, the rising torrent, unstoppable, which in time breaks down all resistance to flow free once again on its journey to its destiny.

True hope has the capacity to start from something very small and become something very large. Hope means, "a desire accompanied by expectation of or belief in fulfillment."

HOPE = Desire + Expectation

Biblical definition of hope: **Hebrews 11:1**

Hope: Strong's #1680 elpis (el-pece'); expectation (abstractly or concretely) or confidence

KJV-- faith, hope.

🔊) **Diet and red wine, Hope for Immortality, FoxO gene, ratemyscience.com**

- *In fact, scientists have been tinkering in the lab trying to extend life for a long time. They've come up with a couple of things that do work in animals. Calorie restriction, for instance. Basically putting an animal on a diet seems to kick in a survival response and helps it live longer. And they found a substance in red wine that has a similar effect.*

Foundations of a true hope: **Titus 1:1-2** **Hebrews 6:13-20:** God was so intent for Abraham to believe Him that He used His own name as collateral. We are to seize this hope and hold on tight! It is like a life preserver in a massive ocean.

Elements of the above-stated hope:

- God's promise,
- The *unchangeable* character of His purpose,
- It is *impossible* that God would prove false,
- We who have taken refuge might be strongly encouraged to seize the hope set before us, and
- We have this hope, a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul.

How are hopes and wishes different?

A hope is NOT a Wish! **Wish:** to have a desire for (as something unattainable), such as, "...he wished he could live his life over."

🔊) **Youth's search/man's search for meaning, *Viktor Frankl (1972 lecture)* Viktor Frankl (1905-1997) was an Austrian neurologist, psychiatrist and Holocaust survivor.**

- *You know what the top category was? 78 percent of these American youngsters were concerned, as they expressed it, finding a meaning and purpose in their lives. So this is a realistic view of man.*

We are looking for something of value to reach towards. **Wrong hopes:** **Job 31:24-28:** Our hope is not to be in gold, wealth, and what we have. Our hope is to be in God and God alone.



Microscopic worms, Hope for Immortality, FoxO gene, ratemyscience.com

*Cynthia Kenyon thinks she may have found one of the keys to a long life in a tiny, nearly microscopic worm called *C. elegans*. (*Caenorhabditis elegans*) "The good thing about these little guys is that they live and die in a little over two weeks."*

Here is a scriptural example of the difference between a wish and a hope: Acts 8:14-9: ...Isn't this how wishes work? You see something you want, and you desire it without doing any of the necessary work to receive it! Acts 8:20-23: Simon wanted to buy this power to use as magic tricks. He was looking at Christianity in the wrong way - you can't buy spirituality or blessings. They are not for sale. We see a lot of Christianity around us today that is so monetarily-based. The hope of Christianity is much bigger than that. It is both *internal* and *eternal*. Christianity has nothing to do with "stuff." So if that is your hope, it is actually just a wish. Hope, therefore, is a much more difficult and serious proposition. It requires aligning one's self with the end result of the hope that we have. The things of this world are not all bad and useless, but they have to be kept in their right perspective.

What makes hope real?

Hope, *The Hunger Games*, (2012 Movie)

- *Why do you think we have a winner?*
- *What do you mean?*
- *I mean, why do we have a winner? Hope. Hope is the only thing stronger than fear. A little hope is effective. A lot of hope is dangerous. A spark is fine, as long as it's contained. So contain it!*

We see this as a satanic perspective to hope. Satan does not want us to have enough hope to change things.

Hope must be part of a much larger perspective to be real: James 2:18-20: Notice even the demons have faith - they know God is true, but they have no hope in that faith. We can believe something to be true, but there must be hope in that truth. What do we do with that belief? How do we make hope real so that it is as strong as our faith?

Maturity makes hope real: 1 Corinthians 13:11-13

Truth FAITH is the basis for HOPE, for true FAITH produces WORKS, and WORKS are evidence of HOPE.

True HOPE is the basis for benevolent LOVE, for without a solid HOPE, the act of SELFLESS GIVING is merely a dead-end gesture rather than a life-changing event.

Hope is the centerpiece of faith and love.

Let's get back to the "hope" people are putting in microscopic worms...

Changed one gene, Hope for Immortality, FoxO gene, ratemyscience.com

- *So this is the normal worm when it is young. It's a nice, spritely worm. Now I'm going to show you the same kind of worms just two weeks later when they are old. In a normal worm, you can see that it is about to die. It is slow moving. Now I'm going to show you worms that look much younger, even though they are the same age. They are wriggling about just like the other ones! So they are like 90-year old people who look 45. So what's different about these? We've changed one gene!*

They are looking for, and are very excited about, the hope of extended life through science.

Living your faith makes hope real - here are the ingredients for a Hope Recipe: Romans 5:1-5:

Verses 1-2: These are some of the things that drive us:

- Justification (meaning "made right") by faith brings us peace with God through Jesus. In such a world as this, peace with God is a very good thing!
- Peace with God brings access to God's grace. We can rely on something bigger than our circumstances.
- God's grace brings us the *opportunity* to exult the hope of God's glory! This was one of the promises given to the followers of Jesus, that the followers would be like him.

Verses 3-5: How do we turn the opportunity into a reality?



- Because of the spiritual promises, we now *know* tribulation brings perseverance.
- Perseverance brings proven character.
- Proven character brings HOPE.
- This hope lives up to expectation because it is driven by God's love and Spirit! It comes through our development and transformation to become more Christ-like.

Where can we find hope in action?

Heroes among us, miracles around us, grizzlyadams.com

- *The threads of history are woven together with stories that inspire and amaze mankind. They are stories of heroes and miracles. For centuries, they have given man something to hope and strive for, the stuff of which dreams are made.*

We are going to start introducing the story of Nehemiah, who demonstrated hope in action, or better yet, whose hope was defined by action: Nehemiah was a descendant of the Jewish population that had been taken captive to Babylon in 587-586 B. C. In 539 B. C. Cyrus the Persian gained control over all of Mesopotamia. He permitted the Jewish exiles to return to the city of Jerusalem. Nearly a century later, in Nehemiah's time, the Persian ruler was Artaxerxes Longimanus (ruled 465-424 BC). Nehemiah was his personal cupbearer.

Let's quickly check back in with science before we rejoin Nehemiah:

DNA and FoxO, Hope for Immortality, FoxO gene, ratemyscience.com

- *Kenyan changed one gene in the worm. Genes are made of DNA - long strings of four chemicals, best known by their initials, A, C, G, and T. Together they form the basis of all life on earth. Kenyan found that there was a gene which scientists call FoxO, which had a central role in keeping her worms freakishly youthful. What FoxO does is it helps the animal to protect and repair its tissue.*

Nehemiah had received word of just how broken down the walls of Jerusalem were, and he was completely distraught. He labored in prayer over the matter and carried this matter as a personal burden, continually bringing it before God.

Nehemiah 2:1-6: The King knew Nehemiah well and was genuinely interested in his wellbeing.

Nehemiah, though a very humble servant of the king, was bold enough to be completely honest.

Notice his first response was not to make the request...it was first to pray *and then* make the request. Nehemiah's continual prayers over Jerusalem had given him great hope. Now this hope was given great opportunity, so he prayed as he plunged through an open door. His hope was founded in his own faith and not in his own intellect or desires. Nehemiah's hope was so firm that he had pre-thought all that would need to be done to repair Jerusalem, so when the opportunity came, he already knew all the details! Nehemiah 2:7-8: Hope knows reality and lives within it, no matter how deep the darkness, for the eyes of hope are on the future!

Can we test the strength of our hope?

What man can be, Viktor Frankl (1972 lecture)

- *If we seem to be idealists and are over estimating, over rating man and looking at him that high up, you know what happens? We promote him to what he really can be. So we have to be idealist in a way, because then we wind up as a true realist. If we take man as he is we make him work, but if we take man as he should be, we make him capable of becoming what he can be.*

Our hope is strong when it is truly recognized and therein lies meaning! Ephesians 1:18-19: Do we have *the hope of His calling*? Hope is the expression and actions of our faith. It causes us to live, act and speak differently. Our hope has strength when we recognize it and it changes our perspective.

Our hope should lift our perspective beyond the moment of difficulty: 1 John 3:1-3: All who have this hope purify themselves. It should change the way we act. We should tell ourselves, "I believe these things will happen, so here is what I'm doing about it," just like Nehemiah. Hope is faith in action! **Our hope should guide us in faith to the unseen:** Hebrews 11:8-10: Abraham



left his home without knowing where he was going. He had hope in the future even though he did not know what the future would hold. He knew it would work out according to God's will.

Building superintendent, Hope for Immortality, FoxO gene, ratemyscience.com

- The reason that it can do it is this one gene controls a lot of other genes. FoxO is a master control gene, meaning it regulates hundreds of other genes - genes that have a profound effect on the worms' health. You can think of it as a superintendent of the building. So if you have a nice big building, obviously it has to be maintained. What FoxO does is keep the building in good working order. The building superintendent would hire workers to do these different things. What FoxO does in the cell is it switches on other genes. Those worker genes do jobs like enhancing the immune system and protecting the cells from bacterial infection. Some of these genes that protect the cell are proteins that will kill invading microorganisms. Others are switched on that are anti-oxidant genes. Kind of like a rust inhibitor for a cell.*

Our hope is strong when it narrows and focuses our objective: Philippians 3:10-14 **Our hope is strong when it provokes great self-discipline:** 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 The Apostle Paul demonstrates that our Christian hope isn't, "I'm saved, so I am done now." **Our hope is strong when we are lifted above the concerns of daily life:** Matthew 6:31-33: We aren't to ignore our earthly needs, but we should not have undue anxiety over them either. If we are focused on doing His will, God will take care of us. This goes beyond just going to church on Sunday and is following in the footsteps of Christ.

What is the last best hope for the world?

For Satan to remain in power, mankind cannot have hope in God beyond a small amount that is contained. Is the best hope for mankind through science and the FoxO gene? Is it looking at history so we don't repeat history? Through education of the masses? No...**Our hope is the last best hope for the world!** 1 Timothy 4:10: Trusting in the living God is the source of the best hope of the world. 1 John 2:2: There is a hope in the Scriptures for not only believers, but also the "everybody else," or unbelievers. **Biblical prophecy is hope. It gives us a glimpse of the future through the eyes of God.** Micah 4:1-5: This is obviously a set of events that are to occur on earth! When God puts a prophecy in place, it means it is going to happen. Here, one of the great hopes of mankind is actually addressed and fulfilled - no more war! Life without fear and life with enough!

Same gene in people, hope for immortality, FoxO gene, ratemyscience.com

- Kenyan tweaked one gene in the worms and made FoxO more active. With a more active superintendent, the cells became more resilient than normal, and Kenyan's worms lived twice as long. If there is one gene that dramatically increases life span in worms, using these samples they tested five genes that had already been shown to help animals live longer to see if any of them would extend human life as well. Based on that list, we found one gene that was head and shoulders above everything else, and that was the FoxO gene. The FoxO gene! That's right! The same superintendent gene that helped double the life of Cynthia Kenyon's worms.*

Revelation 21:3-4: Science is laboring to extend human life. That is a wonderful quest. The Scriptures proclaim that this is already taken care of - it just has not yet come to pass. Whatever God decides to use, FoxO or not, will work to fulfill this promise. When we have the hope through the written Scriptures that God gave us thousands of years ago, it puts things in a whole different perspective. We don't have to worry. Matthew 6:9-10: Jesus gave us this prayer to give us HOPE!!! Think about what he is talking about - is God's kingdom yet on earth? No, but we have seen His will revealed in His prophecies that will take place on earth. This is not just a wish. The Scriptures tell us unequivocally that this hope is for every man, woman and child on the face of the earth. There will be judgment and difficulty, but after that, there is great hope. Why do we believe it? Because the Bible says so.

**So is your hope real...?
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!**