

A Living Hope In a Dying World

Matthew 24:29-32

True salvation implants an inextinguishable hope within us. Prophecy is probably the most encouraging and affirming study we can do in God's Word and especially prophecy. Prophecy has inspired believers since the very first recorded teaching on prophecy in the earliest days of Christ's church; and it is the hope we have of Christ's return that has inspired believers to face troubles, afflictions, and wearying persecutions. Today, as we read the darkest hours of mankind's earthly journey, note how Jesus weaves into this dark fabric, the rays of HOPE.

As we open to Matthew 24:29 we find Jesus describing one of the more fascinating events during earth's final days. These words mark the crescendo, the finale, and the very last act of the dramatic entrance of Jesus Christ back onto the stage. Please notice the 6 words captured in v. 29 and ponder what Jesus described in Matthew 24.

*Matthew 24:29-32 "Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; **the stars will fall from heaven,** and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 30 Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. 31 And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. 32 "Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near.*

The enlarged, unabridged version of what Jesus saw coming, is described by John in Revelation 8. As we turn there we are talking about an event that has an:

Impact Felt Around the World

As we head to the end of our Bible, think about who God's Word is for. It isn't just for us. This book has encouraged saints for 3,500 years since Moses captured into scrolls the first five books. It has encouraged Christ's Church for 2,000 years. But, think of one more truth: this book will continue to encourage and help saints to the END. You see the group that most needs these words are those alive at the END. In Revelation 8 we see how powerful the hope offered by God can be, because it works even when the world is literally falling apart and everything else is hopeless.

Listen to what the Apostle John observed and described as a great burning mountain and great star burning like a torch:

*Revelation 8:8-11 Then the second angel sounded: And something **like a great mountain burning with fire** was thrown into the sea, and a third of the sea became blood. 9 And a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed. 10 Then the third angel sounded: And **a great star fell from heaven**, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water. 11 The name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died from the water, because it was made bitter.*

After a lifetime of studying the book of Revelation, and reading as many books and commentaries as possible—I am still not sure as to whether the words of that prophecy we just read is a first-century man's inspired description of an atomic bomb, a super powerful demonic creature's attack, or if it's about a comet, an asteroid, or meteorite slamming into the earth.

But we do know that God allows John to see an event as it was happening in the future. This is not merely a prediction, prophecy in God's Word is: actually seeing an event in the future as it happens. And John watches an object near the end of the world, falls from the sky and devastates the Earth. And even in that situation, God offers hope that can help and keep believers from giving up. The hope God gives is more powerful than any situation we could ever face!

Whatever this falling object is, God allows it to poison a third of the Earth's fresh water supply, this could be explained as the effect of nuclear radiation fallout; but there are some ongoing discoveries that indicate another possibility. For example:

Near-Earth Objects

It was just six years ago that the US government began funding a new branch of astrophysics called the Near-Earth Object Survey or NEOS. The original allocation of \$40 million was to survey every near-Earth object 100 meters across or larger for 12 months.

In May 2004 just three months after this project started, a University of Hawaii astronomer and a team from Arizona University discovered a new near earth object (space rock) and took photos until storm clouds blocked the skies.

Six months after that, around Thanksgiving of 2004, some Australian astronomers spotted the object, found it to be an asteroid, and named it 2004 MN4.

A month of calculations later led the astronomers to announce to the world on Christmas Eve of 2004 that this asteroid was on a direct hit trajectory with the earth. Here is what

the first verified NEO report said that was published in newspapers around the world:

Scientists calculated that with all available data, the asteroid: "would impact with the Earth on Friday the 13th in April 2029. But what they concluded was that Asteroid 2004 MN4 was a "regional" hazard – only enough to flatten Texas or a couple of European countries with an impact equivalent to 10,000 megatons of dynamite – more than all the nuclear weapons in the world combined."¹

One thing became certain at the end of 2004, the scientific world now has the instruments in hand to detect and track space rocks that were so small that they were not previously tracked; but that could wreak enormous destruction on this planet. As with any other unexpected news, this caused a surge in anxiety for a couple of months, but was soon forgotten. But look back at Revelation 8, and think about what it would be like on the ground when that future event happens.

Now, just think of a flaming object crashing to earth. Something from space (a comet, a meteorite, or something else) hits the earth and poisons 1/3 of the drinking water we learned last week is already in short supply. The result is that "many" people die from this water poisoning. But Earth has already been hit.

Great Meteors have Already Struck Earth

Did you know that astronomers² have concluded that a giant space rock strikes Earth, and leaves a huge crater about every 150 years? Here in the USA we have made a national monument out of a one mile wide, six hundred foot deep meteor crater in Arizona.

Early this month on my way to Los Angeles I leaned over to Bonnie's window seat, and watched Meteor Crater in Arizona go by. By the way, that one hit since the time of the flood since we can still see it. Right? The flood erased the mountains, valleys, and craters across the planet when everything erupted, flooded, swirled and left a mile deep layer of flood sedimentation across the entire planet.

But, what size of space rock does it take to scoop a hole, a mile wide and 600 feet deep, into the Earth? That meteorite was just 20 meters (or 66 feet) wide. That 600-foot-deep (180-meter) hole in the ground, popular now with tourists, is less than 5,000 years old and was created by a space rock so small that another one like it might not be noticed until it hits. We can only detect 100 foot wide rocks, that one was just 66 feet wide!

What if that sized rock hits Newark, New Jersey, 10 miles (16 kilometers) from Manhattan as the crow flies? Not as much damage as you would think. Other than Newark, NYC would be spared and only feel a moderate earthquake of magnitude 4.7 rattles the region. New York City has handled such temblors in the past and largely

¹ Popular Mechanics, December, 2006; http://www.popularmechanics.com/science/air_space/4201569.html

² http://www.space.com/scienceastronomy/mystery_monday_040412.html

endures. No significant ejected materials hits Manhattan, and winds reach an insignificant 3.7 mph.

But what about a "star", an asteroid that is bright, flies earthward and gets as bright as the sun--flaming downward through the atmosphere as it burns away at superheated entry velocity of miles per second? Well if a small say "9.3-mile-wide (15-kilometer) asteroid -- the estimated size of the [suspected dinosaur killer](#) -- drops onto on San Francisco.

The Bay Area doesn't do so well.

The resulting crater, at 113 miles (181 kilometers) wide, pretty much tells the story. The entire metropolis vanishes faster than you can say where you left your heart. What isn't consumed is knocked over in an earthquake of magnitude 10.2, bigger than any in recorded history. Heat from a scorching fireball would turn much of the state, and parts of others, into toast.

The quick death experienced by most Bay Area residents turns out to be a blessing compared to the slow, searing, suffocating death that Los Angeles residents face.

When Death gets Inescapable

About 10 seconds after impact, radiation from the fireball sears Southern California, igniting not only the clothing people are wearing, but even the plywood on the outside of homes.

Within two minutes the ground under Hollywood begins to shake. Weak brick structures crumble. Concrete irrigation ditches are damaged. Frame houses not properly bolted to their foundations are knocked off. Even tree branches fall.

And then it gets nasty.

Six minutes after impact, much of earth that used to be under San Francisco has soared high into the atmosphere and begins to fall on the City of Angels (and just about everywhere else). Ultimately, a blanket of ejected material nearly 18 feet (5.5 meters) deep is deposited in and around LA.

Within a half-hour of the initial cosmic impact, on comes a 66-mph (30 meters per second) wind to rake what's left of Los Angeles.

"If you're close to the site of a major impact, some pretty bad things happen," said Jay Melosh, an expert in impact cratering at the University of Arizona. Denver, about a third of the way over, is coated with nearly a foot of ejected material, called ejecta. Winds reach 22 mph.

New York City residents are spared enough that they can at first sit comfortably and watch all this on TV (to the extent there are any video feeds). Still, about 13 minutes after impact, windows and doors rattle in the East.

After about 21 minutes, stuff shot out from the world's largest new crater starts to rain down on the East, depositing a half-inch blanket across the city. About 3-1/2 hours later an 8-mph wind arrives.”³

So, that would be the incalculable loss of physical property, and the unimaginable loss of tens of millions of human lives just in America, for just this one event of what will be a non-stop horror show that every person alive in the Tribulation will be experiencing non-stop right to the end!

Look back at Matthew 24 again with me, only this time look at verse 13. I want to show you something amazing. Jesus says that something will characterize those who are really His children. No matter what happens before or during the tribulation—His true children never stop clinging in faith and hope to Him. True believers persevere.

*Matthew 24:13 But he **who endures** to the end shall be saved.*

That word “endure” is the Greek word **hupomeno**, which is a very interesting word. Each of the times we find it in the New Testament, it describes the response from the heart of a genuine believer. This hope that works at the very worst of times, works at any time we seek the Lord’s help in our lives. Because whether at the end of the world, or just trying to make it through another day:

Hope is what Jesus Offers

Taking God at His Word, by studying and believing His promises in the Bible, unleashes hope in our lives. The hope God plants in the hearts of His children, true believers, can endure anything. Why not follow this trail through the New Testament and see what I mean.

- *Romans 12:12 rejoicing in hope, **patient in** tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer;*
- *1 Corinthians 13:7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, **endures all things.***
- *2 Timothy 2:10, 12 **Therefore I endure** all things for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. 12 **If we endure**, We shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us.*

³ Catastrophe Calculator: Estimate Asteroid Impact Effects Online, By [Robert Roy Britt](#), Senior Science Writer; posted: 06:30 am ET, 12 April 2004
http://www.space.com/scienceastronomy/mystery_monday_040412.html

- *Hebrews 12:2-3, 6-7 looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him **endured** the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 For consider **Him who endured** such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. 6 For whom the Lord loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives.” 7 If **you endure** chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten?*
- *James 1:12 Blessed is the **man who endures** temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.*

The lesson is that the hope Jesus gives us can endure anything!

Now comes the fascinating part—look back down as James 1:12, that word **hope** is used in the Old Testament that Jesus and His apostles studied. It is the very word we have been studying the last two weeks. How do I know that? Because it is in:

The Bible Jesus Used

If Jesus went to the Family Christian Book Stores this week to buy a Bible, what version would He buy?

Have you ever thought that?

We can find the answer to that question in the Bible you hold in your hands.

The grouping and ordering of the books in the Old Testament Hebrew Bible is different from what Christians have in their Bibles because the Christian Bible adopted the order in the Septuagint, a Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible.

The Septuagintⁱ, or the first translation of the Hebrew Bible, was made in the third century B.C. by Jewish scribes, who were descendents of those trained in Ezra’s Great Synagogue of Jerusalem. These men were very well versed in Hebrew and Greek.

Jesus and the Apostles studied, memorized, used, quoted, and read most often from the Bible of their day, which was called the LXX (Septuagint). When Jesus quotes the Old Testament in Matthew He uses the Hebrew text 10% and the Greek LXX 90% of the time.

Quite naturally, the early Christians also used the Septuagint in their meetings and for personal reading; and many of the New Testament apostles quoted it when they wrote the Gospels and Epistles in Greek. The order of the books in the Septuagint is the same order in our Bibles today.

So if you had a Septuagint Old Testament bound to your New Testament, you would notice the same Greek words used to describe New Testament truths are used for describing similar Old Testament truths. Look back again at Lamentations 3, the passage that most conveys hope in all of the Old Testament:

Lamentations 3:21-25 This I recall to my mind, **Therefore I have hope** [hupomeno]. 22 Through the Lord's mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. 23 They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. 24 "The Lord is my portion," says my soul, "Therefore I hope in Him!" 25 The Lord is good to **those who wait** [hupomeno] for Him, To the soul who seeks Him.

This passage reminds us of how this hope that can endure and triumph through anything, even the very worst times of all the history of the planet, can be ours each day. In fact we each get this hope by:

A Prescription from The Great Physician

So what possible blessing could ever come from such a desperate condition of affliction and hurt? Look back at this passage because it contains the greatest message of Hope in all of God's Word. This is what our Faithful God offers:

1. His Hope comes to us when we fail—God always offers HIS UNFAILING LOVE:

Lamentations 3:22 Through the Lord's mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not.

Jeremiah didn't say he was perfect- he said I know that I am weak and what the Lord revealed to him is even if we fail, God's love never fails. The Lord's mercies, his compassions, they fail not. He loves us with an unfailing love.

2. His Hope comes to us when life seems monotonous—look what the Lord promises- HIS DAILY FRESHNESS:

Lamentations 3:23 They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness.

Have you ever thought about how monotonous life could be without God's faithfulness, His newness and His freshness? My dad did almost exactly the same job for General Motors for 46 years. The same job, at the same plant, every day for almost half a century. That may have been seen as monotonous.

Not for dad. Each day his lunch pail was packed and in was stuck the Bible study book he was currently studying. Dirty, greasy, dog-eared, marked up and priceless. He used those coffee breaks and lunch hours to devour God's Word. My dad never tired of going to work because he found daily refreshment in God's

Word!

Look at this 23rd verse- what he says: They are new every morning—into our monotonous lives, God if we will allow Him to, inserts daily freshness. There is such a newness in our walk with Christ everyday because He is faithful and when we are afflicted, we realize how faithful He is. Look at verse 24-

3. His Hope comes IN OUR WEAKNESSES – He gives us a PERSONAL DOSE OF STRENGTH:

Lamentations 3:24 “The Lord is my portion,”

I have with Bonnie fed 8 children from their first meal onward- when they stopped the milk regimen and went into the real food as we call it, I remember how you sit there on your plate and you chop, chop, chop this way, then you chop, chop, chop that way. Sometimes you mash, mash, mash some of those peas and squash in there when they are not looking- into the potatoes so they will get a good balanced meal.

I remember that I would have this little tiny spoon that was only about this big. I didn't use the serving spoon, I didn't use the ladle to put in to that little mouth, I know what portion they would be able to handle so they wouldn't choke on is.

Look what he in verse 24- “The Lord is my portion,” says my soul, He knows the personal dose of strength I need in my weakness “Therefore I hope in Him!” – He said my soul is weak, the Lord knows the dose or portion I need. Therefore I hope in Him.

4. His Hope comes IN OUR OFTEN FRANTIC LIFESTYLES – HIS PROMISE OF BLESSINGS:

Lamentations 3:25 The Lord is good to those who wait for Him,

You want a great study? That word “wait” is one English word and you will find that word all the way through the Old Testament. There are 8 different Hebrew words translated into English—wait. You know waiting is really important to God. Waiting is very foreign to us. Yesterday as we were driving down 131, a fancy big black, jacked up SUV blew by me. I pulled up beside him toodling along at the stop light at Stadium. He had passed me five minutes ago but that light is so long—I edged up like this so he would notice me—and before the light turned, he ran the red light and squealed around like that.

To the soul who seeks Him—Our lives are often frantic but God promises a blessing to those who wait for Him.

5. His Hope comes INTO OUR ANXIOUS LIVES – HIS SALVATION GIVES QUIET HOPE:

Lamentations 3:26 It is good that one should hope and wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord.

What he is giving us is---- Jeremiah is telling us what he learned in his affliction. What did he learn when he had broken physical health, deep emotional strain-verse 5, dark depression- verse 6, when he had desperation and felt trapped-verse 7, and when he felt out of touch and distant from God in verse 8 of chapter 3.

When he was frustrated and confused in vs. 9, when he was anxious and sad in vs. 17, when he was physically weak and hopeless in verse 18 and when he had bitter affliction in verse 19--- what did he learn? He said this is what I learned in verse 26, we hope and wait quietly.

6. His Hope comes INTO OUR CONFUSING LIVES – He writes HIS PERFECT PLANS: We kind of end where we started, it says in

Lamentations 3:33 For He does not afflict willingly, Nor grieve the children of men.

He says this is not just capricious, it is not roulette living, it's not happenstance, God has a plan. When affliction comes, as this 33rd verse says, it's not an affliction that is a willing, you know----- just want to rattle your cage a little bit and just cause you some problems--- No--- He has a plan.

If we will wait quietly before Him, and say Lord, I want what You are teaching me. He will bring into our lives everything that I just shared with you from verse 22 all the way down to verse 33 of Lamentations.

- Into our failures He will bring His love
- Into our monotonous lives he brings freshness. Everyday He will open the windows of blessing
- Into our weakness, He will give us a little spoonful of what we need, our personal dose of strength
- Into our frantic life styles, He promises blessing if we wait for Him
- Into our anxious lives with anxiety, He gives us a quiet hope that is serenity in the midst of the storm
- Into our confusion, He says I have a perfect plan

That's our great God. Great is Thy Faithfulness, O God my Father. There is no shadow of turning with Thee. Thou changest not, Thy compassions they fail not; as Thou hast been thou forever wilt be.

Current NEO Threats⁴:

2005 YU55 2046-11-09.63

Objects with high Torino ratings

The current record for highest Torino rating is held by 99942 Apophis, an about 270 m near-Earth asteroid, which was later downgraded to 0. On December 23, 2004, NASA's Near Earth Object Program Office announced[1] that Apophis (then known only by its provisional designation 2004 MN4) was the first object to reach a level 2 on the Torino Scale, and it was subsequently upgraded to level 4. It is now expected to pass the Earth on Friday, April 13, 2029 quite closely but with no possibility of an impact. Future uncertainties in the orbit of Apophis will occur because of gravitational deflection during the 2029 encounter, so a Torino rating of 1 (for an encounter in 2036) applied until August 2006, when Apophis was downgraded to 0.

Prior to Apophis, no NEO had ever been given a Torino Scale value higher than 1. In February 2006, the rating for 2004 VD17 was upgraded to a value of 2 due to a possible encounter in the year 2102, making it the second asteroid to ever be given a Torino Scale value higher than 1. Additional observations of 2004 VD17 resulted in a downgrade to 0.

1950 DA is rated above Level 0 by NEODyS,[2] it is rated Level 1. It, however, is not listed by the Sentry program because its risk is not within 100 years.

2007 VK184 is the second object, an asteroid, which is listed on the Near Earth Object Risk List with a Torino Scale of Level 1. The object was discovered on November 12, 2007, by the Catalina Sky Survey. According to the Near-Earth Object list, 95 observations over 35 days suggest 2007 VK184 has a probability of 1 in 31,300 chance to hit the Earth during June 2048. These figures translate into a 0.032% chance to hit (or 99.968% to miss).[citation needed] The asteroid is estimated to have a diameter of 130 meters, and travels through space with a speed of 15.63 km/s relative to the Earth.

2008 AF4 is another object on the Torino Scale of 1. It is thought to have a 1 in 909,000 chance of impacting the Earth in 2096, 2099, or 2100. It was downgraded to 0 by 14 February 2008.

2009 KK, discovered in May 2009, was rated with a value of 1. It was downgraded to 0 on 17 June 2009.[3]

2009 WM1, discovered on November 17, 2009, was rated with a value of 1.[4] It was downgraded to 0 by the end of November.

2009 YG, discovered on December 17, 2009, was rated with a value of 1.[5] It was downgraded to 0 by the end of December.

⁴ <http://neo.jpl.nasa.gov/risk/2005yu55.html>

2005 YU55, in February 2010 was rated with a value of 1.[6]

Due to exaggerated press coverage of asteroids such as 2003 QQ47, astronomers started to work on a re-wording of the Torino Scale, which was published in 2005. It was also considered to phase it out completely in favour of a scale which is less likely to generate false alarms that may reduce public confidence in genuine alerts. One alternative would be the Palermo Technical Impact Hazard Scale.

Asteroids with listing above 1 on the Torino Scale are rare and are, according to NEO, often downgraded to Level 0 after the initial observations.

Appendix: Hope Word Study

The second Hebrew word that God gives us is describing **TRUSTING HOPE**--the word is **YACHAL (3176): HOPE THAT PRODUCES IN US THE ENDURANCE TO GO ON.**

This is trusting or enduring hope.

Hope that trusts until understanding comes.

This is waiting when you can't see what is ahead. **Hope that makes you wait for God when you can't see where you are going!**

Are you unsure where you are today as far as God's plan for your life? Do you ever wonder where God is headed with what He has planned for your future? Do you struggle with His timing and some times feel trapped? Then it is time to let His Word show you what to do while you wait just like Job, Noah, David, and Ezra learned. Have you found the rewards that come as you endure in faith, waiting in hope? This is like getting all packed and sitting on the bench for your flight. You know that when it is time you will go.

Sandstorm in Morocco.

In 1979 I was serving on a team in northern Africa delivering Bibles in Moslem countries. I was one of two designated drivers. Only two of us on the team had international drivers licenses. That meant I drove several thousand kilometers in a very short period of time over some of the worst roads in the world that are found in Africa. One night while everyone was asleep in the cargo van loaded with Bibles I was driving all night to our next stop. A sand storm blew up. I saw less and less of the road. Praying, wondering, and finally stopping when I just couldn't tell where to go.

I just sat there and fell asleep at the wheel and waited for morning. The first thing that greeted me as it began to dawn into the new day was the beautiful ocean spread out in front of me. I had gone straight when the road curved in the dark, and was just meters from the water's edge.

It is wise in life to wait when you do not know where you are headed and

So how can we apply this second type of hope that the Lord offers us—to our everyday lives? I think it would be most helpful to turn to the most well known verse in the Bible using this special word. That verse is in Job 13:15.

Job 13:15 Though He slay **me, yet will I trust** Him. Even so, I will defend my own ways before Him.

The root idea of this word *yachal* is to wait for something. Old Testament Hebrew scholars say that it means 'an expectant waiting under extreme pressure'. The scholar R. B. Girdlestone says, "*Yachal* occurs several times in the Book of Job and signifies a long patient waiting."⁵

When you study this word all the way through Job you can get the true picture of trusting hope.

As you look at these words--Job was going through problems in the extreme.

He lost all of his wealth, all of his children, all of his health, and most of his marriage—and all of that came at warp speed, totally unexpectedly. He was agonizing in pain, and writhing in emotional duress. But through it all he trusts God.

Job 13:15 Though He slay **me, yet will I trust** Him. Even so, I will defend my own ways before Him.

This is trusting hope. This is hope that produces in us great endurance. Job's trusting hope anchored his soul and spirit through life's most severe storms.

Job 14:14 If a man dies, shall he live again? All the days of my hard service **I will wait**, Till my change comes.

This word is even captured by Noah's trusting hope, locked up in an ark that had no way out except when ever God decided to open the door. Remember that God shut them in. Listen to Noah in Genesis 8:12

So he waited yet another seven days and sent out the dove, which did not return again to him anymore.

⁵ Robert Baker Girdlestone, *Synonyms of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1948), p. 104.

For a moment think about trusting hope in Noah's life. If you follow the manner of God's dealing with Noah—the full strength of his faith can be seen.

- God invited Noah into the ark (Genesis 7:1).
- God closed the door Himself. It doesn't seem that there was any other way to get out of the ark other than jumping ship. They were closed in unless they jumped 45 feet. (Genesis 7:16)
- Noah waited with no messages from God for 314 days, that is 45 weeks of silence (Genesis 7:11; 8:13)
- God opened the door when it was His time Genesis 8:15).

The only way to survive inside the ark was by trusting faith. God planned the ark. God invited them in and shut the door. God was with them inside the ark. God sent the storm. And stayed with them inside the ark and all the way through the storm. Then when God knew it was time—God let them out of the ark. But they had two choices—stay with God's plan or abandon ship.

Now fast forward to your own life. If you are saved, God designed your boat (that is your way that you travel through life). He invites you into His plan, when you respond He shuts you in until the ride is over. He sends severe storms, stays with us through the storm, and calms the storms, and when it is His perfect time—opens the door and lets us out.

We can either stay with the plan or jump ship. The only way to last inside the boat of life is to live in trusting hope. What an example Noah can be to us who are going through storms, trials, adversities, disasters, upheavals, and struggles in life.

Now turn to David in Psalm 31. As no stranger to heart aches, pains, problems, and fears—David explains what anchored his soul was his similar trusting hope⁶.

Psalm 31:24 Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart, **All you who hope** in the Lord.

Psalm 33:18, 22 Behold, the eye of the Lord is on those who fear **Him, On those who hope** in His mercy, 22 Let Your mercy, O Lord, **be upon us, Just as we hope** in You.

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

Psalm 42:5, 11; 43:5 Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted **within me? Hope** in God, for I shall yet praise Him For the help of His countenance. 11 Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted **within me? Hope** in God; For I shall yet praise Him, The help of my countenance and my God. 5 Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted

⁶ Yachal is translated often in the LXX by the Greek word elpidzo and elpis. Like in Psalm 119:43, 74, 81, 114, 147.

within me? Hope in God; For I shall yet praise Him, The help of my countenance and my God.

Psalm 71:14 **But I will hope** continually, And will praise You yet more and more.

- **There is waiting or recharging hope.**
 - *Hope that waits until renewal comes.*
 - Just like a charger for your phone, a cradle for your PDA—we plug into God’s truth, believe His Word waiting upon the Lord. Then He renews and recharges and refills us with His strength. Have you plugged into God's Word and been still before Him this week on a regular basis and gotten your strength renewed?
- **There is trusting or enduring hope.**
 - *Hope that trusts until understanding comes.*
 - Are you unsure where you are today as far as God’s plan for your life? Do you ever wonder where God is headed with what He has planned for your future? Do you struggle with His timing and some times feel trapped? Then it is time to let His Word show you what to do while you wait just like Job, Noah, David, and Ezra learned. Have you found the rewards that come as you endure in faith, waiting in hope? This is like getting all packed and sitting on the bench for your flight. You know that when it is time you will go.
- **There is clinging or holding on hope.**
 - *Hope that reaches out and asks for the Hand of God to hold onto.*
 - Hope that clings to the Hand of God as a child holds the hand of their mom in the doctor’s office or their dad in the dark woods at night. Clinging hope that says you are All Powerful, you can carry me through. Have you reached up and taken that Hand that stretches down to you from the heart of God this week? Or are you stumbling through life in the dark, filled with anxiety and pain?
- **There is sheltering or running hope.**
 - *Hope that flees from danger into the loving arms of God.*
 - Hope that runs for the storm shelter when the disasters of life approach. Have you settled in your heart that there is no place safer than in the arms of Jesus? And do you know that He who began the work of salvation also completes it? And have you experienced the One who prays for you on the mountain while you are out in the storm tossed boat—and then comes to get in your boat at just the exact moment that is best, to calm the storm?

Lamentations 3:21-25 This I recall to my mind, Therefore I have hope. 22 Through the Lord’s mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. 23 They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. 24 “The Lord is my portion,” says my soul, “Therefore I hope in Him!” 25 The Lord is good to those who wait for Him, To the soul who seeks Him.

HOPE is what God to those who keep their eyes on the God who has chosen Jerusalem.

Waiting hope

In Lamentations 3 we find the first of these four. That first Hebrew word that God gives us is describing **WAITING HOPE**—the word is **QAVAH (6960): HOPE THAT RENEWS EXHAUSTED STRENGTH.**

Lamentations 3:25 The Lord is good to those who wait for Him, To the soul who seeks Him.

The original idea of this verb was to twist or to stretch something. It was associated with the twisting and stretching of weak strands into a strong rope. From this the word metaphorically developed into the idea of enduring under tension. This concept sprung from the fact that even a weak thread twisted together with a rope became strong. The belief grew that as we hope in the Lord's promises we are woven into His strength and strengthened to withstand the stresses of life.

Now turn with me to the most well known verse in the Bible using this special word. Isaiah 40:31. Here God gives us a great promise given by Isaiah illustrating this word:

Isaiah 40:31 But those who **wait** on the Lord Shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.

The word translated *wait* in Isaiah is *qavah*. The major shade of meaning in this is "waiting in the expectant HOPE and being strengthened thereby." The margin note renders it "who HOPE in the Lord," which is more accurate. A sure hope in the future enables a person to have superhuman strength:

Isaiah 40:29-31 He gives power to the weak, And to those who have no might He increases strength. 30 Even the youths shall faint and be weary, And the young men shall utterly fall, 31 But those who [HOPE in] the Lord Shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.

This is exactly the same word and hope that the patriarch Jacob testified about at the end of his 147 year long life of troubles, stress, and disasters. Genesis 49:18 **I have waited for** your salvation, O Lord!

King David in writing the Psalms uses this word more frequently than any other biblical writer. This word actually was one of the keys to David's life. He recognized that his human strength was never enough to meet the stresses of life.⁷

⁷ Hal Lindsey, *The Terminal Generation*. Old Tappan, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Company: 1976, p. 92-93.

*Psalm 25:3 **Indeed, let no one who waits** on You be ashamed; Let those be ashamed who deal treacherously without cause.* **Waiting Hope** delivers us from being ashamed of hard times.

*Psalm 25:5 Lead me in Your truth and teach me, For You are the God of my salvation; **On You I wait** all the day.* **Waiting Hope** makes each days troubles into a lesson from God just for us.

*Psalm 27:14 **Wait on the Lord**; Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the Lord!* **Waiting Hope** gives us the strength we need so that we do not lose heart.

*Psalm 37:9, 34 For evildoers shall be cut off; **But those who wait on the Lord**, They shall inherit the earth. 34 Wait on the Lord, And keep His way, And He shall exalt you to inherit the land; When the wicked are cut off, you shall see it.* **Waiting Hope** promises us that we have the victory through the Lord.

*Psalm 39:7 "And now, Lord, **what do I wait for?** My hope is in You.* **Waiting Hope** focuses our lives upon the Lord.

*Psalm 40:1 **I waited patiently for the Lord**; And He inclined to me, And heard my cry.* **Waiting Hope** assures us that He is hearing us.

*Psalm 130:5 **I wait for the Lord**, my **soul waits**, And in His word I do hope (yachal #3176 trusting hope the next word). **Waiting Hope** draws us back into God's Word.*

*Lamentations 3:25 The Lord is good to those who wait for Him, To the soul who seeks Him. **Waiting Hope** invites God's blessings.*

Trusting hope

The second Hebrew word that God gives us is describing **TRUSTING HOPE**--the word is **YACHAL (3176): HOPE THAT PRODUCES GREAT ENDURANCE**. Turn with me to the most well known verse in the Bible using this special word. Job 13:15.

The root idea of this word is to wait for something. It came to mean an expectant waiting under extreme pressure. The scholar R. B. Girdlestone says, "Yachal occurs several times in the Book of Job and signifies a long patient waiting."⁸ A study of the usage of this word in the Book of Job gives the most accurate connotations. Job was a man going through extreme trial: he lost his great wealth, all his children, and his health-in rapid succession. He was suffering incredible and constant physical and mental pain. Yet as he thought of why God had permitted all this he says,

⁸ Robert Baker Girdlestone, *Synonyms of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1948), p. 104.

Job 13:15 Though He slay **me, yet will I trust** Him. Even so, I will defend my own ways before Him. [Here the word *yachal* means to keep on hoping with endurance under extreme pressure. Job's hope in the Lord enabled him to endure and be stabilized even under adverse conditions.⁹] **Trusting Hope** guards us from despair (remember Elijah despaired of life and wanted to die?).

Job 14:14 If a man dies, shall he live again? All the days of my hard service **I will wait**, Till my change comes. **Trusting Hope** anchors our souls as Hebrews 6:19 says—in Heaven.

Genesis 8:12 **So he waited** yet another seven days and sent out the dove, which did not return again to him anymore. **Trusting Hope** keeps believing even when there is no visible thing in life to see that points to a possibility of hope—just like Noah did in the ark.

Psalms 31:24 Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart, **All you who hope** in the Lord. **Trusting Hope** strengthens us.

Psalms 33:18, 22 Behold, the eye of the Lord is on those who fear **Him, On those who hope** in His mercy, 22 Let Your mercy, O Lord, **be upon us, Just as we hope** in You. **Trusting Hope** invites God's blessings.

Psalms 38:15 For in You, O Lord, **I hope**; You will hear, O Lord my God. **Trusting Hope** assures us that God hears us.

Psalms 42:5, 11; 43:5 Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted **within me? Hope** in God, for I shall yet praise Him For the help of His countenance. 11 Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted **within me? Hope** in God; For I shall yet praise Him, The help of my countenance and my God. 5 Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted **within me? Hope** in God; For I shall yet praise Him, The help of my countenance and my God. **Trusting Hope** gives us a reason to go on, a reason to smile, a reason to bless others with the strength that God alone can give.

Psalms 71:14 **But I will hope** continually, And will praise You yet more and more. **Trusting Hope** opens our life to magnify the Lord.

Psalms 119:43 And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth, For I have **hoped in** Your ordinances. 49 Remember the word to Your servant, **Upon which You have caused me to hope**. **Trusting Hope** points us back to God's Word.

Psalms 119:74 Those who fear You will be glad when they see **me, Because I have hoped** in Your word. 81 My soul faints for Your salvation, But I **hope in** Your word. 114 You are my hiding place and my shield; **I hope** in Your

⁹ Hal Lindsey, *The Terminal Generation*. Old Tappan, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Company: 1976, p. 92-93.

word. 147 I rise before the dawning of the morning, And cry for help; **I hope** in Your word.

Lamentations 3:21, 24 This I recall to my mind, **Therefore I have hope.** 22 Through the Lord's mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. 23 They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. 24 "The Lord is my portion," says my soul, "**Therefore I hope** in Him!" **Trusting Hope** is choosing to remember God even in the midst of our darkest hours.

Clinging hope

The third Hebrew word that God gives us is describing **CLINGING HOPE**--the word is **BATACH (982): HOPE THAT INSPIRES DEEPER TRUST.** Turn with me to the most well known verse in the Bible using this special word. Proverbs 3:5.

Proverbs 3:5 **Trust** [literally cling to] the Lord with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding;

Here **batach** is used in the sense of hope that comes from casting one's total future upon God as a little child and trusting Him for everything. This word is most often translated to trust or to have confidence in someone-usually God. But in some contexts it is definitely used to mean hope, as in the great prophetic Twenty-second Psalm. The Messiah's thoughts while suffering on the cross are predicted here¹⁰:

"But thou [God] art he that took me out of the womb: thou didst make me HOPE [batach] when I was upon my mother's breasts" (Psalms 22:9 KJV).

Psalm 37:3-5 **Trust in** the Lord, and do good; Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness. 4 Delight yourself also in the Lord, And He shall give you the desires of your heart. 5 Commit your way to the Lord, **Trust** also in Him, And He shall bring it to pass. **Clinging Hope** assures us that God is at work.

Psalm 40:3 He has put a new song in my mouth—Praise to our God; Many will see it and fear, **And will trust** [cling to] the Lord. **Clinging Hope** puts a song in our heart that flows out of our lives in even hard times.

Psalm 56:3-4, 11 Whenever I am afraid, **I will trust** [cling to] You. 4 In God (I will praise His word), In God I **have put my trust**; I will not fear. What can flesh do to me. 11 In God **I have put my trust**; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me? . **Clinging Hope** counteracts and removes our fears.

¹⁰ Hal Lindsey, *The Terminal Generation*. Old Tappan, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Company: 1976, p. 95.

Psalm 112:7 He will not be afraid of evil tidings; His heart is steadfast, **trusting** [clinging to] the Lord. **Clinging Hope** calms us whatever we have coming at us.

Sheltering hope

The final of the four Hebrew words for hope that God gives us is describing **SHELTERING HOPE**--the word is **CHASAH (2620): HOPE THAT OFFERS SECURE REFUGE**. Turn with me to the most well known verse in the Bible using this special word. Ruth 2:12.

Ruth 2:12 The Lord repay your work, and a full reward be given you by the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings you have come **for refuge**."

This is a beautiful word for hope. Its root meaning is "to seek shelter, refuge or protection in something or someone."¹¹ It is used frequently to portray little animals taking refuge in the cleft of a rock as in Psalm 104:18 The high hills are for the wild goats; The cliffs are a refuge for the rock badgers.

Figuratively it came to be used of man's taking refuge in God from the spiritual, emotional, and physical dangers of life. On a few occasions this concept is translated HOPE. In Proverbs 14:32 this is used in a unique way: "The wicked is driven away in his wickedness: but the righteous hath hope in his death" (KJV).When the one who has been declared righteous by believing in Jesus as his Savior faces death, he will have a hope that is a refuge from the uncertainty and fear presented by his own death.¹²

2 Samuel 22:3, 31 The God of my strength, **in whom I will trust**; My shield and the horn of my salvation, My stronghold and my refuge; My Savior, You save me from violence. 31 As for God, His way is perfect; The word of the Lord is proven; He is a shield **to all who trust in Him**.

Psalm 7:1 O Lord my God, **in You I put my trust**; Save me from all those who persecute me; And deliver me,

Psalm 11:1 In the Lord **I put my trust**; How can you say to my soul, "Flee as a bird to your mountain"?

Psalm 16:1 Preserve me, O God, **for in You I put my trust**.

Psalm 31:1 In You, O Lord, **I put my trust**; Let me never be ashamed; Deliver me in Your righteousness.

¹¹ Brown, Driver, and Briggs, p. 875.

¹² Hal Lindsey, *The Terminal Generation*. Old Tappan, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Company: 1976, p. 97-98.

Psalm 57:1 Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me! For my soul **trusts** in You; And in the shadow of Your wings **I will make my refuge**, Until these calamities have passed by.

Psalm 71:1 In You, O Lord, **I put my trust**; Let me never be put to shame.

Psalm 91:4 He shall cover you with His feathers, And under His wings **you shall take refuge**; His truth shall be your shield and buckler.

Proverbs 30:5 Every word of God is pure; He is a shield **to those who put their trust** in Him.

ⁱ Comfort, Philip W., *The Complete Guide to Bible Versions*, (Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.) 1991. Since Matthew wrote primarily to convince the Jews that Jesus of Nazareth was indeed their promised Messiah, it follows as a matter of course that his Gospel is saturated with the Hebrew Scriptures. When Jesus faced off with the liberal, unbelieving religious leaders of His day in Matthew 22:32, He made His point about the resurrection by quoting the LXX of Exodus 3:6 verbatim. That means He knew it, memorized it, and used it at the climactic moments of His ministry. In Mark 7:6 Jesus quoted Isaiah 29:13 word for word from the LXX. In Mark 12:10-11 He quotes Psalm 118:22-23 verbatim from the LXX. In Luke He quotes almost exclusively from the LXX. Paul also uses the LXX as does Peter and Hebrews almost always quotes the LXX. Phillips, John. *Exploring the Gospels, Matthew*. Neptune, New Jersey: Loizeaux Brothers Inc., 1999, p14 . "There are 129 Old Testament references (53 direct citations and 76 allusions) taken from 25 of the 39 books. Of the 129 references, 89 were made by the Lord Himself (35 citations and 54 allusions). Matthew drew from every part of the Jewish Bible: the Law, the prophets, and the Writings. Some of the citations were taken from the Hebrew text (12 total, Guthrie, NTI), but most were taken from the Septuagint (117 total), the Greek version of the Old Testament." The Septuagint (LXX) was the Hebrew Old Testament translated into Greek. After his conquest of the Babylonian Empire, Alexander the Great promoted the Greek language throughout the known world, and thus almost everyone - including the Jews - spoke Greek. Hebrew fell into disuse, being reserved primarily for ceremonial purposes (like the use of Latin among Roman Catholics). In order to make the Jewish Scriptures (what we call the Old Testament) available to the average Jewish reader, a project was undertaken under the sponsorship of Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285-246 BC.) to translate the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek. Seventy scholars were commissioned to complete this work and their result is known as the "Septuagint" ("70") translation. (This is often abbreviated "LXX". Missler, Unexpected King, online.) According to Jewish legend, in ca. 250 B.C., Ptolemy Philadelphus brought together 72 scholars who translated the Old Testament into Greek in 72 days. Thus, the Latin word for 70, "Septuagint" (LXX), was the name attached to this translation. John F. MacArthur, Jr., *The MacArthur Study Bible*, (Dallas: Word Publishing) 1997.