

Eternity Daily Bible Study

Romans 9-16 The Implications of Salvation

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE MINISTRY OF THE AIBI

Number: 619

Verses: Romans 15:4

Topic: Hope From The Bible

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Romans 15:4 MKJV *For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, so that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.*

Some Christians dismiss the Old Testament, but Paul says that it was still of great value: "whatever things were written before were written for our learning" - and at this point in Christian history the "things written before" were the OT Scriptures.

Paul also wrote to the Corinthians about the continuing relevance of OT examples (in this case of God's discipline of Israel in the wilderness).

1 Corinthians 10:11 MKJV *(11) And all these things happened to them as examples; and it is written for our warning on whom the ends of the world have come.*

And the Scriptures Timothy would have known as a child would have been the current books of the Old Testament:

2 Timothy 3:14-17 MKJV *But continue in the things that you have learned and have been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, (15) and that from a babe you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise to salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. (16) All Scripture is God-breathed, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, (17) that the man of God may be perfected, thoroughly furnished to every good work.*

Paul tells us that the Scriptures are a source of hope: *so that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.* In the trials of life it is often a word from the Bible that brings light and hope into our life. But this often needs to be combined with patience as we wait for the word from God to become manifest in our lives. It is this waiting on the word of God that builds character into our lives. The impatient person ends up hope-less because they always give up or take a short-cut before God's word has a chance to blossom into reality.

This is especially true in situations of injustice and great suffering such as the persecutions that came upon the early Christians in Rome. It is not easy to suffer at any time, and undeserved suffering can be especially difficult to bear. To see relatives and fellow-believers dragged off and crucified, or used as human torches to light processions must have been truly dreadful (though the worst persecutions may have occurred after Romans was written). Even in such dreadful situations the Scriptures, patiently borne, would have been a great source of hope as they told of a just and loving God who would reward them with eternal life, and who would punish their enemies on the Day of Judgment.

2 Thessalonians 1:5-10 MKJV (5) *For this is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God for which you also suffer, (6) since it is a righteous thing with God to repay tribulation to those who trouble you, (7) and to give rest with us to you who are troubled, at the revealing of the Lord Jesus from Heaven with the angels of His power, (8) in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God and who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, (9) who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, (10) when He shall come to be glorified in His saints and to be admired in all those who believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that Day.*

Having solid hope in the Scriptures will see us through this life and lay a solid foundation for the life to come. By contrast, putting one's hope in people, or money, or governments or political parties or even in success formulas – is a sure path to ultimate disappointment.

The mature Christian is one who can patiently trust in the promises of God without doubting and without taking unethical short-cuts to the desired end. The apostle Peter, in his second epistle, gives a beautiful snapshot of what this process is like:

2 Peter 1:2-8 MKJV *Grace and peace be multiplied to you through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, (3) according as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who has called us to glory and virtue, (4) through which He has given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, so that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. (5) But also in this very thing, bringing in all diligence, filling out your faith with virtue, and with virtue, knowledge; (6) and with knowledge self-control, and with self-control, patience, and with patience, godliness, (7) and with godliness, brotherly kindness, and with brotherly kindness, love. (8) For if these things are in you and abound, they make you to be neither idle nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

In the central place in Christian growth are phrases such as “*through the knowledge of Him*” and “*through which He has given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, so that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature*”. As we get to know God and as we rely on His wonderful promises the rest unfolds around us – and this knowledge of God and His promises almost entirely comes from the Bible.

It is as we steadfastly believe what is written in the Bible, including the Old Testament, that we come to know God and grow in faith. Note that I say “believe” not just “know”. We have to trust the Scriptures, and hang on them as true words from God with real application to our lives. The key example here is Abraham trusting God for the birth of Isaac despite the discouraging external realities.

Romans 4:18-22 MKJV *For he who beyond hope believed on hope for him to become the father of many nations (according to that which was spoken, "So your seed shall be"). (19) And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body already dead (being about a hundred years old) or the deadening of Sarah's womb. (20) He did not stagger at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to*

God, (21) and being fully persuaded that what God had promised, He was also able to perform. (22) And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.

Let us therefore take solid refuge in the Scriptures knowing that in trusting God's promises we shall find hope in the midst of life!

Blessings,

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