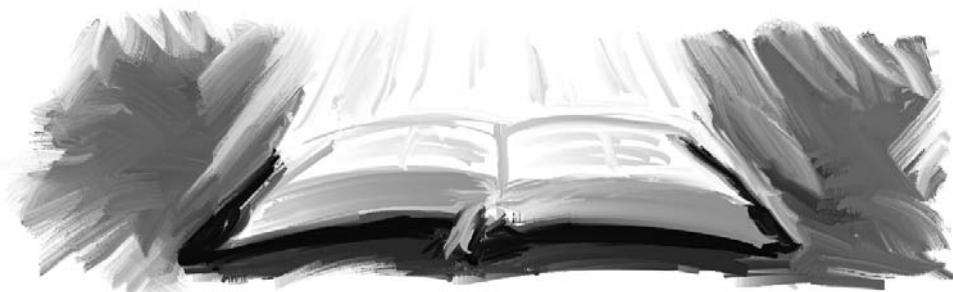


Revelation¹ of Hope



SABBATH—MAY 19

READ FOR THIS WEEK'S STUDY: Psalm 34:7; Psalm 91:4; Romans 3:26; 1 Corinthians 15:51-58; Colossians 1:14; Colossians 2:13; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Peter 3:18; 1 John 1:9; 1 John 2:12.

MEMORY VERSE: “Everything that was written in the past was written to teach us. The Scriptures [Bible] give us strength to go on. They cheer us up and give us hope” (Romans 15:4, NIV).

KEY THOUGHT: The Bible shows us a world of hope and promise.

FOUR MEN IN A PLANE WERE SHOT DOWN DURING WORLD WAR II. The crew floated for 21 days on a small life raft in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. The men had no water or food. But, when their thirst got so bad, rain fell. And the men caught the rain and drank it. When the hunger of the men became great, seagulls landed on the rafts. And the men caught the birds and ate them.

Then the men were rescued. Each man was questioned separately. Each man was asked the same question: What gave you hope to stay alive? All the men gave the same answer: There was a New Testament in the raft. The men read the New Testament every day. And that Book gave them the hope to keep going when things looked hopeless.

In the Bible, *hope* does not mean a wish for something that might not be true. In the Word, *hope* means the truth about a loving, powerful (strong) God. God will care for us. He offers us the promise of new life in a new world.

This week we will look at hope shown to us in the Word of God.

¹revelation—the act of making known what was hidden or secret.

SUNDAY—MAY 20**THE HOPE THE BIBLE GIVES US
(Romans 15:4)**

“Everything that was written in the past was written to teach us. The Scriptures [Bible] give us strength to go on. They cheer us up and give us hope” (Romans 15:4, NlrV).

In the above verse, Paul talked about how the Scriptures give us hope. What special things have you found in the Bible that give you hope?

The Bible speaks about the condition of humans.² We all are sinners (Romans 3:10). And the end result of sin is death (Romans 6:23). Paul talks about the struggle against sin. He said, “What a terrible failure I am! Who will save me from this sin that brings death to my body?” (Romans 7:24, NlrV). The answer to the problem of sin is found in Jesus Christ our Lord (Romans 6:23). Because of His love for us, Christ came to this world. He lived as a human. He died the death that we should die. The Bible points us to the hope of salvation that we can have in Jesus. This hope lives in us because Jesus died to save us from sin.

²humans—men, women, or children.

³forgiveness—the act of pardoning someone or showing mercy to someone who has done wrong or caused hurt or injury to others.

⁴psychologists—people who study the mind and the reasons for the ways that people think and act.

⁵microphone—an electronic device for picking up sound; the device can make the sound louder or send the sound far away.

⁶video camera—a device used to record and play back images (pictures) on a television or computer screen.

What hope is shown to us in Luke 18:29, 30; John 16:13; Romans 3:26; 2 Timothy 3:16; 1 Peter 3:18; and 1 John 5:13?

At the cross, Jesus took the punishment for our sins. Jesus died in our place. He suffered in our place. He did all this for us. Why would Christ have gone through so much for us? What hope does Jesus’ death on the cross offer to us?

MONDAY—MAY 21**HOPE OF FORGIVENESS³
(Ephesians 4:32)**

A woman had been cruelly murdered. Police psychologists⁴ studied the murder. Then they came up with a plan to catch the killer. They placed a hidden microphone⁵ and video camera⁶ in the ground at the woman’s grave. And they waited. One night a man came to the grave. The man got on his knees and begged the dead woman for forgiveness. The police got it all on tape.

What made the man go back to his victim? There is only one answer: guilt.

As sinners, we all have done wrong. Even people who do not believe in the Bible, who do not understand sin as we do, have a

sense of right and wrong. And they often feel guilty when they do wrong. For some people this guilt is overpowering (very strong). Guilt is the basic emotion (feeling) that controls everything some people do. For many people, guilt has led to a feeling of hopelessness for themselves and for those who often suffer because of the guilty one's wrong behavior.

But there is hope. And hope is shown to us in the Bible. This is because the Bible gives us the story of Jesus and His death for us.

What do Acts 26:18; Ephesians 1:7; Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 1:14; Colossians 2:13; 1 John 1:9; and 1 John 2:12 tell us about the forgiveness that Jesus offers to everyone?

Yes, the Bible is clear that through Jesus we have forgiveness. And how much does God forgive us? The Bible shows God as saying that He has taken away our sins from us as far as the east is from the west (Psalm 103:12). God has thrown our sins to the bottom of the sea (Micah 7:19). God has put our sins behind His back (Isaiah 38:17). God has blotted out (removed) our sins or swept them away (Psalm 51:1, 9; Isaiah 43:25; Isaiah 44:22). And God will remember our sins no more (Jeremiah 31:34). Christ died for the sins of the whole world. His death was a cleansing sacrifice.⁷ God forgives the sins of

all who come to Him in faith (Romans 3:25, NIV). No matter who you are or what you have done, your sins can be forgiven by God. Just take hold of His promises of forgiveness for yourself.



Jesus has thrown our sins to the bottom of the sea (Micah 7:19).

Are you still struggling with guilt? If so, go back over some of the verses we studied today. Read them. Pray about them. Pour out your heart to God. Ask Him to help you believe that these promises are for you, no matter what you have done.

TUESDAY—MAY 22

HOPE FOR WINNING THE BATTLE OVER SIN (1 Corinthians 15:57)

What hope is found in Proverbs 24:16 and 1 Corinthians 15:57?

We may fail, but there is hope. There is hope that we can rise again and again after we fall. We have the

⁷sacrifice—the act of giving up one thing, such as life, for the sake of something else.

hope that we are not cast away by God. We might sin, but Jesus will defend us as our Mediator⁸ (Hebrews 7:25; 1 John 2:1). The Bible also says that through the power of Jesus we can have victory⁹ over sin.



We may fall, but there is hope.

It is one thing to claim God's promises of forgiveness.¹⁰ And there are many of these promises! But what about Jesus' promises of victory over sin? Are they not just as real as the promises of forgiveness? Are they not just as important? It is very important in our walk with Jesus that we make these promises of victory over sin our own and believe that they are real.

Some members may be struggling to overcome (win the battle over) weaknesses. According to the Bible, the following steps can lead us to victory:

1. Know what your weaknesses

are. Realize that you cannot overcome your weaknesses by yourself (read John 15:5).

2. Claim God's promises of victory. Make these promises your own (read Philippians 4:13).

3. Believe that the Lord has given you the victory to overcome those weaknesses. Then thank Him for the victory (read 1 Corinthians 10:13).

4. Claim the promise of "death" to self in Christ (read Romans 6:11).

5. Take useful steps to avoid the things that lead you into sin (read Romans 13:14).

6. Live your life in an attitude (feeling) of praise and prayer to the Lord. It is the Lord who gives you the power to overcome your weaknesses (read 1 Corinthians 15:57).

Have you claimed the Bible promises of forgiveness? But are you now struggling to get victory? What changes do you need to make in your life so that you can better use the steps above to get victory over sin through Jesus?

WEDNESDAY—MAY 23

PROVISION (FOOD) AND PROTECTION¹¹ (Psalm 37:25)

"I once was young, and now I'm [I am] old. But I've [I have] never seen

⁸mediator—a lawyer or go-between who helps to bring people together. Jesus is the Mediator between God and us. Jesus helps to bring us back to God.

⁹victory—the act of winning the battle over, or winning the struggle against, something.

¹⁰forgiveness—the act of pardoning someone or showing mercy to someone who has done wrong or caused hurt or injury to others.

¹¹protection—the act of keeping someone or something safe and out of harm's way.

godly people deserted. I've [I have] never seen their children begging for bread" (Psalm 37:25, NIV).

What hope does Jesus offer us in Matthew 6:25-34? What is Jesus saying in these verses to us?

Jesus is the Creator of the universe.¹² He has filled the earth with His wonderful gifts, such as food. But sin has taken its terrible toll¹³ on our world. So not everyone can enjoy these gifts. We may be very rich or very poor, but we have the promises of God that He will give us what we need.



Fruits are one of God's wonderful gifts to us.

God also gives us hope of protection. We are not under the tyranny (cruelty) of chance.¹⁴ Under the tyranny of chance, our lives are ruled by chance that has no purpose in mind. This is not what the Bible teaches. Bad things do happen. But those who

love God have wonderful promises. These promises give us great hope, even when we do suffer.

What hope do you find in Psalm 34:7; Psalm 46:1-3; Psalm 91:4; Psalm 125:2; and Matthew 28:20?

The Lord has given us wonderful promises about His loving care and protection. We can find many examples in the Bible of just how wonderfully and miraculously the Lord protected His people. We also can find examples of God's people suffering, even dying, while being faithful to God (read Matthew 14:10; Acts 7:59; Hebrews 11:35-39). Did the promises of God fail in those examples? Or can we hold on to these promises even when bad things happen? Can we trust that the Lord is in control even when things go wrong? Can we have hope for the future, even though we may suffer now?

Have these promises become real in your own life? What have you learned from your own hardships and suffering? How could this help someone going through a hard time right now?

THURSDAY—MAY 24

HOPE OF EVERLASTING¹⁵ LIFE

No matter who we are, we all face

¹²universe—all the matter, light, and energy that scientists have discovered (found).

¹³toll—the amount or number lost or taken.

¹⁴chance—events that happen by accident.

¹⁵everlasting—lasting forever.

death. Medicine, diet, and exercise only can delay death. No matter our backgrounds, our education, our race, creed (beliefs), or color, death always gets us. Life always ends in loss. It is tough to struggle with hardships, sickness, and disappointment. And then we face death, which ends those problems.

Fortunately, the Bible shows us what nature, science, history, and philosophy¹⁶ never can: Death is not final. Eternal life awaits those who accept Christ as their Lord and Savior.

Write down in your own words the promise and hope found for us in 1 Corinthians 15:51-58 and 1 Thesalonians 4:13-18.

This world offers no answer to death. But it is nice to know there is an answer. It is found in Jesus. Death is not the end. Death is not a long fearful night that never comes to a morning. The grave is not a prison from which there is no freedom. Jesus Christ went into the grave and came out alive again. Thanks to His victory¹⁷ over death, we will overcome (win the battle over) death too. That is how powerful Christ's ministry¹⁸ was! That is how well this power works for us. Even death cannot stop it.

This is the hope the Bible gives us. In the Bible we find the story of Jesus.

The Bible tells us what Jesus has done for us and what He will do for us. The Bible gives the answer to life's hardest question, and that is death. And in the Bible we find the hope that death does not mean the end of everything.



The Bible teaches us that death is not final for those who accept Jesus.

Imagine what life would be like if you believed that everything ended forever at death. How differently would your life be now? How differently would you act? What reasons could you give for living if you knew it would all come to nothing in the end? How should the hope of eternal¹⁹ life change how you live now?

FRIDAY—MAY 25

ADDITIONAL STUDY: Ellen G. White, "God's People Delivered [Set

¹⁶philosophy—the study of human thought about the meaning of life, how mind relates to matter, and the problems of right and wrong.

¹⁷victory—the act of winning the battle over, or winning the struggle against, something.

¹⁸ministry—work done for God.

¹⁹eternal—forever; without end.

Free],” pp. 635–652; “The Controversy Ended,” pp. 662–678, in *The Great Controversy*.²⁰

“In the Word of God there are wonderful, inspired promises. Those who are sick either in body or in mind may receive comfort and hope and courage from these promises.”—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *Counsels [Advice] on Health*, p. 213.

“We need to understand and value the meaning of the words, ‘I sat down under His [God’s] shadow with great delight.’ Song of Solomon 2:3. These words do not bring to our minds the picture of people in a hurry. Instead, they give a picture of quiet rest. There are many Christians who are worried and downhearted. Many of them are so busy with work that they cannot find time to rest quietly in the promises of God. They act as if they do not have time for peace and quietness. Christ invites all these people, ‘Come unto me [Jesus], . . . and I will give you rest.’ Matthew 11:28.”—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Health*, p. 251.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- ❶ There are many promises in the Bible. But why are there still so many suffering people? Why does the Lord let bad things happen? How can we use the Bible to give comfort and hope to those who are suffering?
- ❷ As a class, discuss the work of the church. How does the Lord use the church to bring hope in God’s promises to people? How can your local church be better used by the Lord to make some of these promises happen in the lives of Christians?
- ❸ There are so many clear promises about victory²¹ over sin. But why do church members often have so much trouble overcoming (winning the battle against) sin? As a class, talk about what steps can be taken to help one another find the victories that seem so hard to get.
- ❹ Here is something the whole class can do. Share a Bible verse that gives you hope. Explain to the class why that verse means so much to you.

²⁰great controversy—the war between Jesus and Satan over good and evil.

²¹victory—that act of winning the battle over, or winning the struggle against, something.