

Hope for Creation



Hope (Part 8)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again sharing on this week's inspiring theme: Hope.

In my two previous talks this week I've shared what the Bible has to say about hope in two successive phases of human experience. First, hope during life in this world. Second, hope in death. And I've explained that on the basis of the clear teaching of Scripture, of the written word of God, those whose lives are committed to Jesus Christ and who are walking in His purpose can have hope, first of all, in this life because God is making everything work together for good no matter what the appearances, no matter what the situation. The hand of God is in it making everything work together for good if we are believers and if we are walking in line with God's purpose.

But our hope, thank God, does not end in this world. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15:19:

> "If in this world only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."

If our faith doesn't meet the challenge of death, it's a worthless faith, it's a deception. But, thank God, it does. And so we have hope not only in this life but we have hope in death.

Further back in my talks the previous weeks I shared that the biblical basis of all true hope is the resurrection of Christ. On this basis, the Bible offers us solid grounds for hope both in death and beyond the grave.

Now, in my talk today I'm going to broaden the scope of my theme still further, I'm going to speak about hope for creation, the whole creation. First of all, we need to understand that Adam's rebellion and fall not only affected all Adam's descendants, that is, the entire human race, it also affected the whole area of creation over which God had given Adam both authority and responsibility to rule as God's vice regent. It's very important, we don't understand the state of things in the world today unless we realize that Adam's fall had a negative effect on the whole created order over which God had set him as ruler. It didn't just affect Adam, it didn't just affect Adam's descendants, but it affected the whole creation over which he was ruler, for which he was answerable to

God. Adam's sin admitted a negative, blighting influence that affected the whole creation: the animal creation, the vegetation. Every aspect of creation on this earth was negatively affected by Adam's fall. We get a little picture of this in the words that the Lord spoke to Adam when He challenged him with the results of his disobedience in Genesis 3:17-18:

> "To Adam [the Lord] said, Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, You must not eat of it, cursed is the ground because of you: through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. [Notice the ground was cursed because of Adam's sin.] It [the ground] will produce thorns and thistles for you…"

So you see, thorns and thistles were not the way God intended plants to grow. They are the result of the negative blighting influence that came through Adam's disobedience that affected the whole creation. Every time you see thorns and thistles, just say to yourself, "Those are the evidences that the earth is under a curse."

Now, in the New Testament, in Romans 8:18-23, Paul speaks more fully about this. He says:

> "I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. [That's the redemption of God's believing people.] For the creation was subjected to frustration [or, other translations say vanity or futility], not by its own children, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies."

Note there the succession of words that all evidence the curse: sufferings, frustration, bondage, decay, groaning, pain. You see, the fall of the first Adam brought a blight not only on himself and his descendants but also on the whole creation. However, the redemption achieved by Jesus, the last Adam, extends not only to Adam and his descendants but also to the whole creation. And when man is redeemed, creation will be redeemed together with man. And by the Holy Spirit believers share now in the wordless longing of all creation for that hour or redemption. You see what Paul says, "Not only is creation groaning as in pains of childbirth right up to the present time, not only so, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit [the revelation of the Holy Spirit within us that enables us to see beneath the surface and to see what's going on really in the inner realm], we ourselves who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies." So, creation is groaning, waiting for that glorious day and we who have the first fruits of the Spirit are groaning. We're looking for a birth, the birth of a new age, the redemption of man and the redemption of the earth that was blighted and cursed through man's fall.

This anticipation and expectation of nature for redemption as man is redeemed, these are beautifully portrayed by the psalmist in Psalm 96:11-13:

> "Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad; let the sea resound, and all that is in it: let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them. Then all the trees of the forest will sing for joy; they will sing before the Lord, for he comes, he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples in his truth."

You see, all creation is waiting there for the coming of the Lord to bring redemption to man and to earth.

Now, by way of explaining that more fully, I'm going to read a passage from my book, Chords From David's Harp, which is my special offer this week. It's a comment on those verses of the psalmist that we've just read and the title of my comment is this:

> "Awaiting the Climax"

"The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice…" (Romans 8:19-20)

Man by his rebellion against his Creator brought corruption and decay upon the whole natural world around him. That which was blighted through his fall can be restored only through his redemption. This is the climax that all nature awaits. Too often man himself loses sight of this, but the anticipation of nature grows stronger all the time.

With insight given by the Holy Spirit, the psalmist here interprets the wordless longing of the natural world around him. In his spirit he senses a hushed anticipation, like the

stillness in a concert auditorium as the conductor with upraised baton surveys his orchestra to make sure that each player is ready for the opening note. Heaven above and earth beneath, seas and fields and trees, all await the coming of the Lord to restore to them what was lost through man's fall. At that moment, like the orchestra as the baton descends, they will break forth into a symphony of praise and jubilation.

How about you and me? Are we ready as nature is for that great climax? May God grant that you and I be more expectant and excited than the trees and the fields and the seas and the heavens!

And then, in every one of these meditations on the Psalms in this book of mine, I have at the end what I entitle: Faith's Response; that is, how if we accept the truth presented, we should respond in turn to the Lord. And so, here is faith's response to the words of the psalmist and to the truth which I'm unfolding.

> "By Your Spirit, Lord, keep me in continual excited anticipation of Your coming."

I'm going to say that again. "By Your Spirit, Lord, keep me in continual excited anticipation of Your coming." Paul says if we have the first fruits of the Holy Spirit within us, we identify with the groaning of nature. We identify also with the anticipation of nature. Nature is waiting for the manifestation of its creator, the Lord's return in glory. Everything is going to break forth into a glorious symphony of worship, praise and thanksgiving. Everything in nature is making itself ready. How about you and me? How about us? Ought we not to be more ready than nature? Ought we not to be more excited? Ought we not, who can read the Bible and study the truths of Scripture, ought we not to be on tiptoe of expectation [as one translation says]? You see, we're in the midst of the birth pangs of a new age. We can groan now but we have that sure and certain hope a new age is going to be born.

Well, our time is up for today but I'll be back with you again tomorrow at this same time. In my talk tomorrow I'll be speaking about hope as a helmet, a vital piece of spiritual armor that protects our minds.

Radio Program

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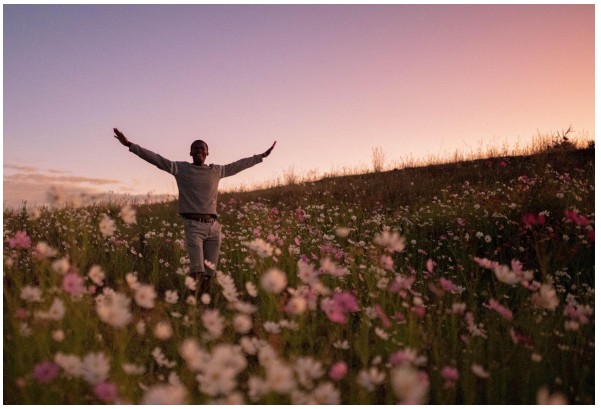

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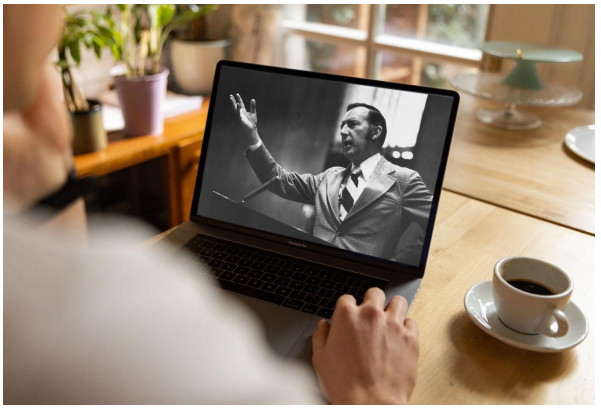

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