

GREAT DOCTRINES OF THE BIBLE

(Special English Edition)

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OUR BLESSED HOPE

INTRODUCTION

In the first set of our lessons, in Lesson #9, we studied the subject of The Rapture of the Church. The Rapture is certainly exciting as the believer looks forward to the coming of Christ. The Rapture is only a part of what Paul calls “that happy hope” in Titus 2:13. The “happy hope” is God’s plan for our future. This hope is the return of Christ to take all the believers with Him to heaven. Some of the fine points of this great event must be left out because there is too much material to include in this lesson. In this lesson we will study those parts that make this hope great for every believer.

IMPORTANCE OF THIS LESSON

- ❑ In Ephesians 2:12, Paul said of the Ephesians, that in the past they were without Christ. They had no hope and they did not know God. This describes this present world. We see a thousand million souls each day who live without hope. Even in “Christian” America, great numbers of people face death with fear, because they are without the hope of heaven in their hearts.
- ❑ Proverbs 11:7 says that when a wicked man dies there is no hope for him. Everything he hoped for is gone – all of it is worth nothing.
- ❑ A person can live, and suffer, and fight in this life as long as he has hope. As believers even when we sorrow we still have a great hope (1 Thessalonians 4:13). Every born again believer has hope in his heart. The believer has the hope of resurrection.
The believer has the hope that he will be raised from the dead never to die again.
The believer has the hope of a future full of glory with Christ.
The believer has the hope of going to heaven. He has the hope that he will see Christ face to face and be with Christ.
- ❑ Believers also have the hope of a new body, a new home, a new life, and a new a new place to live. No wonder it is called “that blessed (happy) hope.” In this lesson our aim is to review all aspects (parts) of that hope.

THE LESSON

I. THIS HAPPY HOPE IS CERTAIN.

- A. There are many proofs for the resurrection of Christ. We can trust all of these proofs because they are true (Acts 1:3; Romans 1:4; Revelation 1:18). Note Lesson # 4.
- B. There are a great number of proofs in the New Testament about the return of Christ.
 - 1. There are 318 verses in the Bible that talk about the return of Christ.
 - 2. That is an average of one for every 25 verses.
 - 3. All of 1 & 2 Thessalonians and Revelation talk about the return of Christ.
- C. The prophets told us about it.
 - 1. Isaiah 40:10 says the Lord God will come with strong hand.
 - 2. Zechariah 14:5, 9 says that the Lord my God will come, and all the believers will come with Him. Then the Lord will be king over all the earth.
 - 3. Psalm 24:9 This verse says that the gates should lift up their heads and the old doors should open and the King of Glory will come in.

- ◆ *The prophecies in the Old Testament point mainly to the return of Christ to the earth to set up Israel as a glorious nation. They talk about the future of Israel. The New Testament says very clearly that believers in the time of the Church will take part in that glorious return (Romans 8:17; Colossians 3:4; Revelation 5:10).*
- D. Some of the words in these promises are very definite.
 1. John 14:3 – “If I go...I WILL come again...”
 2. 1 Thessalonians 4:16 – “For the Lord himself SHALL descend from heaven...”
 3. Acts 1:11 – “This same Jesus...SHALL so come...”
 4. Hebrews 9:28 – “...unto them that look for him SHALL he appear the second time...”
- ◆ *The New Testament writers would not change in their belief about the return of Christ. They preached about the return of Christ because they were completely sure of it.*
- E. The difference between the first time Christ came and the second time He will come.
 1. Compare Luke 2:7 with 21:27
 2. Compare Matthew 1:21 with 24:30
- ◆ *The first time He came humbly as a baby. The second time He will come in power and great glory.*
- F. Three trustworthy witnesses
 1. Christ Himself – (John 14:3) “...I will come again...”
 2. The witness of the angels – (Acts 1:11) “...This same Jesus, ...shall so come...”
 3. The witness of the apostles – (1 Thessalonians 4:16) “The Lord himself shall come.”
- ◆ *The return of Christ is not:*
 1. *Some people teach that the coming of the Holy Spirit is the same as the Return of Christ. The Bible makes almost all the prophecies about the coming of the Holy Spirit AFTER Pentecost. At Pentecost Christ came to be with us through the Holy Spirit. At the return of Christ on the clouds, He takes us to be with Him!*
 2. *Some people teach that at the time of death Christ comes to take the believer with Him. At the time a person dies there are no trumpets, no shouts, and we are not “caught up” to be with Him.*

II. THE NAMES FOR OUR HAPPY HOPE

- A. Our happy hope is called a living hope (1 Peter 1:3). This verse mentions that we have received a living hope through the resurrection of Christ. It is a living hope because Christ lives in us (Galatians 2:20). It is a living hope because the person of our hope is alive forever and ever (Revelation 1:18).
- B. Our hope is called a hope that can never change (Hebrews 6:19). We have a hope that is like an anchor. It is strong and sure and keeps our soul safe. Our hope is strong and sure because God’s Word can never change. God also made this hope certain by making a vow. It is not possible for God to lie with a vow (Hebrews 6:17, 18).
- C. Our hope is called a hope of glory (Colossians 1:27). This verse says that Christ is our only hope for glory. We will see Christ in all of His glory (Jude 24) and we will be like Him (1 John 3:2). We will share in the heavenly glory of Christ in the future (Romans 8:17, 18; Philippians 3:21).
- D. Our hope is called a hope that keeps the believer pure (1 John 3:3). This verse says that Christ is pure and every person who has this hope in Christ keeps himself pure like Christ. The belief that Christ may return at any time helps the believer to keep his life separated from sin (1 John 2:28; Titus 2:11-13).
- E. Our hope brings comfort (1 Thessalonians 4:18). Paul says that believers should comfort each other with the words he gave them about this happy hope. This happy hope is the greatest comfort for a person who is in sorrow over the death of someone. There is no greater comfort for a suffering person than the teaching of this happy comfort (1 Thessalonians 5:10-11).
- F. Our hope is called “that happy hope” (Titus 2:13). This verse says that we are looking for Christ because He is our happy hope. What a happy future is waiting for those whose trust is in the Lord.

III. THE REWARDS OF OUR BLESSED HOPE

Salvation is by grace alone (Ephesians 2:8-9). There is no way anyone can earn or merit heaven. Nevertheless, there are valuable rewards waiting for those who trust and serve the Lord (Revelation 22:12; 4:4). Peter writes that the believer must try hard to show that he is really a child of God and he will be given a very great welcome into the rule of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:10-11). In 1 Corinthians 3:14, Paul writes the same thing. Paul says that any man will receive a reward from God if his work stands.

- A. A crown of righteousness (2 Timothy 4:8). This verse says that God will give that crown to the believer. He will give that crown to all people who want Him to come again and have waited for Him. This reward is for those who have fought the battle for righteousness in this world (note verse 7). This reward is for those who have been examples of that righteousness. It is for those who live right because they are waiting for Christ to return.
- B. A crown of life (Revelation 2:10). The believer must be faithful even if he has to die. If he is faithful then God will give him the crown of life. This crown is promised to those who are willing to suffer because of their love for Christ (James 1:12). They may die as everyone else, or they may suffer a brutal death. Glorious, eternal life is waiting for them!
- C. A crown that cannot rot (1 Corinthians 9:25). When Paul was living the winner received a crown made out of leaves. This crown could rot and only one person could receive it. The crown that cannot rot is for those who continue to live for God until they receive the prize (Philippians 3:14). "Fight the good fight of faith" (1 Timothy 6:12). We must run the race according to the rules (2 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 12:1,2).
- D. A crown of glory (1 Peter 5:4). A glorious crown that never loses its beauty is waiting for the elder or under shepherd who faithfully feeds and oversees the believers in the church (1 Peter 1: 1-3).
- E. A crown of rejoicing (1 Thessalonians 2:19). Paul said to the believers in the city of Thessalonica that they are his crowns of joy when the Lord Jesus comes back. Paul had won these Thessalonians to Christ. This crown is a special crown for the soul-winner. It is a happy reward for all who lead sinners to Christ.

- ◆ *Part of our reward of faith will be when we are caught up at the rapture of the Church (1 Thessalonians 4:17). Another part of that reward will be the moment when we are changed into the likeness of Christ (1 Corinthians 15:51; Philippians 3:20, 21). Other parts of that reward are the joy of being with Christ forever (John 14:3) and sharing His glory (Romans 8:17, 18). The privilege of reigning with Christ over the whole earth will also be a part of that reward (Zechariah 14:9; Revelation 5:10)*
- ◆ *We should consider two things:*
 - *We are to endure patiently so that no person will take away our crowns (Revelation 3:11).*
 - *We know that we do not deserve these crowns. Therefore we will be happy to put them at the feet of Jesus before His throne. (Revelation 4:10).*

IV. WHAT IS THIS HAPPY HOPE LIKE?

- A. It is real. The coming of the Holy Spirit or death are not the same as the coming of Christ for the believers. He will come with a real body and as a real person. This coming will really happen. "I will come again..." (John 14:3). "...This same Jesus...shall so come..." (Acts 1:11). "...the Lord Himself will come down..." (1 Thessalonians 4:16).
- B. It may happen at any time. As Christians we must live as though we are expecting Christ to come back at any moment (Hebrews 9:28; 1 Thessalonians 1:10; 5:6; Philippians 3:20; Titus 2:13).
- C. It will happen suddenly and quickly. The fulfillment of our happy hope will come suddenly (1 Corinthians 15:52). "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye..." (1 Thessalonians 5:2,3). It will be like a thief who comes quickly at night. It will be like lightning (Matthew 24:27).
- D. The coming of Christ has two parts. We must always remember that Scripture presents the coming of Christ in two parts. First, He comes FOR us at the rapture of the Church (1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17; John 14:3). Seven years later He comes to earth WITH us, in power and great glory (Revelation 19:11-15; Jude 14; Colossians 3:4).

1. In the first part, Christ comes only on the clouds. At this time the Church is quickly taken suddenly out of the world (1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17). This gives the Antichrist an opportunity to start his work (2 Thessalonians 2:3-8). This gives the Antichrist his last chance for his false teaching (2 Thessalonians 2:11; Luke 18:8; 2 Timothy 3:1-5).
 2. In the second part Christ returns to the earth with the believers. People will be able to see Him (Revelation 1:7). This time He comes with great power (Matthew 24:26-27). People will see His great glory (Matthew 24:30). Compare 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17 with Zechariah 14:4-5. Compare John 14:3 with Matthew 25:31-32.
- ◆ *There is a period of time between these two parts of Christ's return. This period of time allows some other things to happen. During this time the beast of the Antichrist will rise up and reign over the world (Revelation 13:1-5). The judgment seat of Christ will take place during this time (2 Corinthians 5:10). The Battle of Armageddon will also take place during this time (Revelation 16:14-16).*

V. THE POWER INVOLVED

Our hope includes opportunities for the Lord to display His great power. Here are a few things to consider:

- A. Power to raise all believers from death, never to die again (1 Thessalonians 4:16; 1 Corinthians 15:52).
- B. Power to change our bodies immediately into the likeness of His own body. These new bodies will never die and rot (Philippians 3:21; 1 John 3:2; 1 Corinthians 15:51-52).
- C. Power to make us rise from the earth to meet Him in clouds (1 Thessalonians 4:17). Millions shall rise in a moment!!
- D. Power to smash the nations of the earth and destroy their armies (Daniel 2:34, 35, 44, 45; Psalm 2:8,9; Revelation 19:15-20).
- E. Power to tie Satan and win over the "beast" or Antichrist (Revelation 20:1-3; 2 Thessalonians 2:8; Revelation 19:19-20).
- F. Power to end the control of the Gentiles over the world (Romans 11:25; Acts 15:14-17). The kingdoms of the earth become the kingdom of our Lord (Revelation 11:15; Zechariah 9:10).
- G. Power to remove the curse on this earth. This includes the power of wild beasts to kill human beings (Isaiah 11:2-10; Romans 8:19-22).
- H. The power to end war. God will establish a reign of righteousness and peace in the earth through the whole world. God will deliver this world from ruin (Isaiah 55:13; 35:1-2; 65:25; 9:6,7; Psalm 2:8,9; Zechariah 14:9; Isaiah 2:4; Revelation 20:4; Isaiah 11:9; 2:4).

VI. THE HAPPY EXPECTATIONS OF OUR HOPE

- A. We expect that the Lord Himself will return for us (1 Thessalonians 4:16).
- B. We expect that He will change our bodies into the likeness of His own body in just a moment (1 Corinthians 15:51-53; Philippians 3:20, 21; 1 John 3:2).
- C. We expect that the dead believers will be raised up with a body that will not rot and never die again (1 Corinthians 15:42-44; 51-57).
- D. We expect that we will be taken up in clouds to meet the Lord in the air. At that time He will receive us to Himself (1 Thessalonians 4:17; John 14:3).
- E. We expect that we will share Christ's glory with the believers. The believers will be with Him forever (2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23; Romans 8:17, 18).
- F. We expect that we will receive our rewards according to the "deeds done in (or by means of) our body" (2 Corinthians 5:10; 1 Corinthians 3:13-15; 2 Timothy 4:8; 1 Peter 5:4; Colossians 3:24,25; Romans 14:10-13).
- G. We expect that we will be united in marriage to our heavenly Bridegroom (Ephesians 5:23-32; Revelation 19:7-9).
- H. We expect that we will return with Christ when He comes to earth in order to glorify Him (Jude 14; Colossians 3:4; Revelation 19:14; 2 Thessalonians 1:10).
- I. We expect that we will reign with Christ on the earth for a thousand years (Revelation 5:10; 20:4-6).

- J. We expect that we will live with the Lord in a new heaven after God melts this earth and heaven (Revelation 21:1-4; 2 Peter 3:10).

VII. THE TIME OF OUR HAPPY HOPE

No man knows the day, nor the hour that Christ will come back (Acts 1:7; Matthew 24:36). God asks Christians to live as if Christ could come back at any time. The Scriptures present definite signs of things that will happen before Christ comes back.

- A. When the world is crying “peace and safety” (1 Thessalonians 5:3; Jeremiah 6:14).
- B. When men are not looking for Christ to come back, and are laughing at the very idea of His coming (1 Thessalonians 5:2; 2 Peter 3:3-9).
- C. When the world is in a state of uncertainty and there are many changes in society (Luke 21:25).
- D. When people fear and their hearts are failing because they are afraid of those things which are coming on the earth (Luke 21:25, 26).
- E. When people are living the way people lived in the days of Noah and the days of Sodom and Gomorrah (Luke 17:26-30). In those days people got drunk. People were unfaithful in marriage. They used sex in the wrong way. There were disturbances among people in which some people got hurt. They did what was right in their own eyes. They would not obey the law. They turned against God.
- F. When there is little true faith left in the earth and false doctrine is everywhere (Luke 18:8; 2 Timothy 3:1-5; 1 Timothy 4:1; 2 Peter 2:1).
- G. When God’s appointed time arrives (Matthew 24:36). When the “Time of the Gentiles” is fulfilled (Luke 21:24; Acts 15:14). When the number of the Gentiles is complete (Romans 11:25). When God’s purpose for this time of the Church is completed (Ephesians 3:10, 11; 1:10-14).

CONCLUSION – What Should We Do?

- A. Keep working for God until He comes (Luke 19:13).
- B. Be faithful (1 Corinthians 15:57).
- C. Find comfort in His coming (1 Thessalonians 4:18).
- D. Be watchful and look for His coming (1 Thessalonians 5:6; Matthew 24:42).
- E. Live a clean life (1 John 3:3).
- F. If you are not yet a believer:
 - 1. Prepare to meet the Lord (Amos 4:12).
 - 2. Stop laughing at believers (2 Peter 3:3,4).
 - 3. Seek the Lord while He may be found (Isaiah 55:6).
 - 4. Be ready when He comes (Matthew 24:44).

EVEN SO, COME, LORD JESUS (Revelation 22:20)!

**GREAT DOCTRINES OF THE BIBLE EXAM
LESSON 24**

Questions to be answered by every student enrolled in the Rogma International Free Bible Study Course

Register No _____

Name _____

Address _____

Choose and Round the correct answer in the following: -

1. What is the nature of the believer's Blessed Hope? (Value 2 points)
 - a. Looking forward to the future.
 - b. The time Christ sets up the Millennium.
 - c. The return of Christ for and with His saints with all the accompanying blessings and victories.
2. What is the hope of the unbeliever? (Value 2 points)
 - a. He has the hope that someday he may go to heaven.
 - b. He has no hope.
 - c. He has the hope of his good works.
3. Our hope is called a "Living Hope" because: (Value 2 points)
 - a. we are still alive while hoping.
 - b. Christ lives in us.
 - c. that is the expression the Bible uses.
4. The Crown of Righteousness is intended for: (Value 2 points)
 - a. the soul-winner.
 - b. those who love his appearing.
 - c. those who press toward the mark.
5. The Crown of Rejoicing is intended for: (Value 2 points)
 - a. the soul-winner.
 - b. those who love His appearing.
 - c. those who press toward the mark.
6. Our Blessed Hope is: (Value 2 points)
 - a. real.
 - b. being able to live a good life.
 - c. the joy we have on earth.
7. When will the blessed hope events start? (Value 2 points)
 - a. It may start at any time.
 - b. It will start when Christ comes in power and glory.
 - c. It will start when the new Jerusalem comes down from heaven.
8. In the first aspect of the Blessed hope: (Value 2 points)
 - a. Christ comes back on the clouds.
 - b. Christ comes to earth and is seen by all people.

- c. Christ comes to earth and stays half way between heaven and earth.

Matching

9. What other names does the Bible give to our Blessed Hope? (Value 12 points)
(Open Bible)

Place the letter in front of the reference in the appropriate space in front of the name.

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| ___ A living hope | a. Hebrews 6:19 |
| ___ A steadfast hope | b. 1 John 3:3 |
| ___ A hope of Glory | c. Titus 2:13 |
| ___ A purifying hope | d. Colossians 1:27 |
| ___ A comforting hope | e. 1 Peter 1:3 |
| ___ That blessed hope | f. 1 Thessalonians 4:18 |

10. What are the crowns a believer may receive? (Value 15 points)

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| ___ A crown of righteousness | a. 1 Corinthians 9:25 |
| ___ A crown of life | b. 1 Peter 5:4 |
| ___ An incorruptible crown | c. Revelation 2:10 |
| ___ A crown of glory | d. 1 Thessalonians 2:19 |
| ___ A crown of rejoicing | e. 2 Timothy 4:8 |

11. What blessed things can the believer expect regarding Christ's second coming?
(Value 20 points)

- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| ___ The Lord will return for the believers. | a. 1 Corinthians 15:42-44 |
| ___ The believer's body will be transformed. | b. Romans 8:17-18 |
| ___ The dead in Christ will be raised. | c. Revelation 19:7 |
| ___ The believer will be caught up to meet Christ in the sky. | d. Colossians 3:4 |
| ___ We shall share His glory forever. | e. 1 Corinthians 15:51-53 |
| ___ We shall receive rewards. | f. Revelation 5:10 |
| ___ The believers will be united to Christ in marriage. | g. Revelation 21:1-4 |
| ___ Believers will return with Christ to earth. | h. 2 Corinthians 5:10 |
| ___ Believers will reign with Christ on earth. | i. 1 Thessalonians 4:17 |
| ___ Believers will live with Christ in a new heaven. | j. 1 Thessalonians 4:16 |

Fill in the blank spaces in the following questions.

12. The _____ of Christ gives us certainty of our blessed hope.
(Value 2 points)

13. What phrase in Psalm 24:9 gives us certainty of our blessed hope?
(Value 2 points)

14. What is the contrast between Christ's first and second-comings? (Value 6 points)

The first time He came as a _____ but in the second-coming He will come in _____ and _____.

15. The Blessed Hope is twofold. First Christ comes _____ His people at the rapture of the church; after that He comes in power and glory _____ His people. (Value 6 points)

16. What signs of Christ's coming to earth do we see in the following verses?
(Value 6 points)

a. 1 Thessalonians 5:3 _____

b. Luke 17:26-30 _____

c. 2 Timothy 3:1-5 _____

17. Name five things the believer should do to prepare for the coming of Christ. (Value 15 points)

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

d. _____

e. _____