

Dear Fellow Redeemed by the blood of God's own Son,

Another book has been published to give people hope of life after death. Like so many stories in recent years, this book is about the repeated visions of angels and heaven which a dying high school boy said he received while he was near death. The boy died two years ago after tweeting to the world that he believed in angels and heaven. Now his sister wants to bring this message of "hope" to others through her book.

Whether or not these visions of angels and heaven were really from God, we don't know. What we can say is that man cannot cope without hope! In the early 1700's the English poet, Alexander Pope wrote that "Hope springs eternal in the human breast; man never is, but always to be blest."

Whatever is true about the poet's words, it is NOT true that hope "springs eternal in the human breast." If it did, we would not see so much despair in our society that leads people to seek drugs, and even suicide in order to escape this life. "Despair is the death of hope!" The hope that arises from the human heart is a fragile thing that cannot last for long, because without God man is without hope, as Scripture teaches. But

## **ABRAM'S HOPE IS THE WORLD'S HOPE IS OUR HOPE!**

### **I.**

Hope is a necessity for man. You children hope for certain gifts under the Christmas tree. We may hope that we will have a job next year at this time. We may hope that our physical health is good for years to come. But none of these are necessary hopes for us. The HOPE that gives meaning to our lives and makes all our struggles worthwhile is not merely a wish, but the firm confidence that springs from the heart when nothing on the outside looks hopeful.

Adam and Eve had this hope in the beginning. Why do you suppose that each day they had the certain hope that all would go well for them as they tended the Garden and lived together as man and wife? Was it the beauty of the garden, the purity of the water and the air they took into their perfect bodies? No. It was nothing physical or material that gave them certain hope about their future; rather, it was their perfect relationship with God. With God there was always hope!

Then one day, suffering the seduction of Satan, they began to place their confidence in what they saw rather than what God had said. Suddenly they

were on the wrong side of God, separated from Him and from hope by their sin. Guilt took the place of peace. Instead of joy they felt fear in their hearts. Instead of life, they had a sense that death – spiritual, physical, and eternal separation from God – was the curse of their future.

As Paul tells us in Romans 5:12: **“As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; so death passed upon all men, for all have sinned.”** Now every human being born into this world has one hope that he or she desperately needs – the hope of salvation!

## II.

But what is the source of this hope? Man thinks that he himself is the source of this hope. He tries to run away from the condemnation of his sins. Like Adam and Eve, he tries to hide behind the bushes of his own works and blame others for his wrongdoing. In our foolishness, we think that God cannot see; instead, we stand as naked in our sins as our first parents did!

So they trembled that evening in the Garden of Eden. But then the very God Whom they had sinned against, became the Source of their hope! To the Satan-possessed serpent, God said: **“I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; HE shall bruise your head and you shall bruise His heel.”** (Gen. 3:15)

God promised that He would take on human flesh and be born of a woman in order to bring mankind the Hope of salvation! It seems that Eve hoped that the Savior would come soon. When her first son was born, Eve said: **“I have gotten a man, the LORD!”** (Gen. 4:1). But Cain turned out to be a murderer, rather than the promised HOPE of the world.

During the next 1600 years the world became so wicked that God destroyed it with the world-wide flood. But Noah and his family **“found grace”** and HOPE in God’s promise of the Savior. When they got off the ark God told them to multiply and spread over the earth.

But just 200 years later mankind thought that their hope lay not in God’s will, but in their own. They wanted to stay together at Babel, so they began to build a tower with the hope that it would reach up to the heavens and to God, to make a name for themselves. So God confused their language, forcing them to stop their project and separate.

Nearly 200 more years passed by and God revealed Himself to a man called Abram. Abram and his family **“served other gods”** (Joshua 24:2-3).

Like you and me and all the rest of mankind by nature, Abraham was **“without God and without hope”** in this world. (Eph. 2:12) But through His promise to Abram, God alone became the Source of Abram’s hope for

salvation.

What was Abram's hope? NOT the material blessings promised in our text; NOT the many descendants he would have in the physical nation of Israel; NOT that chunk of land for which Israel is still fighting in the Middle East. NO! Jesus the SEED of Abram, told the Jews in His day: **"Your father, Abraham, rejoiced to see MY DAY, and he SAW IT and was glad!"** (Jn. 8:56) Jesus was the SOURCE of Abram's HOPE!

But Abram's hope is the world's hope too! At the end of v. 3 we read: **"in you ALL the families of the earth shall be blessed."** So it was that Jesus, Abram's descendant, could say to Nicodemus 2,000 years later: **"God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him, should not perish, but have everlasting life."** (Jn 3:16) God's own Son, Jesus Christ, Who was the hope of Adam and Eve, the hope of Noah, and the hope of Abram, has become the only Hope of the world!

### III.

Is He also our Hope? That depends upon whether your faith goes after what it hopes for. The promises God gave to Abram were so great that country, relatives, and even the inheritance of his father's house meant nothing by comparison! God had said to him: **"Get out of your country, from your relatives and from your father's house."**

To the ears of the world this is a terribly drastic and heartless command! But the Lord's purpose was not to take anything away from Abram. God wanted to make Abram richer than he ever was! So Abram's faith left everything in order to fully lay hold of the glorious hope of salvation that lay in his future.

Abram's call is like the call of every child of God to whom the Lord has become the HOPE of salvation in Jesus Christ. It's a call of separation from all that is fleshly and of this world. We should NOT think that hope's faith is only a correct knowledge of the teaching of Scripture.

If Hope's faith were nothing more than a knowledge of God, then Abram would have stayed in his own country to enjoy his father's inheritance. But the letter to the N.T. Hebrew Christians tells us that Abram went looking for **"a city with foundations, whose builder is God,"** and that **"he desired a better country, a heavenly country."** (Hb. 11:8, 15,16)

So also we who are **"the children of Abraham"** by hope's faith in Christ (Gal. 3:8-9), must be those who are looking steadfastly to the promise of that blessed country and our citizenship in heaven. It is the work of our Savior to

separate us not only from our sins, but also – if necessary – from our friends, our relatives, our worldly possessions, and everything else that may get in the way of finally obtaining our hope of eternal salvation through faith in Christ.

You see, our God and Father in heaven eventually brings every one of His dear children to that point in our lives where we are reduced to nothing, and have nothing except HIM. Blessed are we if at that time our souls are able to cry out in hope's faith, as in Psalm 42: **"Hope in God. For I shall yet praise Him whose presence is my salvation."** Amen.