

HOPF

JOHN TRENT (Jeremiah 29)

e are never without hope-no matter how we may feel. We are never beyond the reach of God's grace and the touch of His love—no matter how distant these may

seem. Even when we are struggling, God brings people into our lives, in divine encounters of His grace. Then God uses us to pass this blessing on to others by tender touches, encouraging words, and expressions of value. We have been given the privilege of passing hope along to others. We pass hope to our children by telling them how much we love them and how special they are to us. We have the ability to project a positive future, giving them hope and encouragement for life's journey.

God gives hope to His children as well.

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HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

Most of Jeremiah's prophecies were warnings of impending judgment, messages of doom for a nation that had turned its back took care of her well-being (John 19:25on God. But Jeremiah also could see bevond the immediate crisis to a day when God would deliver the captives of Judah. cause of His parched throat, but also in He told the people that God would limit their captivity in Babylon to seventy years (Jer. 29:10). He told them God's plans for siah would do (Ps. 69:21; John 19:28). them after that: They would indeed return to Jerusalem. Despite their present distress, with the words "It is finished" (John God assured them that He had "thoughts 19:30)-not "I am finished." of peace . . . to give [them] a future and a hope" (Jer. 29:11).

Flash forward a few hundred years. Picture the scene. The Lord Jesus has been hence—a day when the Father had promup all night. He has been shoved through dark alleys and paraded through rocky streets on His way from unjust trials to a the Cross, no covering it up or hanging hill of crucifixion. If anyone should have been "helpless" in that circumstance, it would have been Him. But read again the crucifixion passages and look at the incredible power and hope that is there: No one that He could face Gethsemane and not took Jesus' life. He voluntarily, purpose- flinch from completing His purpose. fully, laid it down.

forgive them" for the soldiers who nailed Him to the tree (Luke 23:34).

When He could have been concerned only about the terrible agony He was suffering, He looked down at His mother and 27).

He cried out, "I thirst," not just befulfillment of a well-known prophecy in the Psalms of what the suffering-servant Mes-

And finally, He completed His work

Where would such confidence come from on this deadly Friday? From the assurance of a hope-filled Sunday three days ised to raise Him from the dead.

Jesus knew that there was no avoiding anything less on it than a sinless offering. But that knowledge did not make Him helpless or hopeless. Rather, He so loved us and was so certain of God's power to raise Him

The Lord Jesus' hope lay beyond the Instead of hating, He prayed "Father, pain in His immediate future; it was in His

place in hea the crown o ble execution tomb—all Ի hope." And

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place in heaven. Therefore, He could face sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not the crown of thorns, the scorn, the horrible execution, and three days in a borrowed tomb—all because he had "a future and a hope." And because of Him, so do we.

HELP FOR TODAY

The next time something happens that makes us feel hopeless, we need to remember Jesus' response. His appearance before an unjust court was unfair. His being turned over for execution made escape impossible. His burial in a tomb left His disciples hopeless. But no matter what Other passages to study about the issue of happens outside us, from defamation of hope include: character to an unfair death, we can carry hope inside because we are under the loving care and guidance of the God of Easter > Isaiah 58:11 morning.

While Jesus was born fully man, He ➤ Romans 5:3-5 was also fully God, which is a mystery > Colossians 1:27 unfathomable this side of heaven, but a > 1 Thessalonians 1:3; 4:13–18 reflection of the untold strength He carried > Hebrews 13:5 within Him to build up and bless others. > 1 Peter 4:12–19; 5:7

And just think—the God of unsur- > 1 John 4:4 passed strength finds and invests tremendous value in us. He saved us with His blood, sealed us with His Holy Spirit, and will stand next to us one day when we approach the Father's throne!

No one can know the full measure of God's family blessing unless they have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Without the blessing that comes directly from our heavenly Father to His children, even an earthly parental blessing can't quite fill our cup. Those who didn't receive the blessing of hope from their parents can get all they need from God—by becoming His children.

Contrary to popular belief, not every person created by God is a member of God's family. The blessing of God is given only to those who believe in His Son. Jesus said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who

come into judgment, but has passed from death into life" (John 5:24).

In addition to His own blessing, God provides us with a spiritual family-other believers who become like brothers and sisters, fathers and mothers. He uses these people to help meet our needs and give us hope. Let Him use us today to touch someone else for God, bringing hope to an alltoo-often hopeless world!

FURTHER MEDITATION:

- ➤ Psalms 27:1, 14; 42:5; 71:5; 146:5
- ≻ John 16:33

To Learn More: Turn to the key passage note on hope at Jeremiah 29:11–13 on page 999. See also the personality profile of the healed woman on page 1287.

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to Hanatiah, the this peosays the ϵ face of ause you ϵ ." ¹⁷So Hananiah the prophet died the same year in the seventh month.

JEREMIAH'S LETTER TO THE CAPTIVES

• Now these *are* the words of the letter $\checkmark \mathbb{T}$ that Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem to the remainder of the elders who were carried away captive-to the priests, the prophets, and all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had carried away captive from Jerusalem to Babylon. ²(This happened after Jeconiah the king, the queen mother, the eunuchs, the princes of Judah and Jerusalem, the craftsmen, and the smiths had departed from Jerusalem.) ³The letter was sent by the hand of 10 Elasah the son of Shaphan, and Gemariah the son of Hilkiah, whom Zedekiah king of Judah sent to Babylon, to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, saying,

- ⁴ Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, to all who were carried away captive, whom I have caused to be carried away from Jerusalem to Babylon:
- ⁵ Build houses and dwell *in them*; plant gardens and eat their fruit. ⁶Take wives and beget sons and daughters; and take wives for your sons and give your

daughters to husbands, so that they may bear sons and daughters—that you may be increased there, and not diminished. ⁷And seek the peace of the city where I have caused you to be carried away captive, and pray to the LORD for it; for

captive, and pray to the LORD for it; for in its peace you will have peace. ⁸For thus savs the LORD of hosts. the God of Israel: Do not let your prophets and your diviners who are in your midst deceive you, nor listen to your dreams which you cause to be dreamed. ⁹For they prophesy falsely to you in My name; I have not sent them, says the LORD.

For thus says the LORD: After seventy years are completed at Babylon, I will visit you and perform My good word toward you, and cause you to return to this place. ¹¹For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. ¹²Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. ¹³And you will seek Me and find *Me*, when you search for Me with all your heart. ¹⁴I will be found by you, says the LORD, and I will bring you back from your captivity; I



KEY PASSAGE

THE OTHER SIDE OF DESPAIR

999

(29:11**-13**)

The word *hopeless* has no place in a believer's vocabulary. If the Lord is present, so is hope. God's Word offers hope:

- Regardless of how dark or desperate a situation seems, hope abides (1 Cor. 13:13). This means that we should hold tightly to our hope.
- Our hope is anchored in Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 3:15, 16); thus it is able to withstand any attack.
- Nothing can separate us from the love of God (Rom. 8:38, 39) and the hope He brings. Any problem, situation, or affliction we face pales in comparison with the power of the Lord who can help us overcome it.

We must learn to look beyond our immediate circumstances, beyond the worry and despair that so easily grip us, and toward the proverbial light at the end of the tunnel. That light is the hope that God gives in His Word. That hope, that confident expectation, can carry us through.

To Learn More: Turn to the article about hope on pages 1000, 1001. See also the personality profile of the healed woman on page 1287.

∃ man with an welling among Had him,ª not had often been eins. And the r him, and the ther could anyght and day, he e tombs, crying nnes.

fist, he ran and cut with a loud t: do with You, God? I implore rment me.' cut of the man, 🖻 him, "What is

ne?" he answered, Ny name is Ler we are many." te begged Him r that He would id them out of EITY.

ine was feeding b all the demons es to the swine, ∎∃ at once Jesus^a the unclean spirmine (there were he herd ran viointo the sea, and

ne fled, and they Sountry. And they es that had hap-Jesus, and saw

t i no faith? 5:3 ^aNU-Text adds ind He gave.

nd began to n filling with en the . The disciples em, yet they believe that

the one who had been demon-possessed and had the legion, sitting and clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid. ¹⁶And those who saw it told them how it happened to him who had been demon-possessed, and about the swine. ¹⁷Then they began to plead with Him to depart from their region.

¹⁸And when He got into the boat, he who had been demon-possessed begged Him that he might be with Him. 19However, Jesus did not permit him, but said to him, "Go home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He has had compassion on you." 20And he departed and began to proclaim in Decapolis all that Jesus had done for him; and all marveled.

A GIRL RESTORED TO LIFE AND A WOMAN HEALED

by boat to the other side, a great multitude mediately knowing in Himself that power had



1287

HOPE FOR A WOMAN IN NEED

(MARK 5:25-27)

Alone, sick, and seemingly without hope, this woman with a "flow of blood for twelve years" and who "had suffered many things from many physicians"

expected to live in pain and as an outcast until she died. Then along came lesus. This woman was not supposed to be in the crowd that day. Because of her condition of constant bleeding (perhaps a uterine disorder), she was in a continual state of uncleanness according to Jewish law. She was not to be in public because others might touch her and become unclean themselves.

But she heard that jesus was coming to town, and she knew that He could heal her. She merely wanted to touch His clothes, knowing that she would be made well. She probably wanted to come and go unnoticed so that the jostling crowd would not be angered that she had come among them. But this act of reaching out and touching lesus' garment also showed the depth of her faith.

Immediately the woman was healed. Jesus knew who had touched Him, of course, but he asked the question, "Who touched Me?" so that she could show her faith. Then He told her, "Your faith has made you well. Go in peace, and be healed of your affliction" (Mark 5:34).

What made that woman go to lesus? Faith that He could do for her what He had done for so many. Her hope was not the kind of hope that says, "Maybe it will happen; I hope so." Her hope said, "I know He can heal me."

Jesus meets us however we come to Him, with whatever problem. Our hope is in Him; not because we wonder if He will help us, but because we know He will help us. Jesus always responds to those who hope in Him, no matter how great or how small they are. He will do more than we can imagine.

To Learn More: Turn to the article about hope on pages 1000, 1001. See also the key passage note at [eremiah 29:11-13 on page 999.

gathered to Him; and He was by the sea.

²⁵Now a certain woman had a flow of blood for twelve years, ²⁶and had suffered many things from many physicians. She had spent all that she had and was no better, but rather grew worse. ²⁷When she heard about Jesus, she came behind Him in the crowd and touched His garment. ²⁸For she said, "If only I may touch His clothes, I shall be made well."

²⁹Immediately the fountain of her blood was dried up, and she felt in her body that she ²¹Now when Jesus had crossed over again was healed of the affliction. ³⁰And Jesus, im-

²²And behold, one of the rulers of the synagogue came, Jairus by name. And when he saw Him, he fell at His feet 23 and begged Him earnestly, saying, "My little daughter lies at the point of death. Come and lay Your hands on her, that she may be healed, and she will live." ²⁴So Jesus went with him, and a great multitude followed Him and thronged Him.

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te men whom 🗄 And Moses . Joshua.

🖅 out the land Go up this way the mountains, e: whether the iz or weak, few bey dwell in is es they inhabit ; ^{___}whether the et there are fori courage. And land." Now the rt ripe grapes. ਈ out the land s far as Rehob, -And they went me to Hebron; zi, the descenew Hebron was ran in Egypt.) r of Eshcol, and t one cluster of 1 two of them on re of the pome-: was called the te cluster which zere. ²⁵And they c from spying land after forty

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theless the people who dwell in the land are strong; the cities are fortified and very large; moreover we saw the descendants of Anak there. ²⁹The Amalekites dwell in the land of the South; the Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites dwell in the mountains; and the Canaanites dwell by the sea and along the banks

³⁰Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said, "Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it."

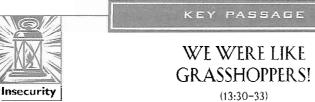
of the Jordan."

³¹But the men who had gone up with him said, "We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we." ³²And they gave the children of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying, 13:33 ^aHebrew nephilim

"The land through which we have gone as spies is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people whom we saw in it are men of great stature. 33 There we saw the giantsa (the descendants of Anak came from the giants); and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight."

ISRAEL REFUSES TO ENTER CANAAN

So all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried, and the people wept that night. ²And all the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron, and the whole congregation said to them, "If only we had died in the land of Egypt! Or if only we had



Insecurity often occurs through comparing ourselves with others. Discouraging comments, negative thinking, and unreasonable expectations can also make us feel insecure. When the ten spies compared themselves to the well-armed Canaanites and their heavily fortified cities, they concluded: "We were like grasshoppers in our own sight." The result was fear, unbelief, and rebellion against God's plan for the people to take the land.

Measuring oneself against others will lead to insecurity. We can a ways find someone who is better looking, wealthier, better dressed, more spiritual or more inteligent. We'l see "giants" next to whom we feel like "grasshoppers." Instead, we are to measure ourselves "within the limits of the sphere which God appointed us" (2 Cor. 10:13). In other words, we should be asking how we are doing with the looks, wealth, appearance, brains, and special abilities that God has given us. Ultimately we are accountable only to Him.

To Learn More: Turn to the article about insecurity on pages 186, 187. See also the personality profiles of Moses on page 219.

SOUL NOTE

Lost Hope (14:1-4) The Israelites were camped at the edge of the Promised Land, but the negative report of the spies caused them to lose hope and perspective. They wanted to go back to Egypt, forgetting that they had been slaves there. They were afraid to enter the land, forgetting the miracles God had performed to

deliver them from Egypt. Lost hope and lost perspective meant a lost land, for God refused to let them enter. When feeling hopeless, we should check our perspective, remembering where God has brought us, and allowing Him to work new miracles in our lives. **Topic: Hope**

2 CHRONICLES 36:23

up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and also *put it* in writing, saying,

²³ Thus says Cyrus king of Persia: All the kingdoms of the earth the LORD God of heaven has given me. And He has commanded me to build Him a house at Jerusalem which is in Judah. Who *is* among you of all His people? May the LORD his God *be* with him, and let him go up!



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Ray of Hope (36:23) The people of Judah were taken captive and deported into Babylon for the next 70 years. They suffered the consequences of their own spiritual neglect. Even in this desperate moment, however, the chronicler ends his record by pointing ahead to the coming of Cyrus, the king of Persia, who would eventually allow the people of Judah to return to Jerusalem. Even in their darkest hour, there

eventually allow the people of Judah to return to Jerusalem. Even in their darkest hour, there was a ray of hope for the future. God would take care of His faithful people. **Topic: Hope**

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en exiled by ul was "cast to turn , depressed times, living cannot feel , and in the Hope in God; For I shall yet praise Him, The help of my countenance and my God.

PSALM 44

REDEMPTION REMEMBERED IN PRESENT DISHONOR

To the Chief Musician. A Contemplation^a of the sons of Korah.

 We have heard with our ears, O God, Our fathers have told us, The deeds You did in their days, In days of old:
You due with the with earlier wide V

You drove out the nations with Your hand, But them You planted;

You afflicted the peoples, and cast them out.

³ For they did not gain possession of the land by their own sword, Nor did their own arm save them;

But it was Your right hand, Your arm,

and the light of Your countenance, Because You favored them.

⁴ You are my King, O God;^a Command^b victories for Jacob.

5

Through You we will push down our enemies; Through Your name we will trample

those who rise up against us. ⁶ For I will not trust in my bow,

Nor shall my sword save me. But You have saved us from our enemies,

- And have put to shame those who hated us.
- ⁸ In God we boast all day long, And praise Your name forever. Selah
- But You have cast us off and put us to shame,

P\$ALM 44:20

And You do not go out with our armies. You make us turn back from the enemy, And those who hate us have taken spoil for themselves.

¹¹ You have given us up like sheep intended for food,

And have scattered us among the nations.

You sell Your people for *next to* nothing, And are not enriched by selling them.

- ³ You make us a reproach to our neighbors, A scorn and a derision to those all around us.
- You make us a byword among the nations, A shaking of the head among the
- ¹⁵ Mv dishonor *is* continually before me. And the shame of my face has covered me,
- Because of the voice of him who reproaches and reviles,Because of the enemy and the avenger.
- All this has come upon us; But we have not forgotten You, Nor have we dealt falsely with Your covenant.
- ¹⁸ Our heart has not turned back, Nor have our steps departed from Your way;
- ¹⁹ But You have severely broken us in the place of jackals, And covered us with the shadow of
 - death.
- 20 If we had forgotten the name of our God.

44:title ^aHebrew Maschil **44:4** ^aFollowing Masoretic Text and Targum; Septuagint and Vulgate read and my God. ^bFollowing Masoretic Text and Targum; Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read Who commands.

SOUL NOTE

Antidepressant (43:5) David repeated his words from Psalm 42:5 and 11, for this truth truly helped him during times of great difficulty. In the final analysis, when life is difficult and trials are overwhelming, believers must "hope in God." Such hope is the confident expectation that God will bring whatever is necessary

to meet our needs. Such hope trusts that God will do what is best, no matter what we might feel. Such hope praises God for who He is and what He has done. **Topic: Hope**

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10

LAMENTATIONS 3:25

The LORD is good to those who wait for 25 Him.

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To the soul who seeks Him.

- It is good that one should hope and wait 26 quietly
- For the salvation of the LORD. 27 It is good for a man to bear
- The yoke in his youth.
- 28 Let him sit alone and keep silent, Because God has laid it on him;
- 29 Let him put his mouth in the dust-There may yet be hope.
- 30 Let him give his cheek to the one who strikes him, And be full of reproach.
- For the Lord will not cast off forever. 31 Though He causes grief, Yet He will show compassion According to the multitude of His mercies.
- 33 For He does not afflict willingly, Nor grieve the children of men.
- 34 To crush under one's feet All the prisoners of the earth,
- 35 To turn aside the justice due a man Before the face of the Most High,
- 36 Or subvert a man in his cause-The Lord does not approve.
- Who is he who speaks and it comes to 37 pass,
- When the Lord has not commanded it? Is it not from the mouth of the Most High 38
- That woe and well-being proceed? Why should a living man complain, 39
- A man for the punishment of his sins?
- 40 Let us search out and examine our ways, And turn back to the LORD;

41			From
41	Let us lift our hearts and hands	57	You di
42	To God in heaven.		You
46	We have transgressed and rebelled; You have not pardoned.		And st
	You have covered <i>Yourself</i> with anger And pursued us;	58	O Lon my You ha
	You have slain and not pitied.	59	O LOR
44	You have covered Yourself with a cloud,		WI
	That prayer should not pass through.		Judge
45	You have made us an offscouring and		Youh
	refuse		All th
	In the midst of the peoples.		
46	All our enemies	61	You h
	Have opened their mouths against us.		All th
	Fear and a snare have come upon us,	62	The l
	Desolation and destruction.		And
48	My eyes overflow with rivers of water	63	da
	For the destruction of the daughter of	05	Look
	my people.		ris La contra
	, p,		l am '
49	My eyes flow and do not cease,		Repai
	Without interruption,		Ассеі
50	Till the LORD from heaven	65	
	Looks down and sees.		Your
51	My eyes bring suffering to my soul	66	
	Because of all the daughters of my city.		Purs
			From
	My enemies without cause		110_1
	Hunted me down like a bird.	Т	HE DEG
53	They silenced ^a my life in the pit		A How
	And threw stones at me.	4	Hot
54	The waters flowed over my head;		The
	I said, "I am cut off!"		54

- 55 I called on Your name, O LORD, From the lowest pit. 56 You have heard my voice:
- "Do not hide Your ear

3:53 ^aSeptuagint reads put to death.



Wait Watcher (3:26) "The LORD is good to those who wait for Him," wrote Jeremiah (3:25). In this world of direct access, instant credit, and immediate gratification, the idea of waiting for something seems quaint, almost outdated. Yet waiting quietly for God's blessings is a discipline that yields tremendous rewards.

One can see God work in his or her life and be recharged. "Those who wait on the LORD shall renew their strength" (Is. 40:31). A time of waiting can be a time of renewal. **Topic: Hope**



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BEARING OTHERS' BURDENS

other, according to Christ Jesus, "that you may grant you to be like-minded toward one an-Now may the God of patience and comfort comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. our learning, that we through the patience and things were written before were written for Spirit. reproached You fell on Me."4 4For whatever it is written, "The reprozenes of those who se ind these the contract and not please Himself; but as neighbor for his good, leading to edification. to please ourselves. ²Let each of us please his with the scruples of the weak, and not We then who are strong ought to bear

with one mind and one mouth glorify the God

GLORIFY GOD TOGETHER

and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

His mercy, as it is written: and that the Gentiles might glorify God for to confirm the promises made to the fathers, vant to the circumcision for the truth of God, -Yow I say that Jesus Christ has become a ser-Christ also received us," to the glory of God. ⁷ Therefore receive one another, just as

And sing to Your name." emong the Gentles, noy of seating the I mult confer to You

:syes of niege baA⁰¹

"Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people!"a

:niege bnA^{II}

rand Him, is you people's a second "Praise the LORD, all you Gentiles!

:eves deisel , niege bnA¹¹

SOUL NOTE

something; it means having a confident expectation. God is the author of hope, not guidaw rishs more them word hope means more than wishing topowerful, glorious, angry at sir, and merc ful toward H s neople. Paul described Hope So (15:13) God is described in many ways throughout the Bible-

never disappoint us. Topic: Hope of the Holy Spirit." Where do we place our hope? We can put our hope in God. He will one day be their home. The God of hope helps His people to "abound in hope by the power for what He promises always happens. Believers hope for heaven because they know it will

"".9qod llada səlitməƏ ədi miH al 'səmuəŋ And He who shall trise to reign over the "There shall be a root of Jesse;

The the God of hope fill you with all

abound in hope by the power of the Holy joy and peace in believing, that you may

FROM JERUSALEM TO ILLYRICUM

:nollinw on another man's foundation, ²¹but as it is where Christ was named, lest I should build have made it my aim to preach the gospel, not preached the gospel of Christ. 20 And so I and round about to Illyricum I have fully of the Spirit of God, so that from Jerusalem 19 nighty signs and wonders, by the power and deed, to make the Gentiles obedienthas not accomplished through me, in word speak of any of those things which Christ which pertain to God. ¹⁸For I will not dare to reason to glory in Christ Jesus in the things fied by the Holy Spirit. ¹⁷Therefore I have of the Gentiles might be acceptable, sanctiistering the gospel of God, that the offering minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, mingrace given to me by God, ¹⁶that I might be a some points, as reminding you, because of the prethren, I have written more boldly to you on to admonish one another." ¹⁵Nevertheless, goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also you, my brethren, that you also are full of son i myself am confident concerning

15:10 Deuteronomy 32:43 15:11 Plant of thers. 15:12 Plant 11:10 15:12 Plant of the side of

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