



Keeping The Flame Alive

Dear friends, today I would like to share with you the importance of 'keeping the flame alive'. What I am referring to here is the flame of hope. The times we are living in are very tough and unless this flame of 'hope' is burning deep within our souls we are in danger of falling victim to discouragement and despair. Friends we do have 'hope' in Jesus.

Let's take a quick look at what the dictionary has to say about the word 'hope':-

"A feeling of expectation and desire for a certain thing to happen."

Friends without this flame of hope flickering within us there is nothing in this dreary world to live for and the devil will take the advantage and press us into the ground. Friends the devil is out to destroy each and every one of God's children today, right now and if he can snuff out your flame of hope half his battle is won. Friends I cannot stress enough how important it is to keep hoping. Jesus is coming, restitution will be made, pain, sadness and heartache will be a long forgotten pastime, peace and happiness will reign supreme. But friends while that time is not yet we cannot let the flame of hope die out. Heaven is what we are striving for, hope in the coming of our Lord. It may look dark and foreboding at the moment friends, but please look to Jesus, He does have the strength to uphold us and carry us through. He has promised multiple times that He will never fail us or leave us. He has promised to come again and take us home, we have no reason whatsoever to doubt Him, His strength has carried us through time and time again. Friends Jesus is coming again soon, Satan is holding us down trying desperately to snuff out our flame of hope, please friends don't listen to him. We do have hope, Jesus isn't going to leave His children to suffer. Jesus is with us constantly and He will give us the strength to stand.

Let's take a look at a few examples in the Bible of 'hope' and the fulfilment of that 'hope'.

Let's first look at the parable of the ten virgins and see how that relates to us today. This parable can be found in Matthew 25:1-13 and while the main point is to watch for the coming of our Lord and be prepared, you also have to have hope the event is going to happen. If you have no 'hope' you wouldn't be standing waiting for the bridegroom in the first place and you would be like the five foolish virgins finding yourself shut out.

Let's now go to the Bible book of 1st Samuel. What a beautiful story this is. How long did Hannah hope for a child? and when that child did come what a blessing he was to the tribe of Israel.

Esther is another example of ‘hope’ in the Bible. We can read her story in the Bible book of Esther. The lives of so many people were at stake but Esther never lost hope that Jesus was with them.

Abraham and Sarah are another example, their story is found in Genesis starting at chapter twelve. Sarah had all but given up hope of having a child but Isaac came along at the allotted time of the Lord.

Friends there are plenty of examples of hope in the Bible but I believe it is also important to link the word ‘hope’ to the word ‘faith’.

Hebrews 11:1 “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”

Hebrews 11:6 “But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”

Now while we need to keep the flame of hope alive, we need to have absolute faith in Jesus. We may be ‘hoping’ for things in this life that Jesus doesn’t seem fit to allow, this is where faith comes in. Yes I am hoping for that child but I have faith if it doesn’t eventuate that Jesus does know why and answers will come in heaven but this is not really the ‘hope’ that I want to address in this letter. The ‘flame of hope’ I am referring to is Jesus, yes we all have faith in Jesus, we know what having faith is all about but are we aware how important it is to keep the flame of hope alive. Without hope we lose faith and we lose our hold on Jesus.

Friends the examples of hope I mentioned above all eventuated. Sarah was promised a child and while her ‘hope’ and ‘faith’ were severely tried the promised child did eventuate. Jesus did save His people via Esther, Hannah also was promised a child and her hope also eventuated. What I am trying to say is Jesus has made promises and to date He has never failed. He promised to keep Noah safe during the flood, He put His hand over Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and He led Moses through the wilderness. Jesus never fails with keeping His promises and friends He has made us a beautiful promise today:-

John 14:3 “...I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also.”

Acts 1:11 “...Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.”

Hebrews 13:5 “...for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.”

Deuteronomy 31:6 “Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he *it is* that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.”

Friends Jesus is coming again, He has promised us in the Bible that He will return and take us home. In the times we live in today that time of Jesus’ return is closer than ever before, even at the door. The wait has been long friends and the devil is tempting us to give up, disbelieve and let the flame of hope die out. But please friends more than ever before we need to let our flame of hope burn bright, now is the time to rally our strength, stand strong, renew our faith and be prepared. Prophecy has dictated the events just prior to Jesus’ second coming and my friends if you look at the events happening around us today you will see they match up exactly with prophecy. Friends I know how hard the long wait has been, I know we are tired and discouraged but friends the promises Jesus has given us regarding His return are about to eventuate, He has also promised to be with us. Friends it is time we took Jesus at His word, it is high time to awake, Jesus is coming. Strengthen your faith in Jesus, put your hand in His hand and please friend ‘Keep Your Flame Alive’.

Romans 15:13 “Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.”

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