

HOPE

Because the YC/CS theme of this year is “Give them hope”, it is important to know what this means. In this short study the major aspects will be explained.

- It should be used by the directors/leadership to prepare themselves.
- It should be used by the members of the groups for personal Bible study.

© 1998, (March) Leen La Rivière
Continental Ministries Europe
Postbox 81065, 3009 GB Rotterdam, Holland
Tel 0031-(0)10-4568688 Fax 0031-(0)10-4559022

“Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see”
(Hebrews 11:1)

What is biblical hope

We have to raise this question, because in our **daily language** hope has lost its meaning. If we say 'I hope so' its a **sign of uncertainty**.

Before we read through the Bible about hope, it is interesting to know what **Webster** (the 'dictionary of English language') is saying about **hope**:

hope (hōp) *v.* **hoped**, **hop-ing** *v.t.* 1 To desire with expectation of fulfilment: I *hope* to be able to join you. 2 To wish; want: I *hope* that you will be happy. — *v.i.* 3 To have desire or expectation: usually with *for*: to *hope for* the best. See synonyms under ANTICIPATE, TRUST. — *n.* 1 Desire accompanied by expectation. 2 The cause of hopeful expectation. 3 The thing confidently desired or hoped for. — *in hopes*. Having hope. See synonyms under TRUST. [OE *hopa*]

Because hope can have the same meanings in **anticipate** and **trust**, here the meanings you find in Webster:

an-tic-i-pate (an-tis'ə-pāt) *v.t.* **pat-ed**, **pat-ing**
1 To experience or realize beforehand; expect; foresee: to *anticipate* a successful season.
2 To act or arrive sooner than. 3 To act or arrive sooner than so as to prevent; forestall: to *anticipate* an opponent's tactics. 4 To foresee and fulfil beforehand, as expectations.

5 To take or make use of beforehand, as income not yet available. 6 To discharge, as a debt or liability before it is due. 7 To cause to happen earlier; accelerate. [L *anticipatus*, pp. of *anticipare* < *ante-* before + *capere* take] — **an-tic-i-pa'tor** *n.*

Synonyms: abide, apprehend, expect, forecast, foretaste, hope. We *expect* that which we have good reason to believe will happen. We *hope* for that which we much desire and somewhat *expect*. We *apprehend* what we both *expect* and fear. *Anticipate* is commonly used now, like *foretaste*, of that which we *expect* both with confidence and pleasure. In this use it is a stronger word than *hope*; I *hope* for a visit from my friend; I *expect* it when he writes that he is coming; and as the time draws near I *anticipate* it with pleasure. Compare ABIDE, PREVENT. *Antonyms*: distrust, doubt, dread, fear, recall, recollect, remember.

an-tic-i-pa-tion (an-tis'ə-pā'shən) *n.* 1 The act of anticipating; especially, a foreseeing or foretaste; expectation. 2 An instinctive prevision. 3 *Music* The introduction of a note before its expected place in the harmony.

Synonyms: antepast, apprehension, expectancy, expectation, foreboding, forecast, foresight, foretaste, forethought, hope, presentiment, prevision. *Expectation* may be either of good or evil; *presentiment* almost always, *apprehension* and *foreboding* always, of evil; *anticipation* and *antepast*, commonly of good. Thus, we speak of the pleasures of *anticipation*. A *foretaste* may be of good or evil, and is more than imaginary; it is a part actually received in advance. *Foresight* and *forethought* prevent future evil and secure future good by timely looking forward, and acting upon what is foreseen. Compare ANTICIPATE. *Antonyms*: astonishment, consummation, despair, doubt, dread, enjoyment, fear, realization, surprise, wonder.

trust (trust) *n.* 1 A confident reliance on the integrity, veracity, or justice of another; confidence; faith; also, the person or thing so trusted. 2 Something committed to one's care for use or safekeeping; a charge; responsibility. 3 The state or position of one who has received an important charge. 4 A confidence in the reliability of persons or things without careful investigation. 5 Credit, in the commercial sense. 6 *Law* The confidence, or the obligation arising from the confidence, reposed in a person (called the *trustee*) to whom the legal title to property is conveyed for the benefit of another (the *cestui que trust*), that he will faithfully apply the property according to such confidence; also, the beneficial title or ownership of property of which the legal title is in another. ♦ Collateral adjective: *fiducial*. 7 The property or thing held in trust; also, the relation subsisting between the holder and the property so held. 8 A permanent combination, now illegal, for the purpose of controlling the production, price, etc., of some commodity or the management, profits, etc., of some business; also, a trust company. Compare CARTEL, CORNER, MONOPOLY, POOL², SYNDICATE. 9 Confident expectation; belief; hope. 10 Custody; care; keeping. 11 *Obs.* Trustworthiness. — *v.t.* 1 To have trust in; rely upon. 2 To commit to the care of another; entrust. 3 To commit something to the care of: with *with*. 4 To allow to do something without fear of the consequences. 5 To expect with confidence or with hope. 6 To believe. 7 To allow business credit to. — *v.i.* 8 To place trust or confidence; rely: with *in*. 9 To hope: with *for*. 10 To allow business credit. — *adj.* Held in trust: *trust* property, *trust* money. [ON *traust*, lit., firmness. Akin to TRUCE, TRUE.] — **trust'er** *n.* — **trust'less** *adj.*

Synonyms (noun): assurance, belief, confidence, credence, expectation, faith, hope. See ASSURANCE, BELIEF, FAITH.

Synonyms (verb): believe, commit, confide, hope. See COMMIT, LEAN¹. *Antonyms*: despair, disbelieve, discredit, distrust, doubt, mistrust, suspect.

O.T.

- Various passages make clear that hope offers perfect certainty.
- Hope is not in contrast to faith, but is an enlargement of faith. As believing is depending on the promises of God, so is hope founded on the promises (toezegging) of God. Such a promise is not always instantly fulfilled, but by faith we hold on in the hope that fulfillment will happen. *As result hope is God-centered.*
- God self is THE HOPE of Israël (Jer. 14:8) "*O Hope of Israel; its Savior in times of distress*" (other examples: Jer. 17:3; PS 119:49). There is a beautiful prophecy how our sorrow will turned into joy: (Jer. 31:16-17) "*This is what the Lord says: restrain your voice from weeping and your eyes from tears, for your work will be rewarded*", *declares the Lord, "they will return from the land of the enemy. So there is hope for your future."* *declares the Lord. "Your children will return to their own land."*
- The hope (expectation) of the unbelievers/wicked people will lead to nothing (Proverbs 10:28) "*The prospect of the righteous is joy, but the hopes of the wicked come to nothing*". This you can see clearly in the history of Israël in the times of the Judges and the Kings. When they were seeking to do Gods ways under a Judge or king (who followed God,) there was redemption, blessing. When they were following false Gods, they went astray and the times were very bad for the people; there was no hope.

In the last books of the OT you find more and more the expectation, the hope that God would redeem his people through the Messiah.

NT

This become totally clear in the NT. Hope is present in Jesus Messiah. Hope is in the NT always connected with salvation, redemption and reconciliation. This is clearly expressed in Ef. 2:12 that the unbelievers in this world have no true hope, because they do not know the true God: "*Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles (-) remember that at the time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israël and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ.*" (Ef. 2:11-13). The true believer is founded in Jesus Christ, our hope (see 1Tim 1:1) (see as well 2 Cor. 1:10; 1 Tim 4:10).

Christians are full of hope, they are "hoppers"

As result of: a change of heart, direction, purpose, redemption, intentions, goals we are becoming like Jesus Christ.

- We beat the enemies: fear, sin, hate, depression, anxiety (all symptoms that are holding back from freedom of the human race).
- We become as well a sign of hope: (1 Petr. 1:3) "*Praise to be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.*" (see as well 1Petr. 3:15; 1 Thes. 2:19-20; 1 Joh. 3:3). Yes, we are living it out, we are visible signs of hope, we are "hope".

Psychic effects of hope

(EZ. 37:11) "*Then he said to me: "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israël. They say, 'Our bones are dried up and our hope is gone; we are cut off.'*" If people have to hope, they dry up, they die spiritually/mentally and later as result the body will die too. So as long people are alive, hope can be restored, life can be renewed (see Eccl. 9:4). And see: (Rom. 5:4-5) "*Suffering produces perseverance; Perseverance, character; and character, produces hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.*" Through the love of Jesus a process is at work in us, producing people of character (so you really are somebody; you have a true identity), and producing true hope, that will not disappoint! It holds.

Mature signs of hope

Each of the following subjects can be the theme of one of the daily bible studies.

- A) 1Thess. 5:8 *“But since we belong to the day, let us be self-controlled, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet.”* (See as well Eph. 6:12-17). This spiritual armor is seen by others; this helmet of hope of our salvation shines in the darkness. This is not a new-age aura of being a self-powered god; but it is given to you by God, as result of your salvation. So it becomes understandable why people ask us about the hope we have (1 Petr. 3:5).
- B) Eph. 4:1-5 *“As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to one hope when you were called—.”*
Interesting: together we are one hope, and we are called to be that way. History explains why we have so many different churches, but as we understand why those differences could arise. We all are together the body of Jesus Christ in this world; in Him we are one; in Jesus we are one hope. To express this, to confess this, is of major importance.
- C) 1 John 3:2b-3 *“Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Everyone who has this hope in him, purifies himself, just as he is pure.”*
Here is hope part of a process. It’s a process of purification, of growing closer with Jesus, of become more and more like He is. This is possible based on your own desire/motivation and the decisions/actions you take.
- D) Romans 8:18-25 *“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. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, 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 firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what he already has? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.”* This hope is focussed on the fact that one day we will be the perfect sons of God; one day the human race, environment, plants, animals will live in full harmony; one day there will be new heavens, a new earth with true peace. We hope and long for the moment that the kingdom of God will be all present (see Rev. 21 and 22). What a hope, what a great future: finally redemption for all of creation: “free at last”.
- E) Hosea 2:14-15 *“Therefore I am now going to allure her; I will lead her into the desert and speak tenderly to her. There I will give her back her vineyards, and will make the Valley of Achor a door of hope. There she will sing as in the days of her youth, as in the day she came up out of Egypt”*. The valley of Achor means the valley of troubles/misfortune/unhappiness. In this valley Achan was stoned to death, because he had stolen precious things when the Israelites under Josua conquered Jericho (because of Achans crime; the Israelites were defeated at the next city Ai ; see Josua 7).
This valley is a very desolate place. One day each believer is in the desert of life. What will you do? Because God seems to be nowhere. And nobody seems to care. Well you can abandon all hope, so you will die in that desert. Or you keep hope and the desert-experience becomes the door of hope for a new period of your life. Finally there will be given new vineyards, new fruit, a new future!.
- F) 1 Cor. 13:6-7 *“Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres”*. There is an important connection between hope and love. We can receive love from God, because so many times our human

possibilities fail. Love is one of the fruits of the Spirit (Gal 5:22). So we can supernaturally receive love. And so we can keep the hope. And when all come to fulfillment, what will remain? "FAITH, HOPE, LOVE". (1 Cor 13:3).

Encouragement

So we have hope for a better eternity, hope for a new life, hope for a new heart, hope for deeds of compassion, yes there is hope! (Colos. 1:23) *"If you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant."*

This is the hope we share, the hope of the gospel!

NOTES: