



2019 – Abounding in Hope

“This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil,”
Hebrews 6.19

His Oath and Promise Expected.

An anchor is a heavy metal weight designed to secure a ship or boat to the seabed giving the vessel stability in rough seas or when sitting out a storm. Hope is an anchor for our soul, it secures our life to the Rock, Christ Jesus.

What is Hope? - in the English language we have weakened the meaning of hope – it has become something we wish for, something just a bit above doubt. We treat it a bit like a lottery or a game of chance. Hoping God will meet our need, provide something, touch us but never actually being too sure. The Bible understanding of hope is 'earnest, confident expectation'. It is closely connected to faith – often what we refer to as faith is actually hope. A confident expectation in God and his Word. That hope keeps us secure in the midst of trials, like an anchor secures the boat and prevents it from drifting.

As a young boy I attended the Boys Brigade at our local Baptist Church. The BB is a Christian youth organisation which was the concept of a Scottish man called Sir William Alexander Smith in 1883. The idea of the BB was that the boys would learn drill, discipline and fun through Christian values. The boys wear a uniform and the badge on the cap and uniform is an anchor with the words 'Sure & Steadfast' - God led Smith to this verse in Hebrews when designing the badge and motto of the brigade. We met together weekly and each week sung as our brigade hymn:

*“We have an anchor that keeps the soul, Steadfast and sure, while the billows roll
Fastened to the Rock which cannot move, Grounded firm and deep in the Saviour’s love”*
Priscilla J Owens

The anchor is always a symbol of hope – it keeps us secure, fastened to the Rock, no matter how fierce the storm rages. In the previous two verses, the writer to the Hebrews writes:

“(17)Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, (18)that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us. (19)This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil,” Hebrews 6.17-19

In verse 17 we read of the heirs of promise. Who are these heirs of promise? It those to whom God has promised, those who will inherit the promises – His children. The apostle Paul said the same to the Galatian church – they were heirs of the promise.

“And if you *are* Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise”
Galatians 3.29

God wants to show to His children, in abundance, convincingly, that His counsel, will, purpose and plan are unchanging. So He confirmed His promise with an oath. He bound Himself to His promise with the oath. The oath is a confirmation of a sworn covenant. The promise and oath, they are unchangeable, unalterable. The writer to the Hebrews calls them the ‘*two immutable things*’. God cannot change His word, He cannot lie: “My covenant I will not break, Nor alter the word that has gone out of My lips. Once I have sworn by My holiness; I will not lie to David ” Psalm 89.34-35

This gives us HOPE – a confident expectation that God will bring His promise/His word to pass. As I was waiting on the Lord about this a simple thought came to me. Hope is: **H**is **O**ath & **P**romise **E**xpected

This hope is an anchor of the soul, it keeps us secure and fixed, immovable in the wildest of seas. It is sure and steadfast, and it enters the Presence behind the veil – this hope conveys us right into the presence of God. It ushers us into the fullness of the blessing. This is where the promise is made manifest.

This is your year to abound in HOPE – to receive with confident expectation His Promise and Oath.