

## What Is Our HOPE?

*Why do some people have no hope? What gives us hope? How can we increase our hope?*

By Gregory Dullum

“Always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you...” the Apostle Peter instructs us in 1 Pet. 3:15.

What is “the hope that is in us”? Are we *so filled with hope* that it shows to those around us, causing them to ask about it?

Hope is one of the “big three” character attributes we should have—along with faith and love (1 Cor. 13:13). What exactly is this hope? The Bible mentions several hopes. Before we consider them, let’s examine what hope is NOT.

### What Hope Is Not

The hope within us is NOT just *wishful thinking*. If we say, “I hope you have a nice day” or “I hope your surgery goes well,” we have *no way to ensure it*, so our “hope” is simply well wishing.

The hope within us is MORE than wishful thinking. It has the added ingredients of CONFIDENCE and TRUST. Our hope is something that is SURE.

The dictionary defines hope as: “to wish for something with the expectation of its fulfillment,” “To have confidence, trust” and “To look forward to with confident expectation of its fulfillment” (“Hope,” *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, 1992, p. 870).

The apostle Paul had more than a *simple* expectation that the future would be bright; he had an “earnest expectation and hope” (Philip. 1:19-20, emphasis added).

Not everyone has hope.

### Some Have No Hope

People who think the future is dark and gloomy—or that there is no future at all—are people who have no hope.

What causes people to have no hope? The Bible gives us clues.

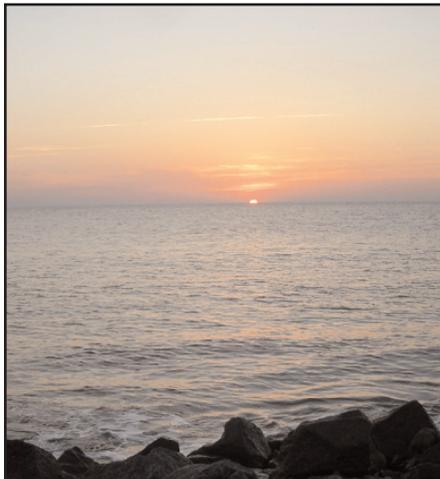


photo by Gregory Dullum

Just as the sun rising over the Atlantic Ocean signals another beautiful day in Jekyll Island, Ga., the hope within us assures us of a bright future!

**1. No belief in God.** If people don’t believe in God and Jesus, they have no hope (Eph. 2:12)! Why? Man doesn’t know the way to peace (Isa. 59:8). The way that seems right to men leads to death (Prov. 14:12). Ultimately, if God doesn’t intervene, mankind would destroy himself off the earth (Mat. 24:22). Man’s future WITHOUT God is *hopeless*.

If there is no God and Christ, then there is no life after death! God is the One who will raise us from the dead. Christ proved there is life after death, and He showed us the way to eternal life.

Paul tells us how hopeless we would be without God and Christ: “For if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins! Then also those who have fallen asleep [died] in Christ have perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most pitiable” (1 Cor. 15:16-19).

**2. No belief in a resurrection.** Those who do not believe in a resurrection are

very sorrowful when loved ones die. They have no hope of ever seeing them again. Paul contrasts our hope with these people in 1 Thes. 4:13: “But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep [died], lest you sorrow as others who have no hope.”

**3. Fear for life during severe trials.** There was a time in Paul’s life when he was surrounded by people who had lost hope. On his way to Rome, his ship was battered by a terrible storm. The others on board feared for their lives; they had no hope of making it out alive (Acts 27:18-20).

Paul, however, had hope. Why? Because an angel had appeared to him and had given him a message of hope. Paul passed the message on to the others on board: “And now I urge you to take heart, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship” (vv. 22-23).

It’s possible for God’s people to lose hope for *this physical life* (and expect to die), and yet cling to a HOPE for a *resurrection and future life*.

In deep misery from his sufferings, Job complained, “Know then that God has wronged me, and has surrounded me with His net.... He breaks me down on every side, and I am gone; my hope He has uprooted like a tree” (Job 19:6, 10). But a few verses later, Job declares, “For I know that my Redeemer lives, and He shall stand at last on the earth; and after my skin is destroyed, this I know, that in my flesh I shall see God” (vv. 25-26). Job thought he was going to die but he still hoped for eternal life when Christ returns.

**4. Many of the dead have died without hope.** The prophet Ezekiel saw the future time of the Great White Throne

HOPE

Continued on Page 2

## Hope

Continued from Page 1

Judgment, when all mankind who have not known God will be brought back to physical life and taught God's way.

As their bodies are reassembled and they are brought back to physical existence, their first thought will be their last thought as they died: "Our bones are dry, our hope is lost, and we ourselves are cut off!" (Ezek. 37:11, see also Rev. 20:5, 11-13).

### Source of Our Hope

Unlike those who have no hope, we have hope within us! What is the source of our hope? What gives us a reason to rejoice and to be confident in the future?

**1. We hope in the LORD** (Ps. 31:24, 71:5). Our hope is based upon our belief in God and Jesus. Peter tells us, "who through Him [Jesus] believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God" (1 Pet. 1:21).

The resurrection of Jesus gives us hope (1 Pet. 1:3). Jesus' resurrection is *proof* that *death is not final*. Jesus was the first to be resurrected to eternal life (1 Cor. 15:20). We have a confident expectation that eternal life awaits us because Christ paved the way, setting an example for us!

God gives us hope *in this life* as well, for He is a "God of hope," NOT a God of doom and gloom. Paul tells us, "Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the holy spirit" (Rom. 5:13). We are NOT tormented by a *sense of grief* and a *dread of the future* (or lack of a future). Instead, we have hope, bolstered by the POWER of the *holy spirit*, and that hope gives us *joy* and *peace of mind*.

We also know we aren't facing our problems *alone* (Heb. 13:5). God is an almighty Helper who is working out a *great purpose* in our lives (Rom. 8:28). That gives us hope!

God promises to save his people through end-time troubles. This, too, is a source of hope! Modern-day Israel will not be completely destroyed by her enemies. "The LORD also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and earth shall shake; but the LORD will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel" (Amos 3:16, *King James Version*).

**2. God's Word gives us hope.** In the Psalms, we read about hoping in "the word of God" (Ps. 119:49, 81, 114, 130:5). The written Word of God (the Bible) gives us hope, because we read PROMISES God has made to us, and we have *full confidence* in them, for God

DOES NOT LIE (Heb. 6:18). These promises are a great source of our hope! Here are just a few examples:

Romans 8:28 tells us, "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to his purpose."

2 Peter 3:9 tells us, "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance."

In Exodus 15:26, God tells us, "I am the LORD who heals you."

1 Cor. 10:12 offers this encouragement: "No temptation has overtaken you except such is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it."

Perhaps the ultimate hope-filled scripture is 1 Cor. 15:51-52: "Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."

This is just a sampling of how God's written Word gives us hope.

### These Things Give Us Hope:

The Bible speaks of various things that give us hope. We have CONFIDENT EXPECTATIONS (not just wishful thinking) about these things for which we hope!

**1. Our calling.** Jesus plainly stated, "No one can come to Me unless the Father who has sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6:44). The fact that we are called by God gives us hope! Paul describes it as the "hope of our calling" (Eph. 4:4). The end result of our calling is that we will be "raised up at the last day!"

**2. Mercy.** Some people live in dread, knowing they have sinned, and believe they cannot be forgiven for their sins. They carry around a terrible burden of guilt. We do not live under a burden of guilt because we know God is merciful and forgiving toward us when we repent (Isa. 1:16-19). This gives us hope! The wages of sin is death, but Christ has paid that penalty for us (Rom. 6:10, 23). This gives us hope!

God's boundless mercy gives us hope! "Behold the eye of the LORD is on those who fear Him, On those who hope in His mercy, to deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in the famine.... Let Your mercy, O LORD, be upon us, just as we hope in You" (Ps. 33:18-19, 22).

**3. Grace.** We have hope because God gives us grace. That grace involves un-

merited pardon for our sins when we repent, but also includes many other things God does for us as we walk with Him. Peter tells us we "hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 1:13).

**4. Righteousness.** Having repented and shed ourselves of sin, we have a "hope of righteousness"—of being made right with God (Gal. 5:5).

**5. The gospel.** In Col. 1:23, Paul mentions "the hope of the gospel." The gospel is "the good news of what God has done, is doing, and will do for mankind." It includes the life and death of Jesus, the Son of God, who takes away our sins so we may be made right with God. It includes the return of Jesus to this earth as King of kings, to establish God's kingdom on this earth.

It includes the bright descriptions of the millennial rule of Christ, when man's corrupt government will be replaced by God's righteous rule, all wars will cease, all animals will become tame, all sick will be made well, and the land will produce abundant crops.

It includes the bright future as all mankind will have an opportunity to learn God's way and become glorified children of God, living forever.

**6. Resurrection and eternal life.** Our hope is NOT that we waft off to heaven as angels when we die. The dead are unconscious—the body returns to dust and the INANIMATE spirit returns to God (as if asleep) *to await a new spirit body* (Eccles. 9:4-5, 10, 12:7; 1 Cor. 15:35-44).

And yet we know our physical death is NOT *the end of us!* "For surely there is a hereafter, and your hope will not be cut off" (Prov. 23:18).

### HOPE

Continued on Page 6

## The SABBATH SCOOP

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# Remember the Sabbath; Keep It Holy

Why does God say “Remember”? Which day is the Sabbath? How should we keep it holy?

By Gregory Dullum  
Part 8

We now come to the longest commandment—the fourth: “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your manservant, nor your maidservant, nor your cattle, nor the stranger who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath say and hallowed it” (Ex. 20:8-11).

Isn't it interesting that the one commandment that begins with the word “Remember” is the one professing Christians FORGET? Instead of resting on the seventh-day Sabbath and keeping it holy, they rest on the *first* day of the week, Sunday—or they keep NO DAY holy.

## Defining the Sabbath

How do we know the Sabbath is the SEVENTH day and *not* the FIRST?

The commandment itself tells us. We have six days to do our business and we are to rest ON THE SEVENTH DAY. The seventh day on our calendar is Saturday.

When God renewed the face of the world during “creation week,” He worked for six days and *rested on the seventh*. The first six days did not have names—only numbers (Gen. 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31). The seventh, however, God *named* the SABBATH (Ex. 20:11). He made the seventh special by giving it a name and making it holy. The name “Sabbath” means “to rest.”

## Know Your Bible

By Charles Nenninger

1. What is another word for excessive desire?
2. How did God lead the Israelites during the day?
3. How did God lead the Israelites at night?
4. The holy spirit of God is symbolized by what moving elements of nature?
5. What king of Moab asked Balaam to curse Israel?

(Answers on page 5)



photo by Gregory Dullum

Days—including the holy Sabbath—begin and end at sunset, such as this colorful sunset on the Pacific Ocean, viewed from Maui, Hawaii.

When does the Sabbath begin? Today, we use a version of the Roman calendar in which days begin and end at *midnight*. But that's NOT the way it was *in the beginning*.

The Sabbath was created during “creation week.” When God started the earth spinning during that week, the dark period came first and then followed the daylight portion of the day. That is why we read, “So the evening and the morning were the first day” in Gen. 1:5. Each of the next five days are similarly described, with evening first and then morning.

When God gave instructions for the Day of Atonement, one of his seven ANNUAL Sabbaths, He made it clear that days begin and end in the evening—not at midnight. God told Moses, “from evening to evening, you shall celebrate your Sabbath” (Lev. 23:32).

When is THIS “evening”? In the afternoon? At sundown? After dark?

Several scriptures indicate that one day ends and another starts at **SUNDOWN**. If an Israelite took clothing as a pledge, he was to return it by sundown (Ex. 22:26, Deut. 23:14). A person who touched something unclean remained unclean until sundown (Lev. 22:6-7, see also Deut. 23:10-11). Daily laborers were to be paid by the end of the day at sundown (Deut. 24:15). Sam-

son gave the Philistines seven days to answer his riddle—and the deadline came at sundown on the seventh day (Judges 14:17-18). The Apostle Paul told Christians not to start a new day angry when he wrote, “Be angry, and do not sin. Do not let the sun go down on your wrath” (Eph. 4:26).

The Sabbath day, which is the seventh day, begins at sundown on Friday and ends at sundown on Saturday.

Let us now examine what God says about the Sabbath.

## Remember...

Why Did God begin this commandment with the word “Remember”? Here are four possibilities:

1. “‘Remember’ implies that it [the Sabbath] was well known and recognized” (*A Commentary, Critical, Experimental and Practical on the Old and New Testaments* by Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown, 1945, vol. 1, p. 358).

The Israelites remembered the Sabbath, because of the lesson of manna. God miraculously fed them with bread they gathered off the ground for six days. They gathered a *double portion* on the SIXTH day because *none* appeared on the SABBATH. If they gathered more than one day's portion on *any day but the sixth*, the extra manna bred worms and stank (Ex. 16:14, 19-26). Thus Sabbath observance became habitual.

But the Sabbath was NOT *the only one* of the 10 commandments known to the Israelites. We saw in Part 2 of this series (January 2015) that *all of the commandments* were known before God gave them on Mount Sinai. So ALL of them *could have begun* with the word “remember.”

2. “Remember” in this case means more than just to call to memory. “The word *remember* ([v.] 8) should then be taken to mean not ‘bring to mind what you already know,’ but ‘keep in perpetual remembrance.’ The repeated disregard of the sabbath by later generations illustrates and confirms the need for this command to ‘remember’ ” (*The New Bible Commentary*, F. Davidson, ed., 1958, p. 120).

Didn't the ancient Israelites forget ALL of the commandments—*not just the Sabbath*? So, if this is the reason, then all of the commandments should have begun with “Remember”!

The *Soncino Jewish Commentary* has

**SABBATH**

Continued on Page 4

# Sabbath

Continued from Page 3

two other meanings for the word “Remember”:

3. “The verb is infinitive and so is not limited to time. Always keep the Sabbath in mind during the week so that if, e.g., you come across a special article of food, set it aside for the honoring of the Sabbath. [4.] The verb generally denotes the remembrance of a past event. Here it refers to the first Sabbath of Creation. As God completed His work and then hallowed the Sabbath day, so were the Israelites to do week by week” (*The Soncino Chumash*, A. Cohen, ed., 1983, p. 460).

In other words, the Sabbath should be the highlight of our week. As we go about our daily business for the first six days of the week, we should be looking forward to and preparing for the Sabbath, always remembering that it is coming at the end of the week. We also should remember back to creation; We should rest in the same manner God rested on that very first Sabbath.

## Sabbath Made Holy

The fourth commandment says, “Remember the Sabbath day, to *keep* it holy” (Ex. 20:8, emphasis added). How can we KEEP it holy unless it was ALREADY holy? When was it first made holy? Who made it holy?

The Sabbath was NOT made holy by Moses. It was NOT made holy by Adam. It was NOT made holy by *any* human. It was made holy by God at the end of “creation week” (Ex. 20:11). Only God can make something holy! Notice how He did it:

“And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it [set it apart for holy purpose], because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made” (Gen. 2:2-3).

## Keeping It Holy

God *made* the Sabbath holy. How do we *keep* it holy? We keep it holy by following God’s example and *resting* on that day from our normal work.

The commandment continues with instructions to do all our work during the first six days of the week and to rest on the seventh (Ex. 20:9-10). And not only are WE to rest, but *everyone in our household* (over whom we have authority) is to rest with us: our mate, children, servants, employees, and even our animals (v. 10).

The *reason* we are to rest is *because* GOD RESTED during “creation week” (v. 11).

When we rest on the Sabbath day, we fol-

low God’s example of resting on that day, and *we declare by our actions* that we have a relationship with—NOT just *any* god—but with THE CREATOR GOD. Our resting on the Sabbath declares our belief that we humans were created by God on day six. We declare our submission to our Creator, and our desire to be like Him. Sabbath observance is a sign FOREVER between God and his people (Ex. 31:13-17). God’s TRUE followers *keep holy the seventh day Sabbath*.

Those who do NOT keep the seventh-day Sabbath DO NOT worship the TRUE Creator God! Professing Christians who observe Sunday are worshiping a *false Jesus*—not the true Jesus of the Bible who declared Himself to be “Lord of the Sabbath” (Luke 6:5).

One reason ancient Judah went into captivity was because it failed to observe the Sabbath. When the Jews were released from Babylonian captivity, they made a point to keep the Sabbath holy. They added a lot of regulations that went *way beyond* Biblical instructions. Orthodox Jews, for example, will not flip a light switch or tear toilet paper off a roll on the Sabbath. These regulations made the Sabbath a burden. Jesus addressed this when He said of the scribes and Pharisees, “they bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men’s shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers” (Mat. 23:4).

It was because Jesus and his disciples violated *these Jewish traditions* that the *Jews accused* them of breaking the Sabbath (Mat. 12:1-2). These traditions *never were* part of GOD’S LAW, for Jesus never broke God’s law, which would have been sin (1 John 3:4, Heb. 4:15). Jesus and his disciples *always kept the Sabbath*, and set the example for us to follow (Luke 4:16, 23:56, Acts 16:13, 17:2).

The Bible gives some general instructions regarding what to do and what not to do on the Sabbath.

## What Not to Do

**1. Work for wages.** The commandment is clear that we should work our regular jobs during the first six days of the week and rest on the Sabbath. We should not work for wages on the Sabbath.

Nehemiah mentions people working on the Sabbath after the Jews had returned from Babylon to Jerusalem:

“In those days I saw in Judah some people treading wine presses on the Sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and loading donkeys with wine, grapes, figs, and all kinds of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the Sabbath day. And I warned them about the day on which they were selling provisions. Men of Tyre

dwelt there also, who brought in fish and all kinds of goods and sold them on the Sabbath to the children of Judah, and in Jerusalem. Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said to them, ‘What evil thing is this that you do, by which you profane the Sabbath day? Did not your fathers do thus, and did not our God bring all this disaster on us and on this city? Yet you bring added wrath on Israel by profaning the Sabbath.’

“So it was, at the gates of Jerusalem, as it began to be dark before the Sabbath, that I commanded the gates to be shut, and charged that they must not be opened till after the Sabbath. Then I posted some of my servants at the gates, so that no burdens would be brought in on the Sabbath day. Now the merchants and sellers of all kinds of wares lodged outside of Jerusalem once or twice. So I warned them, and said to them, ‘Why do you spend the night around the wall? If you do so again, I will lay hands on you!’ From that time on they came no more on the Sabbath” (Neh. 13:15-21).

Not ALL work is prohibited. Farmers should make sure their animals are fed and watered (Luke 13:15). Occasionally there may be an emergency at work that only we can handle. We sometimes refer to these situations as an “ox in the ditch” (Luke 14:5). It’s permissible to help out in an *occasional* emergency. If the ox falls into the pit *every week*—then it’s time to think about getting a new job.

**2. Do not seek our own pleasure.** In Isa. 58:13, God tells us to turn away from “doing your pleasure on My holy day.”

The word translated “pleasure” in Isa. 58:13 could mean “business.” *The Abingdon Bible Commentary* edited by Frederick Eiselen, Edwin Lewis and David Downey (1929), states, “the word rendered *pleasure* should be ‘business’ ” (p. 670). And the *Soncino Jewish Commentary* translates the verse, “If you turn away thy foot because of the sabbath, from pursuing thy business on My holy day” (*Isaiah*, by I. W. Slotki, 1983, p. 286). Is this verse forbidding running a business—or should we avoid personal PLEASURES on the Sabbath?

The Hebrew word for “pleasure” in this verse is *chephets*, and *Strong’s Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary* included in his *Concordance* gives no indication that this word (#2656) is ever used for “business” in the sense of working for a living. It speaks of pleasure, delights and desires.

Just as we have six days to do our own work, we have SIX DAYS to seek *our own pleasure*. We should avoid worldly pleasures on the Sabbath that we can do on other days of the week. These may include sporting events, concerts, movies and watching TV entertainment.

**3. Not speak our own words.** Isaiah 58:13 continues, “And shall honor Him, not doing your own ways, nor finding your own pleasure, nor speaking your own words.” The *Soncino Jewish Commentary* says this means “speaking idle words (cf. Hos. x. 4) instead of concentrating upon holy matters” (p. 286).

Certainly it is permissible to exchange pleasantries on the Sabbath. However, we should strive to discuss spiritual matters on this day. We have six days in which to conduct our daily, mundane conversations. On the Sabbath, we should strive to raise the level of our conversations to that of biblical instruction and encouragement, edifying our families and fellow church members (Eph. 4:15-16).

### What to Do:

**1. Rest physically.** As we cease from our daily labors, we should rest. A break in the daily routine is refreshing to the soul. Take time to physically relax. We can do this by sleeping more, lying or sitting at rest, taking leisurely strolls to enjoy nature or taking a relaxing dip in the pool on a hot summer day. This is not a day for a lot of hectic activity.

**2. Commune with God.** Because we are not spending eight hours or more working on this day, we have more time to communicate with our heavenly Father through additional prayer, Bible study and meditation. This is how we can fulfill the Sabbath instruction in Isaiah 58:14 that tells us, “Then you shall delight yourself in the LORD.”

**3. Attend a holy convocation.** The Sabbath is a time for attending church, called “a holy convocation” (Lev. 23:3). When we go to church, we are appearing before the LORD in his “house” with others who are his children. Together we worship God in song and communal prayer. We listen to his inspired words being preached to us and we fellowship with others of like mind, sharing his truth with each other. This is the highlight of the Sabbath day and should not be missed (Heb. 10:25).

**4. Eat.** The Sabbath is a feast day. When God told Moses about his seven annual feast days, He began with the weekly Sabbath (Lev. 23:1-3).

Because the Sabbath is a *feast* day, it’s permissible to prepare a special meal to make this day stand out—especially for children—perhaps a Friday night candlelight dinner or a Sabbath morning breakfast with lots of fruit and whipped cream.

We should NOT spend all day in food preparation—that could be considered work and would take our minds off the spiritual aspects of the day. Heavy food preparation should be done on Friday,

which is called a “preparation day” (Mark 15:42), so that all that is required on the Sabbath are “finishing touches.”

One way to make a Sabbath meal special is to occasionally eat out in a quiet restaurant on the Sabbath. We can enjoy good food and fellowship without the mundane chores of cooking and cleaning up afterward. We who eat aren’t WORKING on the Sabbath and the restaurant employees would be working on the Sabbath whether or not we ate there. Paying for a meal is not work and is not the same as running a business. The Bible does not specifically ban *the exchange of money* on the Sabbath. It prohibits us from spending our time working on our jobs.

Jesus and his disciples “ate out” on a Sabbath as they passed through a field of grain and plucked some to eat. The Jews accused them of breaking the Sabbath but Jesus defended their practice (Mat. 12:1-8). In this case, the accusation was not about exchanging money for a meal; the disciples were accused of harvesting the field. They weren’t harvesting—they were simply eating a meal when they got hungry.

One verse prohibits buying on the Sabbath. Nehemiah told the people in his day, “that if the peoples of the land bring wares or any grain to sell on the Sabbath day, we should not buy it from them on the Sabbath or on a holy day” (Neh. 10:31).

This verse is not specifically talking about buying a prepared meal and eating it on the Sabbath. It seems to be a prohibition against weekly shopping on the Sabbath. Our *regular* SHOPPING should be done on the OTHER SIX DAYS.

The consciences of some people will not let them eat in restaurants on the Sabbath. They may consider paying for their meal to be conducting business or they may think they are causing restaurant employees to work. If their consciences bother them, they shouldn’t do it (Rom. 14:23).

**5. Call Sabbath a delight.** God wants us to call the Sabbath a *delight* (Isa. 58:13). It should be a delightful *break* from our *daily routine* of work. It should be an *enjoyable* time of COMMUNION with our Creator God through enhanced personal study, prayer and meditation, along with COMMUNAL WORSHIP in a holy convocation. We should *make this day special* by enjoying *special foods* we don’t have the rest of the week and enjoying *special activities* and *conversations* we don’t have the other six days.

If we keep the Sabbath properly, we will find ourselves growing spiritually to become more like the Creator God.

## Fun Fact



Drawing and Fun Fact are courtesy of NAPS

While many countries celebrate Mother’s Day at different times throughout the year, there are some countries such as Denmark, Finland, Italy, Turkey, Australia, and Belgium which also celebrate Mother’s Day on the second Sunday of May.

## Witerature

*Wit and wisdom to complement the truths of the Holy Bible can be found in secular writings.*

*Being George Washington* by Glenn Beck, Candlewick Press, 2011, p. 147.

### God Helps the Humble

“St. James once said, ‘God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.’

“Yorktown is a perfect illustration of that. [British Rear Admiral Thomas] Graves and [British General Charles] Cornwallis were proud (in other words, ‘cocky’); [George] Washington was humble. But Yorktown is also a great illustration of the idea that God gives to those who are not only worthy to receive—but also *ready* to receive.

“Washington was humble, to be sure, but he was also prepared. He’d always understood the necessity of sea power and had lobbied Congress for quite some time to build a formidable navy. When that didn’t happen, he turned to the French, realizing that their navy was his only chance to match the British fleet and stop Cornwallis.”

**Prov. 3:33-34, 29:23; James 4:6**

## Quotable Quotes

“If things go wrong, don’t go with them.”

—Roger Babson

## Memory Scripture

“God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.” —James 4:6

### Know Your Bible Answers

- 1) Lust. 2) A cloud. 3) Pillar of fire.
- 4) Water, wind and fire. 5) Balak.

## Hope

Continued from Page 2

We have “the hope of eternal life” (Titus 1:2, 3:7) which will begin when we are resurrected at Christ’s return (1 Cor. 15:52-53). Paul said, “I have hope in God... that there will be a resurrection of the dead” (Acts 24:15).

That resurrection will occur at Christ’s return. “For what is our hope, our joy, or crown of rejoicing? Is it not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?” (1 Thes. 2:19).

We will become glorified spirit beings at that time! That is why Paul mentions “the hope of glory” in Col. 1:27.

**7. Salvation.** We have the “hope of salvation” (1 Thes. 5:8). God saves us in *every way possible*. He saves us from suffering, sickness and death.

### To Increase Hope

We already have mentioned that hope is one of the big three attributes true Christians should have. As we live in this depressing world, it’s possible to LOSE hope. What can we do RENEW our hope?

**1. Read the Bible.** The Bible is filled with *promises* and *historical examples* that offer us hope! When we review these scriptures, our hope is bolstered. Paul told the church in Rome, “For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope” (Rom. 15:4).

**2. Remember the Lord’s faithfulness.** Recalling what God has done in the past, both *in our own lives*, and *in the lives of others*, gives us hope that God will save us from the troubles we may find ourselves in TODAY.

Jeremiah, lamenting over the fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians, wrote, “This I recall to my mind, therefore I have hope. Through the LORD’s mercies we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness.... It is good that one should hope and wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD” (Lam. 3:21-24).

**3. Our experience teaches us to have hope.** Paul told the church at Rome to rejoice in the hope and glory of God. Then he added, “And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope” (Rom. 5:4).

We are to hold onto our hope *until the end* (1 Peter 1:13, Heb. 3:6). Hope is an ANCHOR of our soul (Heb. 6:19). It will *never disappoint* us (Rom. 5:5). The things in which we hope are SURE!



### Israel Calls for Changes in U.S.- Nuclear Deal

“Clearly unsatisfied with assurances from President Obama about the provisions of the Iran nuclear deal, Israel on Monday [April 6] listed specific requirements that it declared were necessary in any final agreement” (“Skeptical of Iran Nuclear Deal, Israel Calls for Changes” by Isabel Kershner and David E. Sanger, *The New York Times*, nytimes.com, April 6, 2015, p. 1).

In a related story, “Iran’s supreme leader on Thursday [April 9] challenged two of the United States’ bedrock principles in the nuclear negotiations, declaring that all economic sanctions would have to be lifted on the day any final agreement was signed and that military sites would be strictly off limits to foreign inspectors” (Iran’s Supreme Leader Says Sanctions Must Lift When Nuclear Deal Is Signed” by Thomas Erdbrink and David E. Sanger, *The New York Times*, nytimes.com, April 9, 2015, p. 1).

Expect the Obama administration to ignore Israel and forge ahead with an agreement that could allow Iran to gain nuclear weapons. A nuclear-armed Iran may be part of the coming “king of the South” prophesied to exist in the last days (Dan. 11:40).

### Russia Exploits Weak Links in European Union

“[Russian Leader Vladimir] Putin has methodically targeted, through charm, cash, and the fanning of historical and ideological embers, the European Union’s weakest links in a campaign to assert influence in some of Europe’s most troubled corners. One clear goal is to break fragile Western unity over the conflict in Ukraine” (“Waving Cash, Putin Sows E.U. Divisions in an Effort to Break Sanctions” by Andrew Higgins, *The New York Times*, nytimes.com, April 6, 2015, p. 1).

At the time of the end, there will be a 10-king European union pictured by 10 toes on a statue in a vision (Dan. 2:34). This union will be weak: “As you saw iron mixed with ceramic clay, they will

minge with the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay” (Dan. 2:43). This end-time union may form from nations that now comprise the E.U., for we see that the European Union is fragile and has its weak links.

### Gay Agenda Rolls On

“Roman Catholic nuns and brothers in robes, along with conservative activists and lawmakers, all surrounded Gov. Mike Pence of Indiana last week as he signed what was billed as the religious freedom law....

“But on Thursday [April 2],...the state’s top Republican legislative leaders here announced they were changing the law to specify that it will not authorize discrimination because of sexual orientation or gender identity...

“The shift in Indiana has played out with remarkable speed...” (“Religion Laws Quickly Fall Into Retreat in Indiana and Arkansas” by Monica Davey and Laurie Goodstein, *The New York Times*, nytimes.com, April 2, 2015, p. 1).

In a related story, “President Obama is calling for an end to such therapies aimed at ‘repairing’ gay, lesbian and transgender youth” (“Obama to Call for End to ‘Conversion’ Therapies for Gay and Transgender Youth” by Michael Shear, *The New York Times*, nytimes.com, April 8, 2015, p. 1).

As our nation becomes more like Sodom and Gomorrah, the government opposes church groups and other organizations who are trying to help homosexuals overcome sins. Our national fate, if we don’t return to God, will be similar to Sodom and Gomorrah’s: destruction—not from fire and brimstone—but from captivity (Deut. 28:47-52, 64-68).

### Quake Hits Nepal

“A powerful earthquake shook Nepal on Saturday [April 25] near its capital, Katmandu, killing more than [3,400] people” (“Earthquake Devastates Nepal, Killing More Than 1,900” by Ellen Barry, *The New York Times*, nytimes.com, April 25, 2015, p. 1).

Earthquakes are prophesied to occur as we near the end time (Mat. 24:3, 7).