



Saved by Hope

ki-attah tikvati

Nisan 26, 5769

כִּי-אַתָּה תִּקְוֹתִי

For you are my hope (Psalm 71:5)

MOST OF US ARE ACQUAINTED WITH Yeshua's famous statement, "You must be born again" (John 3:3), but after recently witnessing the birth of my son Judah Abraham, I have a new appreciation of this analogy. Just as natural birth occurs in the physical world, when a person is born in the Spirit there are "contractions," labor pains, recurring hurts, and ultimately deliverance. It's rare to hear of the person who comes to faith in the Messiah without such a "birth struggle." Usually there are repeated pressures, convulsions, and a final breaking of the will that evidences spiritual life within the soul. The process of "regeneration," then, no less than the process of generation, is often painful, messy, and difficult, and yet it ultimately produces something unimaginably beautiful...

In the case of the generation of human life, there are the biological facts: a seed and an egg are united and new life begins its advent into the physical world. There is gestation, labor, and the release of life. In the realm of the Spirit, however, the divine and imperishable "seed" is united with the believing heart (1 Pet. 1:23, 1 John 3:9). This "seed" is the Word of God, which must undergo gestation, labor, and the release of an abiding and transforming hope within the soul.

The Scriptures declare that "we are saved by hope" (ἐλπίδι εσωθημεν), that is, we are saved through an earnest expectation of good to come on account of the promises of the LORD God of Israel. The LORD is called "The God of Hope" (*Elohei HaTikvah*), indicating that He is its Author and its End (Rom. 15:13). God both gives birth to our hope and is the satisfaction of our heart's deepest longings. For those with God-given hope, *gam zu l'tovah* – all things work together for good (Rom. 8:28).



Yeshua said that we should become as "little children" in order to enter the Kingdom of God (Matt. 18:2-4), though this doesn't mean we were to become childish, absurdist, or inane in our understanding. There is Spirit *and* there is Truth – and we can't have one without the other. No, Yeshua was talking about the straightforward trust that a child gives his parents, the spontaneous optimism and unreflective humility that are present in most healthy children. I often see that hope in the eyes of my four-year-old son Josiah as he engages life with wonder and joy.



Many of us can quote that we are "saved by grace through faith" (Eph. 2:8), yet we are also clearly told that we are saved by hope (Rom. 8:24). The grace of God is the agency (work) of divine love performed on our behalf, declaring us justified, sanctified, glorified, and so on. The heart's response is solely one of hope, and hope is the one "work" that we are called to vigorously perform: "What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?" Yeshua answered, "This is the work of God, that you trust (i.e. hope) in the one whom He sent" (John 6:28-29).

No matter how close we might attempt to get to the various people in our lives, there is always a "gap," a "space," a "divide" between ourselves and them. In our closest relationships we are still distinct individuals seeking unity... However, the Scriptures declare: *yesh ohev davek me'ach* – "there is a friend who sticks (*davek*) closer than a brother" (Prov. 18:24). This Friend answers to the whisper of our heart's dearest hope and understands our all-pervading frailty.... Born into the weakness of human flesh by the Spirit, this Friend encourages you to share His hope.

May you find your hope in Him today....



Transliteration:

תִּ	וֹ	תִּקְוִי	כִּי	אַתָּה	פִּי-
(3)	(2)	(1)	(3)	(2)	(1)

tikvati

my hope

ki-attah

for you (are)

ki-attah tikvati