

“Paul’s First Letter to Timothy — Prisoners of Hope — Part 2”

Last Time: “Prisoners of Hope’, Part 1, and today Part 2.

The Overall Scriptural Theme: God Sees the End from the Beginning but his plan develops in history and that is where we all find ourselves. According to the glorious will of Almighty God we are bound to the course of a history with a glorious end. God knows the end from the beginning and has placed us in the very center of it all. We have been made “prisoners of that hope eternal” as the prophet Zechariah writes in chapter 9 of his great work of prophecy.

- ***Women have always been on his center stage of history as we shall now see revealed in the pages of sacred Biblical history. Let’s begin first with a significant prophecy from the prophet Zechariah:***

Zech. 9:9, 12, 17

9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he [is] just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.

...

12 Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope: even to day do I declare [that] I will render double unto thee;

...

17 For how great [is] his goodness, and how great [is] his beauty! corn shall make the young men cheerful, and new wine the maids.

- ***Paul now goes back to the beginning, to the book of Genesis where it is the SOURCE of the Rebellion there in the Garden of Eden that was most relevant to him at this time. We spoke of how there is much more to the story, but Paul does not reference that here. The main issue in Ephesus was with the women who had taken over the leadership from the men. But Eve, not Adam, is the main focus. Let’s reread the main verses from chapter 3 again:***

Gen. 3:15-16

15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

16 Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire [shall be] to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

- **What we see in Genesis 3 is the practical effect of that original rebellion against Almighty God.**
 - **Paul's central teaching here rests on Genesis therefore. Although they are still able to teach, they were not to do so publicly in the churches where they would be taking that ministry from its rightful owners. So the prohibition here is only toward women who take over the duly assigned authority to teach doctrine assuming for themselves. Men are to hold that position and are to be respected and held accountable as leaders in their assemblies.**
- **There was a judgment on the woman and it was significant in its effect on her and her husband and all that would follow. But Adam bears the true and final responsibility for what has been done as Paul writes here in Timothy and also in other places, such as in Romans, BUT IN ADDITION TO THE CURSE, WE FIND A HIDDEN BLESSING AND EVEN MORE IF WE SHOULD LOOK BEHIND THE CURTAIN!**
- **Promised Blessing By Grace Through Faith Even Through Childbearing —**
 - **As we have seen, Paul states this blessing in this way in 1 Tim. 2:15:**

1 Tim. 2:15 Notwithstanding she shall be saved in [THE] childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.

 - **"She shall be saved in the childbearing". This Greek word translated "childbearing" is found only here and is with the definite article.**
 - **And all of this in a more complete and eternal respect will be through the seed of the woman our Lord Jesus. This is most wonderful indeed. And amen! That the blessings would outweigh the effects of the curse as God saw it and as his chosen plan dictated. That the curse put upon women would be turned into blessing IF "they", that is, the children, grow and prosper under the living and tender and heart-felt care of their mother is most wonderful. Also the woman herself is included in this surely. And all mankind too!**
- **We have already considered the examples of Sarah, Moses' sister Miriam, Rahab and Ruth:**

Heb. 11:8-10

8 By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

9 By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as [in] a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:

10 For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker [is] God.

Heb. 11:11-13

11 Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.

12 Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, [so many] as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable.

13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of [them], and embraced [them], and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. Yes, *these all were “prisoners of hope” indeed.*

- *When we considered Moses' sister (Miriam), we saw how she along with Pharaoh's Daughter worked together as a pair to accomplish the purpose of Almighty God! The women were in the very center of this working, weren't they? Moses' deliverance from the king's determination to destroy the Hebrew male children was dramatic indeed and positioned him within the house of pharaoh to be Israel's deliverer -- and all this "through the woman". Amen. God worked still! Prisoners of hope indeed. The hope was to deliver the Seed that would redeem his people Israel. Jochebed knew it. She was Moses' mother AND a daughter of the tribe of Levi.*

What was her hope and was her life indeed as a “prisoner of that hope”?

- *The sacred history regarding Rahab and Ruth is dramatic and powerful in illustrating our theme. Let's start again there for some review and because this is now the critical part of our theme for today - many (in this case women) were “prisoners of hope” and that made all the difference through Israel's history. The developing theme of how the Lord God faithfully accomplishes that plan is on clear display. This is through the seed of the women leading to the Promised Seed! We see Rahab ... Ruth ... Hannah*

... Jehosheba ... in the Old Testament and Elizabeth & Mary (Next Time) in the New Testament.

Our Outline Today:

- ***The Seed of the Woman — Rahab, Hope Unexpected by Gentiles***
- ***The Seed of the Woman — Ruth, Hope Longed For by Converts***
- ***The Seed of the Woman — Hanna, Hope Enduring Among the Saints***
- ***The Seed of the Woman — Jehosheba, Hope Tested Against All Odds***

I. The Seed of the Woman — Rahab, Hope Unexpected by Gentiles:

The Key Verse Here Is Heb. 11:31 By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.

- ***After wandering in the desert of Sinai for nearly 40 years Joshua had sent two spies to Jericho, a walled city of considerable stature standing between the wilderness and the Land of Promise. But its capture would be the beginning of God's deliverance of this land and people to the children of Israel.***
- ***Well, Rahab and many others it seems knew how God had delivered the Israelites out of Egypt and had for nearly 40 years sustained them in the desert. They also knew how God had given fearful foes of the Amorites into their hand. She gave testimony to the spies that she had believed that it was Jehovah God who had delivered them.***

She promised to help them escape if only they would guarantee her own salvation at their hand and that of her family. They promised to save Rahab and her family alive when the city was taken victoriously at Joshua's command. They escaped by night and marked her house as "protected" by God (and them) with a scarlet thread.

- ***Well, Jericho was taken in victory, Rahab's family was delivered alive, and they were taken along with the Israelites as they proceeded to conquer the land of promise over a period of some years.***
- ***But there is more to the story, most of it is unwritten but revealed in outline in the genealogies as we saw last time and will see again shortly today.***

II. The Seed of the Woman — Ruth, Hope Longed For by Converts:

- ***You remember the storyline here so we will not repeat it again today except to say that the Levitical law concerning the Kinsman-Redeemer did come into play due to Ruth's mother-in-law Naomi's widowhood and then her own widowhood when her husband, Naomi's son died. The family's property was consequently owned by another Israelite and a near of kin or "kinsman" was allowed to step in and "redeem" the property. It is a complex story but according to the working out of this great plan of God, Boaz, the son of Rahab, is allowed to deliver both Ruth and Naomi from their desperate circumstances. It is a beautiful story and a powerful one in furthering our theme regarding the Seed of the Woman and how it would be the women therefore that God would use in such a critical way to bring to pass his plan of redemption.***
- ***The hope of women! To marry and bear children. Naomi knew of it, and all did, perhaps, though this hope had perhaps been largely lost for many, just like it has today. It seems it was passed down from mother Eve that they were with the judgment also privileged to be a part of a long line of those that would bring this hope to its conclusion, which was ultimately based on the hope and promise of Gen. 3:15 & 16. What an important and encouraging part of sacred history this is.***

What is the rest of the story, if any of you might be wondering if you have not considered the sacred place in the fabric of God's dealings with his people this way before. Surely these women were caught up in the web of time and this "prison of hope" was becoming a reality for them as God worked in their midst. What does the rest of the revealed word say about this? The genealogy tells us and we stand in awe as we read it:

[READ] Ruth 4:14-22 [See also Matt. 1:4-6]

14 And the women said unto Naomi, Blessed [be] the LORD, which hath not left thee this day without a kinsman, that his name may be famous in Israel.

15 And he shall be unto thee a restorer of [thy] life, and a nourisher of thine old age: for thy daughter in law, which loveth thee, which is better to thee than seven sons, hath born him.

16 And Naomi took the child, and laid it in her bosom, and became nurse unto it.

17 And the women her neighbours gave it a name, saying, There is a son born to Naomi; and they called his name Obed: he [is] the father of Jesse, the father of David.

18 Now these [are] the generations of Pharez: Pharez begat Hezron,

19 And Hezron begat Ram, and Ram begat Amminadab,

20 And Amminadab begat Nahshon, and Nahshon begat Salmon,

21 And Salmon begat Boaz, and Boaz begat Obed,

22 And Obed begat Jesse, and Jesse begat David.

- ***So, David's great-great-grandfather was Salmon and his great-great-grandmother was Rahab; his great-grandfather was Boaz and his great-grandmother was Ruth!!] In this way, the Seed of the Woman was the central theme of the Bible and with Rahab we even had the "crimson" or "scarlet" thread. I wonder what Rahab told her daughter-in-law Ruth about that scarlet thread while they were sitting by the warming fire on a dark winter evening? So blessed indeed.***
- ***But if you were Rahab or Ruth in the center of this drama, how would you have considered the circumstances of your day as they developed during those trying times? Are there any examples before us here of such a hope as the prophet had written? Are these very ones perhaps "prisoners of hope"?***
- ***Though much time and many generations had passed since that Garden event, the original hope had not died in the hearts of all. The answer is surely yes and amen!***
- ***We have good evidence here that these women were indeed "prisoners of that great hope passed down through mother to daughter" from generation to generation.***

III. The Seed of the Woman — Hanna, Hope Enduring Among the Saints:

- ***Some short time later (less than one generation, it seems) other events were occurring in the land of promise that we will look at now. For we will consider Hanna and her son Samuel next. They provide the connecting link in sacred history between Rahab / Ruth and King David as we have seen.***
- ***This is during the period of the Judges who managed the nation's affairs for about 250 years.***

- *I will not today review the entire story of Hanna and how she came to be blessed by a son, Samuel. But God provided a son after many years of barrenness led Hannah to proclaim in song what goes down in history as one of the greatest testimonies of God's sovereign and eternal purpose ever spoken. It is matched only by Mary's as found in the gospel of Luke.*

The two are quite similar in fact:

[READ] 1 Sam. 2:1-10

1 And Hannah prayed, and said, My heart rejoiceth in the LORD, mine horn is exalted in the LORD: my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies; because I rejoice in thy salvation.

2 [There is] none holy as the LORD: for [there is] none beside thee: neither [is there] any rock like our God.

3 Talk no more so exceeding proudly; let [not] arrogancy come out of your mouth: for the LORD [is] a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed.

4 The bows of the mighty men [are] broken, and they that stumbled are girded with strength.

5 [They that were] full have hired out themselves for bread; and [they that were] hungry ceased: so that the barren hath born seven; and she that hath many children is waxed feeble.

6 The LORD killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.

7 The LORD maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up.

8 He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, [and] lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set [them] among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars of the earth [are] the LORD'S, and he hath set the world upon them.

9 He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail.

10 The adversaries of the LORD shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them: the LORD shall judge the ends of the earth; and he shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed.

The so called "magnificat" of Mary is much like Hanna's great song of thanksgiving and praise after God grants her a son, Samuel.

Lk. 1:42-55

42 And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed [art] thou among women, and blessed [is] the fruit of thy womb.

43 And whence [is] this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

44 For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy.

45 And blessed [is] she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord.

46 And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord,

47 And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

48 For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

49 For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy [is] his name.

50 And his mercy [is] on them that fear him from generation to generation. [In confirming the hope concerning which they were prisoners indeed.]

51 He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

52 He hath put down the mighty from [their] seats, and exalted them of low degree.

53 He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away.

54 He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of [his] mercy;

55 As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever.

- *Well, need we say more? The “prisoners of hope” were not disappointed, in the end. Amen.*

IV. The Seed of the Woman — Jehosheba, Hope Tested Against All Odds:

- *This was in the days of a prophet named Zechariah, whom Christ mentioned in his earthly teaching:*

[READ] 2 Kings 11:1-4, 21

1 And when Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she arose and destroyed all the seed royal.

2 But Jehosheba, the daughter of king Joram, sister of Ahaziah, took Joash the son of Ahaziah, and stole him from among the king's sons [which were] slain; and they hid him, [even] him and his nurse, in the bedchamber from Athaliah, so that he was not slain.

3 And he was with her hid in the house of the LORD six years. And Athaliah did reign over the land.

4 And the seventh year Jehoiada sent and fetched the rulers over hundreds, with the captains and the guard, and brought them to him into the house of the LORD, and made a covenant with them, and took an oath of them in the house of the LORD, and shewed them the king's son.

...

21 Seven years old was Jehoash when he began to reign.

- ***Here, finally, we must consider a woman we may not even have ever heard of, named Jehosheba. During a time of great rebellion and idolatry within God's own nation, Israel, this woman valiantly and at very great risk saved the child and heir to the throne, Joash. As it turned out, he was the only remaining one of the royal sons in David line chosen by God to deliver in his good timing the very Seed of the Woman, Israel's Messiah and our Lord Jesus Christ.***

- ***A quick summary of those events would include these:***

- ***King Jehoshaphat, a relatively good king in Jerusalem, had a son named Joram who ascended to the throne when his father died. He married the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel who ruled the Northern Kingdom and were promoting evils in every way. Joram's wife, the daughter of Jezebel, named Athaliah, influenced her husband and he promoted false and idolatrous worship throughout the land of Judea including in Jerusalem itself.***
- ***Then Athaliah arranged for her husband's six brothers to be murdered and after her husband then died of an incurable disease, her son Ahaziah ruled in his place. He mounted war against his mother's family in Samaria and succeeded in killing all of them. But in the process of war he himself died in battle leaving his mother to take the reigns of government in his stead since the entire royal line of David was apparently destroyed. But she was wrong. She did rule with an iron hand and established idolatry on a level perhaps never seen in all Israel.***
- ***However, there was one remaining member of the royal line remaining, a one year old son of Ahaziah named Joash. This brings us to the heart of this episode in sacred history as we conclude our study today. One of her dead husband's sister's,***

named Jehosheba and the wife of the rightful High Priest, was determined to restore somehow the rightful royal line of David to its God-ordained place in Jerusalem. She knew the baby Joash was the only remaining heir to the throne of David and she hid him from the evil woman Athaliah for six years and then he was crowned king to her great surprise. So the royal line continued and ultimately delivered the Seed of the Woman, our Lord Jesus Christ! Amen. God's will shall be accomplished, and the "prisoners of hope" are truly in the center of this great work of Almighty God. And all are a part of that great work, especially the women.

Application:

- *Hanna possessed a hope that endured. That continued because it was the work of Almighty God to confirm his promises made from the Garden of Eden. Many through whom God worked were truly "prisoners of hope", of a hope that had been established in the Garden so long before and the circumstances of life could never change that hope which was in the deepest part of their souls. That hope was all about a family, a heritage, even kings, and finally the ultimate Seed, Israel's Messiah, our Lord Jesus. And the women were right in the middle of that hope beyond all hopes, for the ultimate seed to be brought forth, the Redeemer, or Lord Jesus Christ.*