



## HELPS Word-Studies

An excerpt from *The Discovery Bible* by HELPS Ministries.

**1680** *élpis* (from *elpō*, "to anticipate, welcome") – properly, expectation of something sure (certain); *hope*.

For believers, 1680/*elpis* ("hope, an *active* expectation") is always based on receiving the *title-deed of faith*, His inbirthed *persuasion* about what to expect (wait, hope for). See Heb 11:1 (cf. Ro 10:6-8, 17 with 1 Jn 5:4). Faith is always something received (generated by the Lord, never people), so biblical hope (1680/*elpis*) is always *from God* (about what He has spoken), i.e. it is *not mere human optimism* ("wishful thinking").

1. *Hope* (1680/*elpis*) is built on the persuasion God gives about His will, inbirthed through *faith* (4102/*pistis*). Hope then embodies faith (4102/*pistis*), and faith-hoping consummates "through love" (cf. Gal 5:6, Gk text).

Heb 11:1: "Now *faith* (4102/*pistis*) is: *title-deed* for things *hoped* (1679/*elpizō*) for – the (divinely-given) conviction about matters *not* (physically) seen."

[The *emphatic "not"* is conveyed by 3756 (*ou*) used with the *participle*. 1680 (*elpis*) relates back in the LXX to the OT term, *bātah*, "having confidence/being assured."]

2. In sum, 1680 (*elpis*) has the "*technical*" meaning in Scripture of *God-based confidence (expectation)* which flows out of His prior inworking of *faith*. *Biblical hope* is never mere *human optimism* nor *wishful thinking*. Rather it is always the *outgrowth of God-inbirthed faith*. Faith ("the Lord's inworked *persuasion*") is the *content* (the "what") of hope, which waits upon the Lord to execute His "*when*" and "*how*."

*Reflection:* John Calvin, "Hope is nothing but the *constancy of faith*." Hope is the *faith-expectation* which "cannot have any other object than *faith* has" (*Institutes*, 3, 2, 507).

M. Harris, "Only the person with Christian *faith* can have Christian *love* or '*hope*'" (*Col/Phm*, 30). Thus faith *precedes* hope.

**Working it out . . .**

1. (Heb 11:1) Hope *begins* with receiving faith from God, and *endures* as faith-hoping through an "*interim*" (*waiting period*), i.e. from when faith is imparted to its full outworking "through love" (Gal 5:6). Accordingly, *hope* (1680/*elpis*) is placed "between" *faith* and *love* in 1 Cor 13:13. Hope takes the *progression* of the Lord first inworking *faith*, and then developing this faith-*hoping* to consummation "through (divine) *love*" (Gal 5:6).

1 Cor 13:13: "But now abide *faith* (4102/*pistis*), *hope* (1680/*elpis*), *love* (26/*agapē*), these three; but the greatest of these is love" (NASB).

Gal 5:6: "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but *faith working itself out through (divine) love*."

[Gal 5:6 literally reads, "Faith energizes *itself unto (divine) love*" – a medio-passive verb ("works") best understood as *middle voice* (so most commentators) – i.e. "faith working (energizing) itself out unto divine love" (middle voice) – not "faith working *by love*" (Gk passive voice).]

*Reflection:* Why is love "the greatest"? Because love *includes faith and hope* (by definition), not because faith or hope are "inferior." As "3" is "greater" than "1" or "2" because it *includes* them, biblical love presumes (includes) the divine inbirthing of *faith* which blossoms into faith-*hope*.

[Love then is "greater" than faith and hope then because love always *includes* faith and hope – even as *purple* always includes "red and blue."]

2. Ro 5:2 and Gal 5:5 connect *hope* (1680/*elpis*) and *glorification*, the "final phase of our salvation" awarded at Christ's return, i.e. when each believer receives their unique glorification (see 110/*athanasia*, "immortality"). See also 1 Cor 15:35-54; 2 Cor 5:1-10; Phil 3:11-21.

[See also "the body of redemption" (i.e. of our *physical* body) at Ro 8:23.]

Ro 5:2: "Through whom also we have obtained our introduction by *faith* (4102/*pistis*) into this grace in which we stand; and *we exult in hope* (1680/*elpis*) of the glory of God" (NASB).

Gal 5:5: "For we through the Spirit, by *faith* (4102/*pistis*), are waiting for the *hope* (1680/*elpis*) of (proceeding from) *righteousness*" (NASB).

"In the books of the Maccabees the *resurrection of the body* is attested as a *hope*. (See further R. Bultmann and K. H. Rengstorf, *TDNT* II 523-30; S. Mowinckel, *He That Cometh*, 1959, 261-450; Jesus Christ.)" (*DNTT*, 2, 241).

So too, Col 1:27 has the important phrase, "*the hope of the glory*" (*hē elpis tēs doksēs*). The Greek definite articles refer to the precious *fulfillment* of hope as the *glorification* of believers at Christ's return.

*Reflection*: "Faith-hoping" is directly tied to the individual transformation of our physical bodies into His glorious likeness, causing us to become *immortal, incorruptible* (see Phil 3:21; 1 Cor 15:35-54).

3. In sum, hope (1680/*elpis*) is *active, confident waiting* as God's Word in us *matures* (consummates) "through love" (Gal 5:6). Hope is the "*interim*" period that extends from the time faith is inbirthed by God to its *expression* through divine *love*.

Biblical hope (1680/*elpis*) carries God-inwrought confidence that goes with His work of faith (Heb 11:1). Obeying faith, in the process of hope, consummates into the active expression of God's *love* (cf. 1 Cor 13:13).

Hope runs on *God's timetable*, not ours. God first births the persuasion of His will (desire) in the believer by His work of faith (Heb 11:1; cf. 1 Jn 5:4; cf. 2307/*thelēma*). This *may* find *immediate temporal fulfillment*, but this *active* waiting can extend into the distant future (even *heaven*, Heb 11:39).

The Lord births His *thelēma*-plan in us through *faith*, which matures through *hope* (cf. 2307/*thelēma*). This means surrendering to God and waiting for Him to fulfill all He persuades us of – in *His way*, in *His time*.

*Reflection*: 1 Cor 13:1,2 shows it *is* possible to *have* faith *without* it *going on to hope or love*. This happens by being disobedient or non-responsive to God after He births faith in us.