

Faith, [Hope](#) & Love\_Part25

**Psalm 131:3:** O Israel, hope in the Lord from this time forth and forevermore.

**1 Timothy 4:10:** For it is for this we labor and strive, because we have fixed our hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers.

This is our instruction: **HOPE** in Jesus from this time forth and forevermore. **Psalm 131** gives us the command and **1 Timothy 4:10** explains how it comes to be. We are to “fix our hope on the living God.” Being in the *perfect active indicative* “to fix” is something we are to do once and for all and that is to be a statement of fact about our lives. True Biblical hope is not something that ebbs and flows with each changing circumstance of our lives. We are to know Jesus so well and be so completely confident that He will always act according to His character and nature and will always live up to His name that we dig down deep into our soul and make the decision to abide in hope. And this decision is to be firm, unchanging, never needing renewal; it is to be fixed. Thus, we are to **HOPE** in Jesus from this time forth and forevermore; and this hope should be clearly evident to everyone we know.

Both of these passages spell out for us the relationship between faith and hope. If you choose to bet your life on the name of the Lord, you will make the decision to abide in hope. But to the extent that you still bet your life on your own wisdom instead of God’s, choose to rule your own life and do things your way, and live like one who has made their abode in this world, your hope will be proportionally diminished. I hope this inter-relationship makes complete sense. This is why faith,

hope, and love are the building blocks of the Kingdom of God. Without faith, there is no hope nor *agape* love. Without the combination of faith and hope, there is no *agape* love. But faith, hope, and *agape* love combined provide for us the ability to experience the divine nature and the abundant life which Jesus promised could be ours. Let's go back to the passage that we are using to examine hope.

***Psalm 33:18-22***

Behold, the eye of the Lord is on those who fear Him, on those who hope for His lovingkindness, to deliver their soul from death and to keep them alive in famine. Our soul waits for the Lord; He is our help and our shield. For our heart rejoices in Him, because we trust in His holy name. Let Your lovingkindness, O Lord, be upon us, according as we have hoped in You.

In our last study, we covered the first line in this passage: "Behold, the eye of the Lord [*Ayin Adonai*] is on those who fear Him, those who hope for His lovingkindness." We also studied in **2 Chronicles 16:9** how the Lord wants to show Himself strong to those who fear Him, to those who dig down deep into their soul and **make the decision to HOPE** for His lovingkindness. Hope is therefore a natural byproduct of one who fears the Lord. Thus, in order for hope to define your life, the fear of the Lord must define your practical and spiritual experience. As we studied, the fear of the Lord is the Old Testament equivalent to the New Testament concept of living by faith. One is phrased in the negative and the other in the positive, but both the "fear of the Lord" and "living by faith" communicate the same

surrender, dependence, and trust in the Lord. If you live in the fear of the Lord as one who has dug down deep into your soul and made the decision to **HOPE** for His lovingkindness, if you have fixed your hope on the living God who is the Savior of all men, *Ayin Adonai* will prove Himself strong for you. He will move time and space on your behalf in order to show you what it truly means when He says in **Romans 10:13**, "Whoever will who call on the name of the Lord will be saved." If you fear the Lord, hoping in His lovingkindness, you will know His true salvation which comes by way of the *Design Point*: the freedom in your soul from all that is not God thereby making room for Christ to literally possess your being and live in and through you, accomplishing the Father's works.

But you can also cut yourself off from hope; you can choose to live in hopelessness. Hope is like a rope that is tied to faith, and it can be easily cut. In fact, I would venture to say that most believers have long been cutting through this rope of hope. Sadly, most have never learned to live as aliens and strangers in this place; rather, they still envy sinners and continually strive to find their meaning, purpose, and validation from this world. It is tragic. The Lord gave us glimpse of that heartbreaking reality on Friday, **02/07/2014**. Here is what He showed us:

*"I see a glimpse of the overall war that's going on between the Enemy and the identities of the Beloved. The Enemy has such a stronghold across the board and so many of the Beloved live with chopped off heads, frozen hearts, and mutated hands. Their legs are unstable and stumble around though God has created the Beloved to be truly magnificent and even "superhuman."*

This reality is disturbing; but it highlights the truth that as one of the chosen **beloved** you can still choose to cut yourself off from hope and live a spiritually mutated life. It also highlights the fact that a life built on faith and hope can be magnificent and even “superhuman.” According to **2 Peter 1:3-11**, that is God’s desire for your life, but you have to dig down deep into your soul and make the decision to live by faith—to fear the Lord and hope for His lovingkindness.

This brings us to the second phrase in **Psalm 33:18-22**...“on those who hope for His lovingkindness, to deliver their soul from death and to keep them alive in famine.” There are two very distinct ways this hope is to be realized in our lives: 1) There is a spiritual aspect to our hope which is picked up in the phrase “to deliver their soul from death;” and 2) There is a very practical and physical aspect to our hope which is picked up in the phrase “to keep them alive in famine.” Thus, we are to live with the hope that His lovingkindness is our full provision for both life and godliness; it is to be to us a certainty as opposed to a cross-your-fingers-that-God-will-show-up kind of hope.

However, before we examine what it means to “deliver our soul from death” and “to keep us alive in famine,” which are two adjective clauses which describe the Lord’s lovingkindness, let’s first get our arms around this concept. Lovingkindness is one of those Old Testament words we can easily skip over while reading the Bible without truly understanding its significance. The Spirit speaks volumes about the subject; therefore, I believe we must first understand the relationship between the Lord’s lovingkindness and His chosen **beloved** before we dive in to the details of what the promise of His lovingkindness entails. So let’s dig in to the Old Testament.

We are told that the Lord abounds, thrives, flourishes, and overflows, with

lovingkindness, showing it to thousands—to all who call upon Him, love Him, and keep His commandments (*Exodus 34:6; Numbers 14:18; Deuteronomy 5:10; Nehemiah 9:17; Psalm 86:5*). As Solomon prayed in *1 Kings 8:23*, “O Lord, the God of Israel, there is no God like You in heaven above or on earth beneath, keeping covenant and showing lovingkindness to Your servants who walk before You with all their heart.” He shows lovingkindness to His anointed, to David, and His descendants forever (*2 Samuel 22:51*)—which obviously includes us, His chosen **Beloved**. Already we can begin to see that there is a connection between the dispensing of Lord’s lovingkindness and our responsibility to choose Him and to live in the fear of the Lord.

Lovingkindness and truth go before Him (*Psalm 89:14*) and “He is good for His lovingkindness is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him” (*1 Chronicles 16:34, 41; 2 Chronicles 5:13, 7:3, 6; Psalm 103:17; Psalm 106:1*). When we are told that the Lord abounds in lovingkindness, we must accept the reality that as there is no limitation to His provision of lovingkindness, there is also no end to His provision: it’s from everlasting to everlasting. This is not a zero-sum experience: if I get some then there is less available for you. No, the Lord overflows with lovingkindness and this flow goes on and on and on and on; there is plenty for you and plenty for me. If you choose to fear Him, if you are willing to walk by faith, you will know His lovingkindness in both its abundance and permanence.

When Israel went out to war, those appointed to sing would go out before the army and their song was: “Give thanks to the Lord, for His lovingkindness is everlasting” (*2 Chronicles 20:21-22*). Through all their trials and difficulties, they came to know that the Lord’s lovingkindness could always be relied upon—always!

Thus, they went out to war with the banner of His lovingkindness flying high over their lives. It was not subject to their current circumstances. They were at war, the enemy was at hand, but they did not measure the Lord's lovingkindness based on their momentary experience. Instead, they knew it to be true and they knew it would define their overall experience, it would just be a matter of time. Nehemiah acknowledged this as well when he said: "Now therefore, our God, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God, who keeps covenant and lovingkindness, do not let all the hardship seem insignificant before You, which has come upon us, our kings, our princes, our priests, our prophets, our fathers and on all Your people, from the days of the kings of Assyria to this day" (***Nehemiah 9:32***). Thus, even though they were experiencing great difficulty at the hands of many enemies, Nehemiah made a bold proclamation: the great, the mighty, and the awesome God [always] keeps covenant and lovingkindness ("keeps" is a *participle*). Do you get it? The reality of the Lord's lovingkindness upon the life of the **beloved** is not to be emotionally measured or determined by circumstances; rather, it is to be considered a reality.

The times of difficulty that we experience are necessary for the Lord to accomplish His will in our lives, but it does not mean that He has withdrawn His lovingkindness from you. If you let those times of difficulty have their way in your life, you will experience the practical outpouring of His lovingkindness; it's just a matter of time. Consider this statement from ***Psalms 25:10***, "All the paths of the Lord *are* lovingkindness and truth to those who keep His covenant and His testimonies." Let that reality sink into you head. Everywhere He leads us, every single step, has been and is for the purpose of our knowing and standing in confidence that He will deliver our soul from death and keep us alive in famine. This

is a trustworthy statement.

Remember, the salvation of your soul requires you to walk down the pathway of death. There is no other way; the *flesh* simply must die in order for you to experience the fullness of Christ in you. I did not fully grasp this concept when the Lord was taking me through my storm and the crucifixion of my flesh. But you are lucky to have been taught the truth. Now you must let this truth become your truth and so penetrate your being that you will be able to stand in hope of the Lord's lovingkindness regardless of what God has to take you through to put down your *flesh*. The pain of crucifixion often blinds us to the truth; but if you settle with this truth and make peace with it, you will be able to endure confident that all the paths of the Lord *are* lovingkindness.

The psalmist also declared in ***Psalm 40:11***, "Your lovingkindness and Your truth will continually preserve me." Let's incorporate the two adjective clauses: 1) the Lord's promise to deliver your soul from death is to be a solid rock upon which your right foot stands; and 2) His promise of provision in famine is to be a solid rock upon which your left foot stands. This word "preserve" means to guard and to keep hidden; it denotes safety and security. Thus, the reality of the Lord's lovingkindness in your life is to be an anchor for your soul; it is to be your confidence—a supernatural confidence which does not come by way of "good" circumstances, but by way of promise and an assurance in the Lord's character and nature fully trusting that He will always do what He promises, it is just a matter of time.

David declared in ***Psalm 31:21***, "Blessed be the Lord, for He has made marvelous His lovingkindness to me in a besieged city." In other words, David did not declare the praises of the Lord because he was "blessed" in this world and everything was

going great. No! Even in a besieged city, when life was turned against him and he was surrounded by enemies, he learned to live by faith and hope in the Lord's lovingkindness, and it was marvelous to Him. It brought him joy. Sure his circumstances were awful (and we know David had a very hard life), but the expectation that the Lord would break through with supernatural deliverance for his soul and provision for his body caused David to leap with joy and declare: "Blessed be the Lord." David was so assured of the Lord's guarantee of deliverance and provision that he declared with all assurance: "Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever" (**Psalm 23:6**). He knew that the Lord might require him at any time to step down another undesirable path, but he was confident that the Lord's lovingkindness would be right behind him. In fact, when he said that lovingkindness "will follow" he used the Hebrew *imperfect*, which means that he knew this to not be a matter of "hope" in the cross-your-fingers way, but it is something that is in existence and will continue to be in existence; it is a matter of fact. Hence, David could declare that the Lord's lovingkindness will follow him all the days of his life.

As we know, the fear of the Lord, hating all evil and betting his life on the character and nature of God, was the heartbeat of David's hope in the Lord. David tells us that the Lord's lovingkindness was always before his eyes; thus, David kept these truths of both deliverance and provision in the forefront of his mind; and, this was a big piece of what motivated him to keep going trusting the Lord no matter what was happening in his life. When things seemed uncertain, scary, and not what he had expected, David remembered the Lord's lovingkindness and rested on these promises of deliverance and provision knowing, according to **Psalm 40:11**,



that the Lord's lovingkindness would always preserve him. In fact, David was even so confident in the Lord's lovingkindness that he invited the Lord to test him and to try him.

***Psalm 26:1-7***

Vindicate me, O Lord, for I have walked in my integrity, and I have trusted in the Lord without wavering. Examine me, O Lord, and try me; test my mind and my heart. *For Your lovingkindness is [always] before my eyes*, and I have walked in Your truth. I do not sit with deceitful men, nor will I go with pretenders. I hate the assembly of evildoers, and I will not sit with the wicked. I shall wash my hands in innocence, and I will go about Your altar, O Lord, that I may proclaim with the voice of thanksgiving and declare all Your wonders.

The word "before" is a *participle*; thus, we know that David always kept the Lord's lovingkindness fresh in his mind and it was the sure promise of both deliverance and provision that motivated David to forego the envy of sinners and choose instead to go about the altar, or to walk the pathway of sacrifice and death, that he might proclaim with the voice of thanksgiving and declare all the Lord's wonders. This is a very powerful passage and speaks to our finding life in death and our being assured that we can and we must walk the pathway of death knowing that the Lord's lovingkindness will follow. And this is not to say that we must do it perfect. In fact, we know we will stumble and fall; it is a treacherous path. But, according to ***Psalm 94:18***, "If I should say, 'My foot has slipped,' Your

lovingkindness, O Lord, will hold me up.” This is breathtaking; and it confirms that God does not deal with us on the basis of sin but on the basis of His lovingkindness. Those of you who still live in shame have not yet bet your lives on this truth. Accept it now; let it become your truth. If you should say your foot has slipped, His lovingkindness will hold you up. He promises to deliver you and provide for you; so stop swimming in those rotten pools of shame and instead rejoice in this assurance and proclaim with the voice of thanksgiving.

**Psalm 13:5** says, “But I have trusted in Your lovingkindness; my heart shall rejoice in Your salvation.” You may have slipped, you may have blown it, you may have failed, but you can still chose to rejoice for His lovingkindness follows you and is always assured. Get over your mistakes and move forward knowing that He has lavishly poured out His abundant lovingkindness upon your life. Trust in His lovingkindness and let your heart be filled with thanksgiving and rejoice in His salvation. In **Psalm 107:8, 15, 21, and 31** we are commanded four separate times (in other words, with four being the number of creation, we are commanded from one end of creation to the other), to give thanks to the Lord for His lovingkindness. “For His lovingkindness is great above the heavens” (**Psalm 108:4**).

Now some of you may have a hard time internalizing this truth since you have blown it so much and are blowing it. But understand this, if you are the Lord’s chosen **beloved**, He has crowned you with lovingkindness (**Psalm 103:4**). The Lord’s lovingkindness sits upon you as an emblem of His eternal faithfulness. It sits upon you as a symbol of absolute authority: you are one upon whom the Lord’s lovingkindness resides; and it is beautiful and it is your glory.

***Psalm 117***

Praise the Lord, all nations; laud Him, all peoples! For His lovingkindness is great toward us, and the truth of the Lord is everlasting. Praise the Lord!

His lovingkindness is great toward His chosen **beloved**. Rest in this reality; it is your reality. This is rendered in the Hebrew *perfect*; thus, it is to be understood in an overall state of completion. His lovingkindness **is** great towards us. “Many are the sorrows of the wicked, but he who trusts in the Lord, lovingkindness shall surround him” (***Psalm 32:10***). Thank Him for this truth. ***Psalm 118:1-4*** says, “Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; for His lovingkindness is everlasting. Oh let Israel say, ‘His lovingkindness is everlasting.’ Oh let the house of Aaron say, ‘His lovingkindness is everlasting.’ Oh let those who fear the Lord say, ‘His lovingkindness is everlasting.’” Declare it, say it, and in so doing you will be offering up a beautiful sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to the Lord. This is a sacrifice beautifully described in ***Psalm 118:27-29***.

***Psalm 118:27-29***

Bind the festival sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar. You are my God, and I give thanks to You; You are my God, I extol You. Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; for His lovingkindness is everlasting.

If you let this truth be your truth, if you walk bearing that beautiful crown on your head, then lift up this sacrifice of thanks and be one of the chosen **beloved**

who declares, shouts, and boldly proclaims His lovingkindness.

Now your actual experience of His deliverance and provision may not be happening at the current time, you may be going through a time of great difficulty (as I was during my storm), but keep in mind, “The Lord favors those who fear Him, those who wait for His lovingkindness” (***Psalm 147:11***). Waiting confidently on the Lord to bring about your deliverance and your provision is the hope which springs forth from the fear of the Lord. Therefore, no matter what you are going through, you can wait in confident assurance, for His lovingkindness will follow. There will be deliverance for your soul and you will receive necessary provision, it is always just a matter of time. Again, rest in this truth for it is your truth: “For if He causes grief, then He will have compassion according to His abundant lovingkindness. For He does not afflict willingly or grieve the sons of men” (***Lamentations 3:32-33***).

We know that if we are ever going to know true life and love, we must take a trip down the pathway of death where the Lord afflicts us and grieves our soul. Still, in the midst of that journey, we seem to forget that God is leading us down this pathway so we will know more of Him and will fully experience His lovingkindness. In the midst of my storm, I had such a difficult time connecting to His promises of deliverance and provision. I felt hopeless when it reality, **HOPE** was all around because He was in charge of each and every step I would take. Then one day He graciously encouraged me with these words:

***Isaiah 54:8-10***

“In an outburst of anger I hid My face from you for a moment, *but with*

*everlasting lovingkindness I will have compassion on you,”* Says the Lord your Redeemer. “For this is like the days of Noah to Me, when I swore that the waters of Noah would not flood the earth again; so I have sworn that I will not be angry with you nor will I rebuke you. For the mountains may be removed and the hills may shake, *but My lovingkindness will not be removed from you,* and My covenant of peace will not be shaken,” Says the Lord who has compassion on you.

What a beautiful promise. He gave this to me so I could cling to hope, trusting in His eternal lovingkindness. This word assured me that once I passed through this valley of the shadow of death, I would not have to go back through it. That was a big reassuring, whew! The fire of judgment upon my flesh would do its work; and, upon its completion, I would be able to live without the threat that this kind of judgment would ever again be upon my life. It was appointed for me for a time in order to teach me how to trust in the Lord and no longer trust in my own goodness and my religion. This is how it always is. If we let the fire of God’s judgment do its work on our *flesh*, then that will be an end of it and we will know what it means when the Lord says in **Romans 10:13**, “Whoever will who call on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

He swore to me that He would not again be angry with me or rebuke me. Let me tell you, that one promise gave me so much hope in the midst of this journey of death. Like Noah, I could feel myself rise above the waves in the ark of His lovingkindness. Then He told me in **Jeremiah 31:3**, “I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have drawn you with lovingkindness.” In other words,

I would become very intimate with His deliverance and provision for my life and it would draw me to Him and secure me in Him despite what He had to take me through. And even though, at that time, I was kicking and screaming, I was confident that I would know His rest for I was one who was chosen and loved with an everlasting love. And now, after many long years, like David I can also say, without hesitation: "Because Your lovingkindness is better than life, my lips will praise You. So I will bless You as long as I live; I will lift up my hands in Your name" (***Psalm 63:3-4***). And it is by His abundant lovingkindness that I enter His house and bow in reverence before Him (***Psalm 5:7***). His lovingkindness is such a complete provision; it is better than life.

The Lord even tells us that when we are suffering, when we are in pain, we can cry out to the Lord, "revive me according to thy lovingkindness" (***Psalm 119:88; 159***). David even prayed in ***Psalm 143:12***, "In Your lovingkindness, cut off my enemies and destroy all those who afflict my soul, for I am Your servant." This is the confidence we should have all the time. Regardless of our circumstances, we must always believe that the Lord will always be our provision.

### ***Psalm 52:1, 5-9***

Why do you boast in evil, O mighty man? The lovingkindness of God endures all day long...God will break you down forever; He will snatch you up and tear you away from your tent, and uproot you from the land of the living. Selah. The righteous will see and fear, and will laugh at him, saying, "Behold, the man who would not make God his refuge, but trusted in the abundance of his riches and was strong in his evil desire." But as for me, I am like a green olive tree in the

house of God; I trust in the lovingkindness of God forever and ever. I will give You thanks forever, because You have done it, and I will wait on Your name, for it is good, in the presence of Your godly ones.

God will make a spectacle of those who refuse to fear the Lord. They will be broken and torn. But the one who trusts in His lovingkindness will be like a green olive tree in the house of God. He has done it. For this we must give Him thanks forever and be willing to wait on His name. "I will sing of the lovingkindness of the Lord forever; to all generations I will make known Your faithfulness with my mouth. For I have said, 'Lovingkindness will be built up forever; in the heavens You will establish Your faithfulness'" (*Psalm 89:1-2*). As we come to believe in and accept the reality of the Lord's lovingkindness, we can't help but to offer up a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. It is what His lovingkindness produces in our soul. Consider *Psalm 48:9-10*, "We have thought on Your lovingkindness, O God, in the midst of Your temple. As is Your name, O God, so is Your praise to the ends of the earth; Your right hand is full of righteousness." His name is wonderful, marvelous, eternal, and magnificent, and so is His praise. Think on His lovingkindness always.

In closing, let's read from *Psalm 136*. I want you to meditate on each line. His lovingkindness is our reason to praise, to worship, to give thanks, and to exalt the wonderful name of our God. When we think about His lovingkindness, we start to remember that He has been faithful to us and has loved us with an everlasting love. His lovingkindness stands before us as our **Rock of Remembrance** of all that He has done. He has spoken to us and has fulfilled His word. Sure at times it seemed hopeless, but we have always been surrounded with **HOPE**. He has proven to us

time and time again that He always does what He says, it is just a matter of time. And the time that we wait is about our learning to trust Him with our entire heart, mind, soul, and strength; it is about our learning to pray without ceasing; and it's about our learning to be reciprocate the faithfulness He has shown us. The Lord is good and His lovingkindness is everlasting.

### ***Psalm 136***

Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, for His lovingkindness is everlasting. Give thanks to the God of gods, for His lovingkindness is everlasting. Give thanks to the Lord of lords, for His lovingkindness is everlasting. To Him who alone does great wonders, for His lovingkindness is everlasting; To Him who made the heavens with skill, for His lovingkindness is everlasting; To Him who spread out the earth above the waters, for His lovingkindness is everlasting; To Him who made the great lights, for His lovingkindness is everlasting: The sun to rule by day, for His lovingkindness is everlasting, the moon and stars to rule by night, for His lovingkindness is everlasting.

To Him who smote the Egyptians in their firstborn, for His lovingkindness is everlasting, and brought Israel out from their midst, for His lovingkindness is everlasting, with a strong hand and an outstretched arm, for His lovingkindness is everlasting. To Him who divided the Red Sea asunder, for His lovingkindness is everlasting, and made Israel pass through the midst of it, for His lovingkindness is everlasting; But He overthrew Pharaoh and his army in the Red Sea, for His lovingkindness is everlasting.



To Him who led His people through the wilderness, for His lovingkindness is everlasting; to Him who smote great kings, for His lovingkindness is everlasting, and slew mighty kings, for His lovingkindness is everlasting: Sihon, king of the Amorites, for His lovingkindness is everlasting, and Og, king of Bashan, for His lovingkindness is everlasting, and gave their land as a heritage, for His lovingkindness is everlasting, even a heritage to Israel His servant, for His lovingkindness is everlasting.

Who remembered us in our low estate, for His lovingkindness is everlasting, and has rescued us from our adversaries, for His lovingkindness is everlasting; who gives food to all flesh, for His lovingkindness is everlasting. Give thanks to the God of heaven, for His lovingkindness is everlasting.

With this comprehensive understanding of the Lord's lovingkindness, next week we will start with the two adjective clauses: "to deliver their soul from death and to keep them alive in famine." In the meantime, let the reality of the Lord's lovingkindness birth in you hope; let it fill your soul with thanksgiving and praise. No matter what you are going through, you can confidently wait for His lovingkindness to be practically experienced. Just remember, every chosen **beloved** must walk the pathway of death if they are ever going to know true life and love. Don't be one of those who live with chopped off heads, frozen hearts, and mutated hands, with legs that are unstable and stumble around. God has created the chosen **beloved** to be truly magnificent and even "superhuman." He has dawned you with a crown of lovingkindness; own it. Wear it gladly and face each step you must take down this corridor of death with the confidence that His lovingkindness will bring

about the salvation of your soul and the provision you need for this life. It is assured. I encourage each of you to dig down deep into your soul, regardless of what you might otherwise think or feel, and choose to abide in hope. This is a decision you can and must make if you are going to ever learn to wait in His love and rest in His love.

Let's Pray