



# **Three Rivers Fellowship**

## **The Pauline Bootcamp (Session 7)**

***The Eternal Hope of the Body of Christ***

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## 1. DEFINITIONS

The Greek words for hope are the noun form ἐλπίς (54 times in the N.T. 69% in Paul) meaning "an expectation" and the verb form ἐλπίζω (31 times in N.T. 61% in Paul) meaning "anticipating" or "expecting". The character of this word family in the religious sense is one of "surety and absoluteness" of expectation. There is no sense of "possibility" nor "probability". Today we tend to use the English word "hope" within the context of "possibility" or "probability", rarely is it used as in the Biblical usage (as will be seen below). A good example of the modern usage might be the following statements:

"I am hoping that the Pirates win the World Series this year..."

"My hope is that the Steelers this year go to the Super Bowl so that I can use my season ticket advantage..."

In both of these cases (given the teams' records and performances) it is at best "wishful thinking" that they will even come close (the Steelers may have a better chance this year than the Pirates) to fulfilling the poor fan's hope and desire. Thus, the usage of this word family is almost mere speculation.

In contrast, the Pauline definition of the Hope of the Body of Christ is summarized below:

The Hope of the Body of Christ is the personal and eternal union and identification with Christ both in His holy state and His exaltation over all powers and authorities including the cherubim and all the angelic hosts. In its administrative position over all God's eternal created order, the Body of Christ is the direct, personal, and full expression of Christ's administrative position over God's eternal, created order. Everything manifested in the humanity of Christ as He now sits in the Third Heaven on the Father's Throne will be manifested both individually and corporately by members of His Body.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. THE SPECIFICS OF THE BODY'S HOPE

### 2.1. Location of the Body's Hope

The eternal abode of the Body is in heaven (not earth). Specifically, the Body of Christ will spend eternity in the "super-heavenlies" ἐπιουράνιος (epi-ouranios), literally meaning "the upon-heavens" or "the heavens upon (the heavens)". All of our blessings are founded in the "super-heavenlies". (Eph 1:3)

Eph 1:3 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:

Paul was caught up to the Third Heaven, τρίτου οὐράνου (TRITOU OURANOU). (2 Cor 12:1-3):

2 Corinthians 12:1 It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord.

2 I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven.

3 And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;)

4 How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter

Super-heavenlies == Third Heaven<sup>2</sup>

Our eternal position is in the heavens (Phil 3:20). [more on this below]

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Rodabaugh, S.E., A Dispensational Survey of Scripture Centered Around the Seven Ones of the Body of Christ, Trinity Grace Fellowship, Pittsburgh, PA, 1983, p. 23.

<sup>2</sup> From the Book of Enoch we are told that there are at least 10 levels of heaven, but Paul by inspiration tells us that there are 3.

## 2.2. The Body is Equally Seated with Christ

The Body of Christ is jointly (equally) seated with Christ in His Humanity upon the Father's Throne.

Christ is seated at the right hand of the Father (=Father's Throne) and the Body is equally seated with Him on the SAME throne (Eph 1:20 .cp. 2:6).

Eph 1:20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set *him* at his own right hand in the heavenly places.

Eph 2:6 And hath raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:

The Owner of the Throne upon which Christ and His Body sit is the Father (Rev 3:21).

Rev 3:21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

Our conversation (seat of authority) is in the heavenlies (Phil 3:20).

Philp 3:20 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:

21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

The standard commentators have often confused this verse. The phrase "from whence we look" cannot refer to "heavens" because "whence" (singular) does not agree in number with "heavens" (plural). Thus, "heavens" cannot be the antecedent of "whence". Indeed, the nearest antecedent of "whence" is "conversation". Thus, we are looking for Christ to descend FROM our "conversation". Conversation is a very poor translation of the Greek word πολιτεύμα (POLITEUMA). POLITEUMA is related to the Greek word family POLITEUW, meaning to regulate civil affairs. POLITEUMA must be taken to mean "seat of authority" - **the place upon which those sitting are "administrating civil affairs"**. This notion of administrating civil affairs falls precisely in line with the Body's administrative authority over the elect angels. Thus, Christ and His Body are seated upon the Father's throne administrating the affairs of the entire created order (see below).

## 2.3. The Body of Christ Inherits the Same Glory as Christ Now Radiates from the Throne

The Body inherits all things that are Christ's (Rom 8:16a) because Christ and His Body make up one fundamental Unit, where Christ is the Head, and we are members of His Body in particular. Thus, the foot inherits the same "humanity" as the "hand" or the "head". A human being is not made with foot of a calf or the arm of a dog.<sup>3</sup> Each body component is uniquely human. Thus, each member of the Body of Christ, uniquely shares in Christ's inheritance. The Body of Christ is the non-incarnate extension of Christ's Incarnate Humanity, as pictured in type, whereby the wife is the extension of her husband's humanity (Eph 5:22-33). The Body of Christ shares the very same glory as Christ radiates from the Father's Throne (Rom 8:16b). See also Rom 8:17-21.

Rom 8:16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together.

18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

19 For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

20 For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected *the same* in hope,

<sup>3</sup> The nature of the Body of Christ is in contrast to the "Survival of the Fittest Theory" of the pagan Greek scholar Empedicles.

21 Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

#### 2.4. With Christ the Body of Christ Rules the Angelic Realm and the Entire Created Order

The Body administrates the affairs of Angels (1 Cor 6:2, 3).

1 Cor 6:2 Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? 3 Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?

Here the Greek word "judge" is κρίνω (KRINO), and can only mean in this context judge in the sense of "administrate" NOT judge in the sense of "condemn". For how can elect angels be "condemned"?

The Body has a teaching ministry to angels (Eph 3:10).

Eph 3:10 To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly *places* might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God,

The angels learn of the Body's hope through the Body's own learning of its Hope. This learning and knowledge gained by the elect angels will also help them administrate the affairs that they will be responsible for in the future eternal kingdom.

With Christ the Body is in charge (literally "heads up") of the entire created order (Eph 1:10).

Eph 1:10 That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; *even* in him:

#### 2.5. The Future State of the Body of Christ

Before God (the Father) and through the finished work of Christ the Body is holy and without blame (Eph 1:4).

Eph 1:4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame (ἡμᾶς ἁγίους καὶ ἀμώμους) before him in love:

The KJV translators missed the power of Paul's intent here. They missed the Figure of Hendiadys employed. The phrase "holy and without blame" should have been translated "blamelessly holy", remembering that the second noun always becomes an adjective of superlative degree. The preferred translation might have been "super-blamelessly holy".

The Body is sanctified and presented "blameless" at the Rapture (1 Thes 5:23).

1 Thes 5:23 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and *I pray God* your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In this way (cp. Rom 8:16), the Body of Christ is simultaneously resurrected and glorified. Of course, this simultaneous resurrection and glorification is in contrast to the sequential process for Israel and her Gentiles.

#### 2.6. There is no ethnic distinction within the Body of Christ

The members of the Body of Christ are not saved with any ethnic distinction in mind, nor will there be any ethnic role to be played out among the Body of Christ (1 Cor 12:13; Gal 3:28; Col 3:11).

1 Cor 12:13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we **be Jews or Gentiles**, whether we **be bond or free**; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

Gal 3:28 There is neither **Jew nor Greek**, there is neither **bond nor free**, there is neither **male**

**nor female:** for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

Col 3:11 Where there is neither **Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free:** but Christ *is* all, and in all.

The same is said for sexual distinction, class, and class distinction. In the case of ethnic distinction there remains NOW distinction (i.e., Germans, Chinese, Irish, Zulu, Jew, Arab, etc.) and (male and female), but the eternal position to which the Body of Christ has been called, there will be no ethnic nor sexual distinction (Eph 4:13), and no "class distinction".

Eph 4:13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect **man** (ἄνδρα = **male**), unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

Regarding gender today there exists distinction in roles (1 Cor 10:3,4,7-10), but in the future for the Body there is no ethnic nor sexual distinction. A comment on gender and ethnicity is in order. We are not saying in the eternal state that women members of the Body of Christ become men. Rather as a whole the Body of Christ is "masculine" in authority over the entire created order, at both the individual and at the corporate levels. As a righteous member of the Body of Christ a woman will have the same authority over the entire created order as a righteous male member of the Body of Christ. As a specific example of ethnicity, I will remain an genealogical "mut" comprising no less than Irish, German, French, Viking, Swiss, etc. But, my relationship to Christ and to fellow members of the Body of Christ has nothing to do with my ethnic background. Especially in the glorified state!

### 3. THE BODY'S HOPE IN CONTRAST TO ISRAEL'S HOPE

In this section we compare the Body's hope with that of Israel's. While Israel's hope is earthly in nature and scope, the hope of the Body of Christ is solely heavenly. This will be clearly seen in this section.

#### 3.1. Location of Israel's Hope

Israel's hope is to inherit the land promised to Abraham (Gen 13:14,15,18; 15:17-21; Ez 48:1-29).

Gen 13:14 And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward:

15 For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.

16 And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, *then* shall thy seed also be numbered.

17 Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee.

#### Eastern and Western Borders

Gen 15:18 In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates:

#### Northern and Southern Borders

Ezekiel 48:1 Now these *are* the names of the tribes. From the north end to the coast of the way of Hethlon, as one goeth to Hamath, Hazarenan, the border of Damascus northward, to the coast of Hamath; for these are his sides east *and* west; a *portion for* Dan.

2 And by the border of Dan, from the east side unto the west side, a *portion for* Asher.

3 And by the border of Asher, from the east side even unto the west side, a *portion for* Naphtali.

4 And by the border of Naphtali, from the east side unto the west side, a *portion for* Manasseh.

5 And by the border of Manasseh, from the east side unto the west side, a *portion for* Ephraim.

6 And by the border of Ephraim, from the east side even unto the west side, a *portion for* Reuben.

7 And by the border of Reuben, from the east side unto the west side, a *portion for* Judah.

8 And by the border of Judah, from the east side unto the west side, shall be the offering which ye shall offer of five and twenty thousand *reeds in* breadth, and *in* length as one of the *other* parts, from the east side unto the west side: and the sanctuary shall be in the midst of it.

9 The oblation that ye shall offer unto the LORD *shall be* of five and twenty thousand in length,

and of ten thousand in breadth.

10 And for them, *even* for the priests, shall be *this* holy oblation; toward the north five and twenty thousand *in length*, and toward the west ten thousand in breadth, and toward the east ten thousand in breadth, and toward the south five and twenty thousand in length: and the sanctuary of the LORD shall be in the midst thereof.

11 *It shall be* for the priests that are sanctified of the sons of Zadok; which have kept my charge, which went not astray when the children of Israel went astray, as the Levites went astray.

12 And *this* oblation of the land that is offered shall be unto them a thing most holy by the border of the Levites.

13 And over against the border of the priests the Levites *shall have* five and twenty thousand in length, and ten thousand in breadth: all the length *shall be* five and twenty thousand, and the breadth ten thousand.

14 And they shall not sell of it, neither exchange, nor alienate the firstfruits of the land: for *it is* holy unto the LORD.

15 And the five thousand, that are left in the breadth over against the five and twenty thousand, shall be a profane *place* for the city, for dwelling, and for suburbs: and the city shall be in the midst thereof.

16 And these *shall be* the measures thereof; the north side four thousand and five hundred, and the south side four thousand and five hundred, and on the east side four thousand and five hundred, and the west side four thousand and five hundred.

17 And the suburbs of the city shall be toward the north two hundred and fifty, and toward the south two hundred and fifty, and toward the east two hundred and fifty, and toward the west two hundred and fifty.

18 And the residue in length over against the oblation of the holy *portion shall be* ten thousand eastward, and ten thousand westward: and it shall be over against the oblation of the holy *portion*; and the increase thereof shall be for food unto them that serve the city.

19 And they that serve the city shall serve it out of all the tribes of Israel.

20 All the oblation *shall be* five and twenty thousand by five and twenty thousand: ye shall offer the holy oblation foursquare, with the possession of the city.

21 And the residue *shall be* for the prince, on the one side and on the other of the holy oblation, and of the possession of the city, over against the five and twenty thousand of the oblation toward the east border, and westward over against the five and twenty thousand toward the west border, over against the portions for the prince: and it shall be the holy oblation; and the sanctuary of the house *shall be* in the midst thereof.

22 Moreover from the possession of the Levites, and from the possession of the city, *being* in the midst of *that* which is the prince's, between the border of Judah and the border of Benjamin, shall be for the prince.

23 As for the rest of the tribes, from the east side unto the west side, Benjamin *shall have* a *portion*.

24 And by the border of Benjamin, from the east side unto the west side, Simeon *shall have* a *portion*.

25 And by the border of Simeon, from the east side unto the west side, Issachar a *portion*.

26 And by the border of Issachar, from the east side unto the west side, Zebulun a *portion*.

27 And by the border of Zebulun, from the east side unto the west side, Gad a *portion*.

28 And by the border of Gad, at the south side southward, the border shall be even from Tamar unto the waters of strife in Kadesh, and to the river toward the great sea.

29 *This is* the land which ye shall divide by lot unto the tribes of Israel for inheritance, and these *are* their portions, saith the Lord GOD.

The land promised to Abraham encompasses the land bordered by the Euphrates River on the east, the Mediterranean Sea, the Nile River (as latitudinally defined by Kadesh) on the south, and the city of Hamath on the North. This encompasses most of modern-day Iraq, Jordan, parts of Syria, Egypt, and Lebanon.

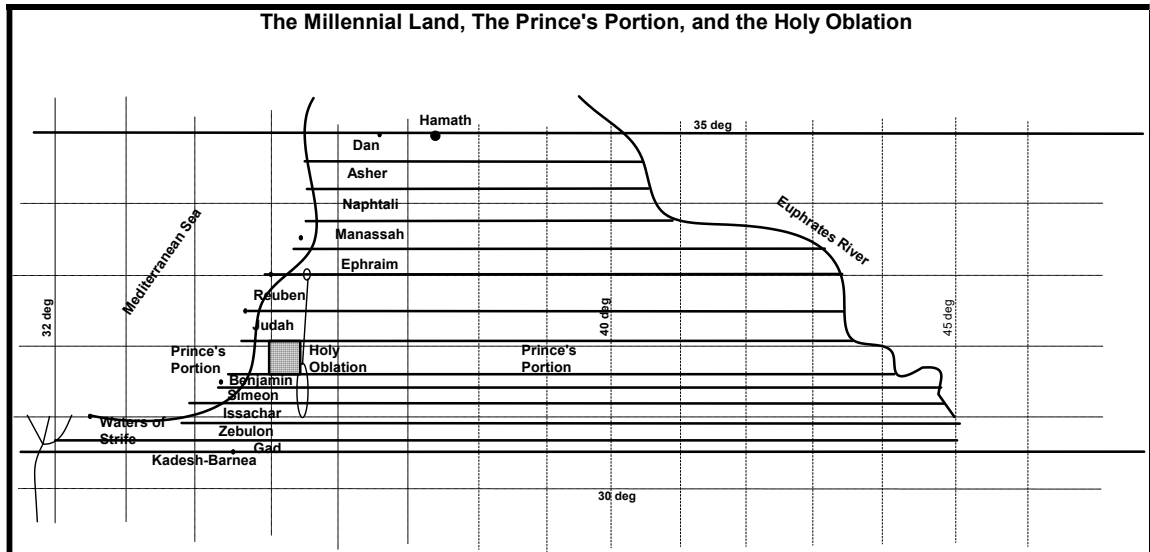


Figure 1. Land Promised to Israel Through Abraham

As can be seen the Body's hope is quite distinct from that of elect Israel. Israel has an earthly hope, while the Body has a heavenly hope.

### 3.2. The Seats (or Thrones) of Israel

The legislative branch of Israel's future government is precisely the 12 apostles as the Great Sanhedrin. They are to sit on twelve (12) thrones administrating the affairs of Israel (Mat 19:28; Luke 22:30).

Mat 19:28 And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Luke 22:30 That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Indeed, Israel as a nation will be the priestly intercessors for the Gentile nations (Ex 19:6; 1 Pet 2:5,9; Rev 5:9,10).

Ex 19:6 And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These *are* the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

1 Pet 2:5 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ...

9 But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

Moreover, these multiple thrones are viewed as a singular throne<sup>4</sup> being owned by Christ Himself (Rev 3:21).

Rev 3:21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

<sup>4</sup> A composite-unity.



The Body sits on a singular throne (the Father's Throne) which is in the third heaven and not upon the earth. Indeed, an examination and comparison of the relevant scriptures clearly show that the "owner" of the throne does NOT directly sit on His throne. The Owner of His throne "commissions" others to sit upon His throne.

THE BIBLICAL THRONES		
THRONE	OWNER	SITTING ONES
Heavenly	The Father	Christ in His Humanity and His Body
Earthly	The Son	12 Apostles, David, Ezekiel, and the Nation of Israel as the Intercessors for the Gentile Nations

**Table 1. The Owners of the Biblical Thrones**

### 3.3. The Relationship of Israel to the Angels

Israel is under the authority of the Angels in every respect. The entire law was dispensed to Israel through the Angels (Acts 7:53; Gal 3:19).

Acts 7:53 Who have received the law by the disposition of angels and have not kept *it*.

Gal 3:19 Wherefore then *serveth* the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; *and it was ordained by angels* in the hand of a mediator.

The angels teach and reveal knowledge to Israel Dan 7:16; 8:17; 9:21.

Dan 7:16 I came near unto one of them that stood by and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things.

Thus, for Israel the angels are their intercessors (cp. with 1 Cor 8:5, 6; Heb 1:14).

1 Cor 8:5 For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,)

6 But to us *there is but* one God, the Father, of whom *are* all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom *are* all things, and we by him.

Heb 1:14 Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

**For the Body there is NO angelic mediation! Christ alone is the mediator for the Body (1 Tim 2:5).**

1 Tim 2:5 For *there is* one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;

### 3.4. Ethnicity within Israel's Program

Israel's hope contains and indeed maintains ethnic distinction. In fact, this is implied if Israel is to be the priestly "nation" for the "nations" (Isa 2:1-3; 14:1-3; 60:1-16).

Isa 2:1 The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

2 And it shall come to pass in the last days, *that* the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.

3 And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to

the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

4 And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

Israel possesses the Gentiles in righteousness (Amos 9:9-12).

Amos 9:9 For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as *corn* is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth.

10 All the sinners of my people shall die by the sword, which say, The evil shall not overtake nor prevent us.

11 In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old:

12 That they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the heathen, which are called by my name, saith the LORD that doeth this.

Egypt and Assyria are Israel's immediate associate nations helping Israel administrate the Gentile nations (Isa 19:23-25).

Isa 19:23 In that day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians.

24 In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, *even* a blessing in the midst of the land:

25 Whom the LORD of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed *be* Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance.

God governs the elect Gentile nations through the nation of Israel (Zech 8:3, 13, 22, 23; Joel 3:1).

Zech 8:22 Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the LORD.

23 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; In those days *it shall come to pass*, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard *that* God *is* with you.

**Yet, in contrast there is NO ethnic distinction within the Body of Christ (Gal 3:28).**

Gal 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

#### 4. IMMUTABILITY OF THE BODY'S HOPE

The hope into which a saint has been called is eternal for God does not change His mind (Rom 11:29).

Rom 11:29 For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance ("regret").

The context of this passage is the setting aside of Israel. This setting aside is as Paul clearly teaches is temporary and was part of the plan from the beginning. By the downfall of Israel God purposefully brought into being the Body of Christ and by the Body of Christ Israel will regain her hope.

God has not elected persons to a mere generic salvation (whatever that would mean) but has called his elects to specific hopes. These hopes are eternally sure because God has chosen them, and Christ has purchased them with His blood at the torture-pole. The Body is eternally elected to be the righteous non-Incarnate extension of Christ's Humanity (Eph 1:18; 4:4).

## 5. UPON MASTERING THE BODY'S HOPE

The importance of the doctrine of the hope is clearly stated in scripture (Eph 4:4).

- Eph 4:1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,
- 2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;
- 3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.
- 4 There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;
- 5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism,
- 6 One God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in you all.

The hope is one of the fundamental elements contained in the "doctrinal statement" of the Body of Christ. Each member of the Body of Christ is to learn, master, and obey the Seven Ones of Ephesians 4. Indeed, faithfulness to the hope dictates eternal reward Col 1:23; 2:8, 18.

Body saints are compelled to master the hope and come into a "detailed knowledge" of their hope (see Paul's prayer: Eph 1:17, also **Eph 4:13**; Col 1:9, 10; **Col 2:2**; 3:10; **2 Tim 2:25**).

Eph 4:13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

14 That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

Col 2:2 That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ;

2 Tim 2:25 In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;

26 And *that* they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

3 In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

In these passages the Body's hope is explicitly linked with  $\epsilon\pi\iota\gamma\nu\omega\sigma\iota\varsigma$  (EPIGNOSIS) meaning detailed or full knowledge. True Saints progress in mastering Paul's Gospel, but the reprobate do not. It is this context that is brought to the passage below.

Reprobates are characterized as being NEVER able to come to a "detailed knowledge" of the hope (2 Tim 3:7), but the true saints progress in their detailed understanding of their hope (1 Cor 13:12; Eph 1:17).

2 Tim 3:7 Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.