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# Words of Truth

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## Hebrews 2:15

By: Brian A. Yeager

Though we are looking at verse fifteen in this study, the following is the whole sentence which includes verse fourteen. Here is the text: *“Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage”* (Hebrews 2:14-15). As we consider those who lived their lives in fear of death, let’s remember who we are talking about and why death was fearful. Also, we need to consider what bondage those people were under.

Those who lived prior to and under the Law of Moses had no hope in death. One Psalm speaks of the terrors of death (Psalms 55:4). In a context of a discussion with king David and a wise woman from Tekoah, we read this: *“For we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again; neither doth God respect any person: yet doth he devise means, that his banished be not expelled from him”* (II Samuel 14:14). Regarding death, Solomon wrote: *“For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast: for all is vanity. All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again... For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten”* (Ecclesiastes 3:19-20 and Ecclesiastes 9:5). Job said: *“But man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he? As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up: So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep. O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that thou wouldest keep me secret, until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me! If a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come”* (Job 14:10-14).

There is not much hope in the words above nor is there in many more quotes that we could examine from the Old Testament. There was some understanding of a judgment from God (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14). There was some thought of life after death (Psalms 49:12-15). However, there are statements that show this thinking could have been figures of speech at times (Psalms 86:13). When we studied the book of Daniel here locally in El Paso we saw how language that appeared on the surface to reveal the resurrection didn’t really mean such (Daniel 12:1-3; see notes here: [https://www.wordsoftruth.net/daniel12\\_01\\_13.html](https://www.wordsoftruth.net/daniel12_01_13.html)).

What we do know about times of old is that they did not have the lively hope of the resurrection that we have in Christ. Notice: *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into”* (I Peter 1:3-12).

Living under the Law of Moses was a life of bondage. The saints in Rome, whom had the Spirit of God working through them, were told this: *“For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father”* (Romans 8:15). Those Christians in Galatia that wanted to return to certain aspects of the Law of Moses, were told not to be entangled again in the yoke of bondage (Galatians 5:1-18). The law itself was a law of bondage (Galatians 4:1-31).

The saints of old were afraid to die. They didn't have the hope that we have in death. We can be like Paul and know that in death there are things that are far better (Philippians 1:21-23). We know about Paradise (Luke 16:19-31 and Luke 23:39-43). Therefore, when facing death, we can be ready and willing to leave this world (Acts 21:13). That is a comfort we have because we are in Christ.

Our comfort and our confidence comes because we can see what happened with Christ. He died, went to Paradise in Hades, was risen on the third day, and then was taken into Heaven (Acts 2:22-33). He is the firstborn from the dead (I Corinthians 15:20 and Colossians 1:12-18). He is the evidence that being dead in the flesh is not the end of everything (I Thessalonians 4:13-18). That comfort did not exist for those under the Law of Moses. Remember, Jesus is the firstborn from the dead. Our hope was not their hope. Therefore, those reading this Hebrew letter could have a sigh of relief. Their fear of death was no longer warranted. Being in Christ means that death is swallowed up in victory (I Corinthians 15:54-57).