Word of the Kingdom Conference 2024 Back to the Future We Hope For What We Do Not See Session 4

Romans 8:18 For I consider 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 creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. 20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; 21 because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. 22 For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. 23 Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. 24 For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? 25 But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance.

Hope within the context of these verses from Romans and scripture as a whole has to do with a confident expectation. It is defined in Scripture by God as something that is expected to be realized, as opposed to man's definition of the word or how we may sometimes loosely use the word as something which may or may not happen. And although hope is described here in Romans 8 as not seen in the present with the physical eye, but is to presently be seen and believed by faith (what we do not see), it is to be fully anticipated that this will be an individual's future reality. And our scripture from Romans tells us we are to eagerly wait for this hope with perseverance.

Perseverance, or patient endurance, is to be our continual practice in our lives now as we wait eagerly for what we do not see. This is not waiting in a general sense, as in waiting for time to pass, or going through the motions of life and its troubles that are common to all of mankind. Rather, it is specifically related to enduring and remaining under trials as those who have faith to the saving of the soul are tested, and as they endure present sufferings by putting to death their old man and his desires and respond by faith to those testings (by continuing to believe what God has said). And as they do so, they allow the Holy Spirit to produce this fruit/work of patient endurance and faithfulness in them - Galatians 5:22 *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering* **[patient endurance]**, *kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.*

We will look at a few scriptures that show us this truth - James 1:2 *My* brethren, count it all joy when you fall into **various trials**, 3 knowing that the **testing of your faith** [to the saving of the soul] **produces patience**. 4 But let **patience** have its perfect **work** [a work of the Spirit], that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

1 Corinthians 10:13 No *temptation/testing* has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be *tempted* beyond what you are able, but with the *temptation* will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to *endure* it.

1 Peter 2:19 For this is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one **endures** grief, **suffering** wrongfully. 20 For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it **patiently**? But when you do good and **suffer**, if you take it **patiently** this is commendable before God.

Not only are we to patiently endure and suffer by dying to our flesh and submitting to the will of the Father THROUGH the various trials and testings that constantly surround us, but we are to do this over a long extended period of time (longsuffering). However, (and we can thank the Lord), this long period of time of suffering is not endless, but has a definite end goal - Hebrews 6:11 *And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance* [confidence] of hope until the end, 12 that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

Continuing on, we see this spoken of Abraham - Hebrews 6:13 For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, 14 saying, "Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you." **15** And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. James 5:10 *My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience.* 11 Indeed we count them blessed who endure [who remain faithful under trial and testing]. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.

LOOKING UNTO ONE THING. THE DAY/THE PROMISE OF REST

2 Peter 3:8 But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 9 The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

The desire and longsuffering that the Lord presently has towards Christians is that they would have a change of mind (repent) and be saved, and not perish for the age to come. This longsuffering of the Lord is not endless, but is based upon and set within the specific timeframe of six days, six thousand years. Which is why Peter in v. 8 references the six twenty-four hour days of the restoration of the ruined material creation in Genesis, which ENDED with a Seventh Day of Rest. This is the one thing the recipients to whom Peter was writing were allowing to escape their attention. And for ourselves, the ONE THING we are to be constantly reminded of as it may at times escape our attention, is that the Lord is presently working with mankind in view of fulfilling His purpose for creating him (rulership) but will END His work after 6 days, 6,000 years, and Rest for the 1,000 years following. And He will not be slow, but quick to fulfill His promise when the time arrives - Revelation 22:12 "And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work.

Which is what it means to and why we are to be constantly -Hebrews 12:2 *looking unto Jesus,* the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. The end goal and purpose of remaining under trials and testings over a long extended period of time is to obtain or inherit the promises. This is our hope. God's promise of REST from our work of suffering through testings and trials is realized only AFTER one has done so, as there is the possibility of not reaching the end goal - Hebrews 4:1 *Therefore, since* **a promise** remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it.

Hebrews 4:9 *There remains therefore* **a** *rest for the people of God. 10 For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God did from His* [on the seventh day God rested from all His work which He had done]. 11 Let us therefore be diligent to enter **that rest**, lest anyone *fall according to the same example of disobedience* [the example of the Israelites under Moses who did not enter the land but came short of it].

The kingdom-seeking Christian who chooses at any moment not to continue to remain faithful under the trials and testings of his faith, who chooses not to remain submitted to the will of the Father but instead chooses to live after his own will and agenda, is described in Hebrews as one who did not fear the Lord by not exercising faith to the saving of the soul, and who came short of the end goal and chose to draw back - Hebrews 10:36 *For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise: 37 "For yet a little while, And He who is coming will come and will not tarry. 38 Now the just shall live by faith; But if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him."*

And this drawing back will have fearful and age-lasting consequences not only for the soul of the individual who draws back, but also for the souls of the brethren - Matthew 24:45 "Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? 46 Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. 47 Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods. 48 But if that evil servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming,' [stops looking unto Jesus and begins to forget this one thing] 49 and begins to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards, 50 the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not **looking for him** [not looking unto Jesus and His coming reign in the Seventh Day] and at an hour that he is not aware of, 51 and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Hebrews 10:39 *But we are not of those who draw back to perdition* [destruction], *but of those who believe* [who are faithful and wise servants, who are looking for Him] *to the saving of the soul.*

CONSIDER ONE ANOTHER

1 Timothy 4:15 Meditate on these things; **give yourself entirely to them**, that your progress **may be evident to all**. 16 Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. **Continue in them**, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.

Though we know these things and are established in the message of the Word of the Kingdom that the Holy Spirit has presented to us, and we are presently hearing that which He is still continuing to speak today, we are commanded and exhorted to continue in them and to give ourselves entirely to what we've heard. As our lives provide an encouragement, motivation, and an example to those within the household of the faith to persevere by remaining under testings, suffering long until the end - Hebrews 10:24 *And let us consider one another* [meaning to observe, understand, fix one's eyes or mind upon] *in order to stir up love and good works, 25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching* [not forgetting this one thing].

1 Peter 5:6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, 7 casting all your cares upon Him, for He cares for you [He is very compassionate and merciful]. 8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour [Job]. 9 Resist him, steadfast in the faith, **knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.** 10 But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while [an end to the suffering], perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you. 11 To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen. From our perspective and our finite understanding of circumstances, there will be times when we begin to look around instead of unto Jesus, to live by what we see and feel. It may seem like no one is watching or considering our actions because we do not receive any type of recognition now for presenting our lives as a living sacrifice for the good news that we have heard. But we must remember the vow we have made to pursue and be glorified together with the Christ because this is what the scriptures say to do, which we must choose to continually believe, by continually acting upon that belief. We must allow the Lord to renew our minds in this area so that we may have the same attitude as Paul who did not even judge himself before the time - 1 Corinthians 4:1 Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. 2 Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful. 3 But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by a human court. In fact, I do not even judge myself. 4 For I know of nothing against myself, yet I am not justified by this; **but He who judges me is the Lord**. 5 Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels [motives] of the hearts. Then each one's praise will come from God.

All of our works are unto the Lord, the Righteous Judge, and NOTHING in His creation is hidden from His sight - Revelation 2:1 *"To the angel of the church of Ephesus write, 'These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand,* **who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands** [which are the seven churches]: 2 *"I know your works...*

And the Lord Himself WILL reward us on that Day - Matthew 6:1 "Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. 2 Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. 3 But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 that your charitable deed may be in secret/hidden; and your Father who sees in secret [what is hidden] will Himself reward you openly. Colossians 3:3 For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ who is our life appears, **then you also will appear with Him** *in glory.*

THEY ALL DIED BELIEVING

Hebrews 11:13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth...39 And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, **did not receive the promise,** 40 God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.

All of the individuals mentioned in Hebrews 11 physically died in faith. They all died believing what God had said regarding the coming Seventh Day of Rest and did not receive the promise of Rest in their lifetime. But they obtained a good testimony from God, as their faith walk has been recorded for us in Hebrews chapter 11. Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God. They **looked** by faith (at what is not seen), beyond the present age (Man's day) to the age to come. Beyond the earthly inheritance covenanted to Israel TO the better heavenly inheritance, and they are STILL at this moment waiting to receive it. They understood that although the realization of these promises were afar off years beyond their lifetimes, they remained assured of and were confident (they had hope) in God's faithfulness to fulfill them. For God IS Faithful to His Word.

Job made a powerful confession of this in the midst of his **testing** and physical **suffering**, which he knew were NOT endless - Job 19:25 *For I know* that my Redeemer lives, And He shall stand at last on the earth; 26 And after my skin is destroyed, **this I know**, That in my flesh I shall see God, 27 Whom I shall see for myself, And my eyes shall behold, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!

For ourselves, the scriptures encourage us who are much closer to that Day (when we will SEE what we do not presently see), who are much closer to midnight, to live our lives in the following manner-

1 Thessalonians 5:5 You are all sons of light and sons of the Day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. 6 Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. 7 For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. 8 But let us who are of the Day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation. 9 For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 who died for us, **that whether we wake or sleep** [whether we are alive or have physically died], **we should live together with Him** [in the age to come]. 11 Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.

BACK TO THE FUTURE

So then, with the title of our conference 'Back to the Future' in mind, and following the instructions given to us with how we are to study God's Word by comparing Scripture with Scripture, line upon line, here a little there a little, we will go back to the OT to the type of Abraham who looked to the future who provides for us- Romans 15:4 *For whatever things were written aforetime with a view to our learning were written, in order that through the patience and through the encouragement arising from the scriptures we might be having hope.* (Wuest An Expanded Translation)

And we can also learn from the type pictured in Lot, who unfortunately did not have his eyes on the future (he did not hope for what was not seen), but on the present and the consequences for him because of it - 1 Corinthians 10:6 *Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted.*

LIFT YOUR EYES BUT DON'T BE A LOT!

Genesis 13:10 And Lot lifted his eyes and saw all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere (**before** the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah) like the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt as you go toward Zoar. 11 Then Lot chose for himself all the plain of Jordan, and Lot journeyed east. And they separated from each other. 12 Abram dwelt in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelt in the cities of the plain and pitched his tent even as far as Sodom. 13 But the men of Sodom were exceedingly wicked and sinful against the LORD. Abram, who we know would later be called Abraham, had pleaded with Lot to separate from him because the land could not bear them both due to their many possessions and the strife between their herdsmen. Lot had separated from the one to whom the promises of God were given and had chosen for himself *all* the plain of Jordan *seeing* that it was well watered *everywhere,* pitching his tent even up to Sodom, where the men were exceedingly wicked and sinful before the Lord. And there he remained.

Abram, on the other hand, dwelt in the land of Canaan, the land that God had called him to in Genesis 12. This was the land that God had said that He would bring him to and give him and his descendants forever -Genesis 13:14 And the LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him: "Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are northward, southward, eastward, and westward; 15 for all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever. 16 And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if a man could number the dust of the earth, then your descendants also could be numbered. 17 Arise, walk in the land through its length and its width, for I give it to you."

Firstly, we see from the previous passage about Lot, that he 'lifted his eyes', BEFORE Sodom was destroyed and because of what he *saw* it then governed his actions and decisions, and he chose for himself all the plain of Jordan. And there was only one direction he could have gone and did go after he had chosen to separate himself from Abram, the one to whom God had given the heavenly and earthly promises of rulership. Lot pitched his tent even up to Sodom, a name that means 'burning', and as we know it is a city that God later judged and destroyed. So just in the name 'Sodom' itself we can see what the fate of that city would eventually be.

Although the promises were not given to Lot, he would have been aware of them and they would have been available to him because he was taken along on the journey with Abram when Abram left Ur of the Chaldees. But in order to receive these blessings, Lot would have to dwell (remain) with Abram who was a descendant of Shem, the only one of Noah's sons to have a God - Genesis 9:26 *And he said: "Blessed be the LORD, The God* of Shem, And may Canaan be his servant. 27 May God enlarge Japheth, And may he dwell in the tents of Shem; And may Canaan be his servant."

But Lot separated from Abram and '*dwelled* in the cities of the plain, and *pitched his tent* toward Sodom [the city that will burn].'

We can conclude that Lot was not ignorant of but had more than a basic knowledge of the promises of God, which again were only given to Abram. Lot had embarked on the journey with Abram, and Abram would have made the purpose of the journey and the promises clear to him. This lays the foundation for what we see later in the Scriptures with Ruth and Orpah, who were both presented with an opportunity to go on a journey, and who had to remain under the instruction and protection of Naomi in order to receive an inheritance through marriage. But as we know, Orpha began the journey but later turned back to her people and to her gods.

On the other hand, after Lot had separated from Abram, God spoke to Abram and told him to 'lift his eyes now and look', again confirming the promise of the inheritance of the land and the multiplicity of his descendants. Because of what God said, Abram's response was to move - Genesis 13:18 *Then Abram* **moved** *his tent, and went and dwelt by the terebinth trees of Mamre, which are in Hebron, and built an altar there to the LORD.*

Abram moved his tent and dwelt [meaning to remain or abide] by the terebinth trees of Mamre, which in the Hebrew means "strength" and "fatness". "Mamre" also has a root word that has do to with a 'lifting up of the wings', which was displayed in what God had just done for Abram by bringing him to the Land from Ur. This will remind us of what God had told the children of Israel following their deliverance from Egypt - Exodus 13:3 *And Moses said to the people: "Remember this day in which you went out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage; for by strength* **[power] of hand the LORD brought you out of this place.** No leavened bread shall be eaten.

Exodus 19:4 You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself.

'Fatness' is mentioned several times throughout Scripture in connection with the fullness of God's blessings and abundant provision for His people when they will dwell in the land - Isaiah 30:19 For the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem; You shall weep no more. He will be very gracious to you at the sound of your cry; When He hears it, He will answer you...v.23 Then He will give the rain for your seed With which you sow the ground, And bread of the increase of the earth; It will be fat [rich] and plentiful. In that Day your cattle will feed In large pastures.

All of this, of course, points to that future Day foreshadowed in the experiences of Abram before the nation of Israel came into being, but was already in existence in his loins. Lord willing, we will delve more into the primary application for Israel another time. But hopefully we will see the spiritual truth we are to learn here for ourselves.

Abram established himself by the terebinth trees of Mamre by **building an altar** to the Lord there. Altars are associated with offerings and sacrifices. The first mention of it in scripture is seen in Noah's actions following the flood where there was a new beginning and the command to be fruitful and multiply - Genesis 8:20 *Then Noah* **built an altar** to the *LORD, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird,* **and offered burnt offerings on the altar**.

To point it out once again, this was Abram's response because of the promise God had given him. Abram viewed his present circumstances the same way in which God did. Not by leaning on his own understanding or being right in his own eyes, but trusting the Lord that the land he was presently standing on would one Day be his to rule over, but NOT at that present time- Hebrews 11:8 *By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. 9 By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; 10 for he waited [he looked] for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.*

WE HAVE A PROMISE! THEREFORE...

Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you **present your bodies a living sacrifice,** holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

These verses come following Paul's explanation of the setting aside of Israel during this present dispensation, but not completely cast away from God and His purpose for the nation as His firstborn son. In this way, the Gentiles would be grafted into and become partakers of the inheritance, the heavenly portion of the kingdom promised to Abraham and his descendants. These descendants would believe (have faith) as Abraham did and thereby be blessed along with him - Galatians 3:7 *Therefore know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham. 8 And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, "In you all the nations shall be blessed." 9 So then those who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham.*

We know that God's plans are perfect, and it is with His foreknowledge that although Israel had rejected the offer of the kingdom of the heavens and crucified their King, the entire nation (those alive at the end of the tribulation) will one day be delivered and brought back to the land covenanted to them - Romans 11:26 *And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: "The Deliverer will come out of Zion, And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; 27 For this is My covenant with them, When I take away their sins."* For God will not have a change of mind about their calling because it is He Who is making all things work together for good according to His plan and His purpose, which always has to do with the coming Seventh Day.

Therefore, Paul cannot help but respond by giving praise to God and declaring- Romans 11:33 *O* the depth of the wealth and wisdom and knowledge of God. How unsearchable are His judgments, and how untraceable the paths He takes; 34 for whoever knew the Lord's mind? or who became His counselor? 35 or who has previously given to Him and it

will be recompensed to him? [the answer would be... no one!] *36 Because out from Him and through Him and for Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.* (Wuest An Expanded Translation)

This is what precedes Romans 12 and why the chapter begins with 'therefore'. Therefore because we - Romans 11:30were once disobedient to God, yet have now obtained mercy through their disobedience [Israel], 31 even so these also have now been disobedient, that through the mercy shown you they also may obtain mercy. 32 For God has committed them all to disobedience, that He might have mercy on all,

Paul exhorts and pleads because of God's mercy toward us who were once Gentiles, who were without hope of an inheritance but are now a new creation in Christ, and who are now partakers of the promises given to Abraham, to offer our bodies as a living sacrifice, recalling how Abram responded by building an altar to the Lord when he was given the promise.

WHAT DO YOU SEE?

God wills and desires that we respond to Him by faith (believing what He has said) but as we've seen with both Abraham and Lot, man has a choice about doing so. Whether we are conscious of it or not, we ARE responding and it is either in faithfulness or unfaithfulness. We are responding by either drawing near to the Lord as Abram did by establishing himself in a position of strength and blessing, which for us would be to continually seek first His kingdom and His righteousness now, in order that we may receive blessing from God at the JSOC. Or we are drawing away from Him as Lot did, conforming ourselves and focusing all of our attention on the city that will eventually burn rather than looking out ahead to the CITY that God has prepared for us and what is beyond it - 2 Peter 3:10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. 11 Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, 12 looking for and hastening [to desire earnestly] the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on

fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? 13 Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

We can only see the Day that will come unexpectedly like a thief in the night, we can only see the Day when our hope will be realized and we can only look for a new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness will dwell, by faith. We believe what God has said in His Word about it, as we rightly divide that Word. It is not a charismatic emotion we can work up or an excitement generated by the man of the flesh, appearing to be godly but absent of transforming power. No, it is only through the Word as we pray and ask the Lord to enlighten our spiritual eyes to see it, and He brings forth the inward transformation from above.

So the question that we are challenged with today is, do you see it? Are you continuing to see it? How much of it have you seen? Our answer to these questions will be shown by the decisions we make every day (our holy conduct and godliness) and our desire to gather and encourage those who are also seeing by faith the Day and the hope set before them. Our answer as to what we see will determine our final position with the Lord following our removal, before this city is destroyed - Genesis 19:27 And Abraham went early in the morning to the place where he had stood before the LORD. 28 Then he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain; and he saw, and behold, the smoke of the land which went up like the smoke of a furnace. 29 And it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when He overthrew the cities in which Lot had dwelt. 30 Then Lot went up out of Zoar and dwelt in the mountains, and his two daughters were with him; for he was afraid to dwell in Zoar. And he and his two daughters dwelt in a cave.