

1. “..... looking unto Jesus / the hope set before us” (Hebrews 12:1 & 6:18 NKJV)

Hello folks, it's always a privilege to be able to share something and I pray this will be a blessing . Bear with me if I should cover things you know really well, it's just that I want to make sure no-ones left out. There was a sense of joy at times as I was preparing this, so hopefully The Lord is in it.

What I want to share in particular, concerns The Hope of the Gospel..., God's Word in our heart, His promise of eternal salvation through faith in Jesus ... and that it's not about our best efforts, or our mistakes even but about looking to the one who loved us and gave himself for us.... because it's through faith we receive all that He has secured for us in this so great salvation.

So this is all about “*looking unto Jesus*” with the eyes of faith and scripture makes it really clear that He is intended to be our vision from start to finish. “*The author and finisher of faith*” (Hebrews 12:2 NKJV)

If we could have a look at Hebrews 12, verse 1....,

Before we read it, I think it would be fair to say that most of us, even after all these years, still get surprised and dismayed at our shortcomings, forgetting for that brief moment that our old nature just can't be changed. You get fed up with yourself and the natural response is then to try harder and for our fight to be there so to speak..., but The Lord's way is for us to look to him.

If you remember there's that wonderful scripture that says....,

“But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord”. (2 Corinthians 3:18 NKJV)

And that's the encouragement here in Hebrews 12, to shift our vision onto Him, “*looking unto Jesus*”. It sounds like just a glib statement but in Jesus we see God's promise to us through the gospel.

“Therefore we also..., since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares [us], and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 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”. (Hebrews 12:1-2 NKJV)

Just in passing, ‘endurance’ (*hypomene*)is a word worth noting, as it's part and parcel of our walk and we'll look at that a bit later, also translated as patience, or steadfastness.

The ‘*hypo*’ part of the word means under, not to be confused with ‘*hyper*’, which is over, over and above. So there's that element of sometimes being under circumstances but believing and trusting regardless.

(‘*meno*’ / to remain)

Both, “run the race with endurance”....and “endured the cross”....are from the same word, ‘*hypomene*’

In the previous chapter it lists all the great characters of faith in scripture who believed and trusted God in all kinds of situations and here in chapter 12 it begins with..., “*Therefore we also...*”. So it's our turn now.

I don't know if you remember but on a previous occasion, we saw that in the phrase..., “*looking unto Jesus*”, the word translated as “*looking*” is ‘*aphorao*’; (that's ‘*apo*’;which means “*from*”...and ‘*horeo*’;to see.)

Which if you check, actually does mean “to look away from”.

Then it says, “*unto*”(eis).., which means ‘at’ or ‘to’ a specific point.

So the phrase, “*looking unto Jesus*”, involves a definite looking away from one thing, to something else.

Literally it could be read as, “*looking away from everything else unto Jesus*”

From all the cares and distractions, , to Him.

And this issue of where we are looking is so important. A life lesson really... that once understood, will help us through all of life's difficulties.... because in seeing Jesus, we see God's promise to us...., the finished article. The one who as our representative is risen, ascended and glorified..., seated at The Father's right hand and we are in Him.

2.

“Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is...and everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure”. (1 John 3:2-3 NKJV).

With “*the race set before us*” being a metaphor for our lives, our everyday life..., it’s certainly a marathon rather than a sprint...and for anyone young in The Lord, the image of a race could easily be misunderstood, thinking that our salvation requires something from us as well, to prove to God that we’re inherently a good person and worthy of eternal life. Which of course couldn’t be further from the truth.

Scripture being so clear on this..., that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

That only Jesus was able to save us from a lost eternity and He has.... and that when He cried out “*Finished !*” from the cross, it was emphatic and final.

Every sin...every sickness...all of the curse...all of God’s judgment upon our sin, He bore it all in his body on the cross...and His pure sinless blood redeemed us forever.

Having secured everything for us it’s by faith now, that we access all of God’s blessing that He’s freely bestowed on us in Christ.

Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. But He [was] wounded for our transgressions, [He was] bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace [was] upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. (Isaiah 53:4-6 NKJV)

And what I feel to focus on in particular is The Hope of The Gospel..., the final part of God’s promise of eternal salvation which happens for us all when The Lord Jesus comes for His church. That moment when we get to see Him face to face and are clothed upon with our glorified bodies.

I’d like us to see what Paul wrote concerning this ... and in Ephesians 1, he gives us a great overview of our salvation..., in verses 13-14 he writes,

“...in Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation;..... in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory”. (Ephesians 1:13-14 NKJV)

And then later on in Chapter 4 of the same letter, he urges them to walk worthy of their calling, in effect to walk in love...,

(Ephesians 4 verse 25...)

“Therefore, putting away lying, Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbour, for we are members of one another. Be angry, and do not sin”: do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil.

Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labour, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need.

Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.

And do not grieve (make sorrowful) the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamour, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice ... and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you. (Ephesians 4:25-32 NKJV)

And in both those passages he refers to ‘the day of redemption’..., that moment when Jesus comes for us and we get to see Him face to face and are transformed in the twinkling of an eye and will be with Him forever.

If I could just point out that the phrase, “‘by’ whom you were sealed ‘for’ the day of redemption”....., is far better translated as....., “‘in’(en) whom you were sealed ‘unto’,(eis) the day of redemption”, as the ASV, RSV and Young’s literal translation have it.

3.

Obviously by definition any promise involves time, in that it's for something in the future... and scripture tells us we're to "*imitate those who through faith 'and' patience inherit the promises*". To see how it worked for them. That's in Hebrews 6..., where it goes on to say that after they patiently endured, they received the promise.

And we see patience, (*hypomene*), sometimes translated as endurance, coming into the picture.

How it plays a key part in our development as God's children..., almost a necessary part it seems ... and something common to all of us. "*...who through faith and patience inherit the promises.*"

I expect most of us understand this and have come to appreciate just how important this issue of faith and patience is. It's a big life lesson, that once it's understood, removes all anxiety. Inasmuch as we aren't shaken by circumstances any more, wondering what's gone wrong ... because nothing has gone wrong ... but rather, we learn to face the highs and the lows of life, all the while holding fast to God's promise in our hearts, just as the patriarchs did.

With James telling us to let patience have her perfect work..., Paul calls it, "*this light momentary affliction.,*"

"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal."(2Corinthians 4:17-18 NKJV)

That passage of scripture says it all really. That where we are looking is so important and profitable for us. And in Romans 8:18-25 (NKJV) he makes it clear that he isn't belittling the problems we go through.... just putting them in context alongside of God's promise to us, that we are eagerly waiting for.

"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. For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God.

For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected [it] in hope; because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

For we know that the whole creation groans and labours with birth pangs together until now. 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.

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? But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for [it] with perseverance.

Perseverance is that word again '*hypomene*' = *hypo/under. + meno/abide or remain.).*

It's all there isn't it ?

Obviously we pray and look for The Lord to intervene in all these things because of what The Lord Jesus has done for us on the cross but it's learning to appreciate that while we are kept and protected, if there are situations that we face..., to know that He is with us always and will lead us through those valleys working all things for good.

Knowing that while The Lord never sends bad things or subjects us to trials in that way ... He does see to it that we profit from every situation, if and when we go through things and more than that, there's an "*eternal weight of glory*" that Paul spoke of, credited to our account as we keep our eyes on Jesus and hold the promise of the gospel in our heart.

If we read what Paul wrote to the Colossians, we see that he prays that they would know the Lord's will for them and once again, patience and long-suffering feature strongly in God's plan for us at this time.

4.

Colossians 1:9-14, NKJV

*“For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing [Him], being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, **for all patience(hypomene) and longsuffering with joy:***

*...giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us **to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.** He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed [us] into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.”*

Colossians 1:21-23, NKJV

*“And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight-- if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are **not moved away from the hope of the gospel** which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister.”*

Of the many examples of those who patiently endured with God's promise in their heart, Abraham is probably the first that springs to mind.... but in all the accounts, as they went through life and life's experiences with God's Word in their heart, it's clear that it's not about self effort, or mistakes even ... but about faith in God's Word and trusting the one who promised.

And where Abraham is concerned, there are two elements that really stand out...., God's Word to him, which very often was a word in season, that came at just the right moment, re-affirming His promise and causing Abraham's faith to grow stronger and stronger in the face of what was impossible circumstances. And secondly., that The Lord's priority was to have him focus on the promise, rather than the circumstances.

God's word of promise in our heart, that we have believed is the principle thing ... but second to that, the need to keep it in view for faith to stay strong and grow.... and as a body, we need all the different ministries and the encouragement of one another for that to happen don't we ?

I think of Jesus when he washed the disciple's feet, saying to follow his example, a picture of being there for each other in The Lord, supporting, praying, whatever..., of that word in season for him that is weary. What a precious thing that is !

Knowing the importance of His promise, being prominent in our hearts and mind., the way The Lord achieved this for Abram was brilliant.(The same principle is at work in the name change that came later.)

*“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; for **all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever.***

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.

Arise, walk in the land through its length and its width, for I give it to you.

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”. [Gen 13:14-18 NKJV]

Most likely he based himself there at Hebron with His large flocks and herds, surrounded by hills and valleys, overlooking the lowland plains and the Dead Sea in the far distance but for sure, Sarah and Abraham would have walked the length and breadth of the land to see what God had promised him. Who wouldn't have been eager to see all that had been gifted. The thing is, as they did this, everywhere they looked was a reminder of God's promise, which was being reaffirmed in their hearts.

5.

And as an example to us, we see that it's a principle, of looking to the promise, which in our case is one of looking unto Jesus... but just like Abraham, for us to check out our inheritance.

Listening to good wholesome preaching and to immerse ourselves in the finished work of Christ..., finding out all that Jesus has done for us and seeing there God's great love for us.

By faith to lay hold of the Hope set before us regarding this glorious inheritance that our Father has promised us,which is the culmination of everything that The Lord Jesus went through for us to receive.

This principle of looking unto Jesus is such an important one. In fact Paul's words come to mind....*"We all, beholding as in a mirror the glory of The Lord are being transformed into the same image from glory, to glory,... by the Spirit"*.

And then some years later, when Abram seemed to be going through a difficult time, once more God re-affirmed his promise and further impressed it upon Abram with a visual picture that would keep it at the forefront of his mind. It was after that time of great uncertainty when war had come so close.

With Abram dwelling in the hills of Hebron to the west of the Dead Sea, they were untouched by the war but it had come within a whisker,(Genesis 14). The dispute that prompted an overwhelming invasion of a foreign army, in fact from where Abram had originally come from..., seemed to be with the inhabitants of the Jordan plains area, which at that time was very fertile and prosperous.

In a swathe the invaders had just swept down through the Jordan valley on the East side of The river Jordan, taking captives and looting on their way.

Continuing South they swung down and around the Dead Sea and part way up it's western side, to what is modern day En Gedi , overlooked by the distant hills on which Hebron stood. Before the later destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the whole Jordan valley was a place of productivity and wealth.

En Gedi (*Hazezontamar*), for instance..., the word 'tamar' means date palm, so perhaps an indication of what was produced there? Date plantations being such a lucrative business.

So even prior to this conflict, for Abram it must have been a period of great uncertainty and stress, as an army on the march would have been heralded by passing traders and word would have spread. So their arrival would have been expected for many months .

Eventually, the invaders met and defeated the combined army of all 4 kings of the main cities in the vicinity of Sodom, who had come out to face them in battle to the South of the Dead Sea, after which the invaders headed home, satisfied with what they'd come to do .

You know the story, how afterwards, someone who had managed to flee, brought word to Abram that Lot had been taken captive and how he mustered his trained servants and raced after the invaders and eventually caught up with them far to the North, attacking at night, harried and defeated the unsuspecting army with only 318 trained servants... and rescued all the captives and all their goods.

So clearly he's been concerned that possibly at some time in the future, they could well return when they realise how small a force it was that routed them....but there was a far deeper concern, something on which his whole life was built, that troubled him even more and when The Lord spoke to him, it all came out.

"After these things, the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, "Do not be afraid, Abram. I [am] your shield, your exceedingly great reward."

But Abram said, "Lord GOD, what will You give me, seeing I go childless and the heir of my house [is] Eliezer of Damascus?"

6.

Then Abram said, "Look, You have given me no offspring; indeed one born in my house is my heir!" And behold, the word of the LORD [came] to him, saying, "This one shall not be your heir, but one who will come from your own body shall be your heir."

Then He brought him outside and said, "Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them." And He said to him, "So shall your descendants be."

And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness. (Genesis 15:1-6 NKJV)

Appropriately it was in the night, a night season and obviously Abram had been deeply concerned for a while and had been turning these things over in his mind, perhaps unable to sleep.... but now! Wherever Abraham looked, the night sky..., the ground he walked on..., all were reminders of God's promise to him.

That's the importance The Lord places on keeping his word of promise in view. Which for us is all about Jesus that we are made partakers of Christ. To 'look away from' and 'unto' Jesus.

In effect The Lord is saying to us " in Him you see my love for you., my provision., your promised inheritance."

Perhaps this is a good moment to look at something related to this in Luke 21.

It's the passage in Luke 21:5-7, where The Lord is telling the disciples about how the temple would be completely destroyed...and in answer to their question of when this would take place, he tells them prophetically, of impending near events, concerning themselves and Jerusalem but also of His second coming at the end of the age. Which of course is very relevant to us, as it must be so close now with so much of bible prophecy already fulfilled.

Anyway, I'll just pick out a few verses from Luke 21, (NKJV)

5-7, "Then, as some spoke of the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and donations, He said, "These things which you see — the days will come in which not [one] stone shall be left upon another that shall not be thrown down."

So they asked Him, saying, "Teacher, but when will these things be? And what sign [will there be] when these things are about to take place?"

I won't read it all but He tells them how they will be hated of all men for his name's sake and of the sacking of Jerusalem and destruction of the Temple which came to pass in AD 70 and then, concerning the last days just before His return, where he says this....

Verse 25 ... "And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring;.... men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. v28 **Now when these things 'begin' to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near.**"

Now what is really interesting, is that, 'look up', is one word, *anakypto* ... and *kypto* means to stoop, which is what Jesus did when he wrote on the ground that time if you remember, when the woman was being accused and threatened with stoning. He stooped down (*same word, 'kypto'*) and wrote on the ground. But here, with the prefix '*ana*'..., '*anakypto*', it's the reverse of that.

So "look up..", actually implies a straightening up from having been stooped over and looking down..., which is the mental posture that many people have at the moment, with all the things that are happening in the world... and then He says..., "to lift up your heads", ('*epairo*' ,)which means to raise up, elevate.

So the picture here is one of standing upright after having been stooped over... and just as in Hebrews 12, it's a '*looking away from something*'..... '*unto Jesus*'. It's this issue about where we're looking,

"look up (stand upright) and lift up your heads...., because your redemption draws near."

7.

And always it comes down to this, of looking to the promise of God, which is all wrapped up in The Lord Jesus.

Obviously it's impossible to ignore all the things that are happening in the world as things get darker and darker, ... but like Abraham, in the face of it, we can choose to look to the promise of God, that moment when we shall see The Lord Jesus and receive our full inheritance in Christ.

To encourage and build each other up with a word in season for him that is weary..... and if there are any worries or fears about anything, not to keep it inside, but to bring it to The Lord, who will sort it out. He loves us very much and as mentioned before, when He cried out "**finished**", from the cross, it was emphatic and final.

Jesus secured everything for us there when He died for us on the cross.... and with The Gospel having the power to save all who believe ... it also sees us placed safely in Christ.

So just to recap....,

"looking unto Jesus", is a definite shift of one's vision. From everything else, whatever that may be, to the one who loved us and gave himself for us, in order that we should have a glorious inheritance as the sons of God.

To make sure that He is our vision, knowing that everything we are and will be, is because of Him ... and it's a daily thing.

For what it's worth, I believe this hope of the gospel is the way of escape in every situation that scripture refers to in 1 Corinthians 10:13.... *"that you are able to bear it"*, it says.

And how Paul and Silas for instance, severely beaten up and imprisoned in a dungeon, in the inner most part..., their feet held fast in stocks, could pray and sing praises to God there in the dark at midnight. The response from heaven was such, that an earthquake shook the prison ..., the shackles fell off and the prison warder and his family were all saved that night. (Acts 16:23-34 NKJV)

There's a lovely scripture in Proverbs 4:20-23 (NKJV) that urges us to guard our hearts above everything else., *"My son, give attention to my words; Incline your ear to my sayings. Do not let them depart from your eyes; Keep them in the midst of your heart; For they [are] life to those who find them, And health to all their flesh. Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it [spring] the issues of life"*.

in effect, to be wise as to what we allow in, those thoughts of guilt, of being not good enough, or unloved. Remember that it's the wiles of the accuser that we are up against...., so it's with subtleness that he tries to turn our eyes away from the perfect, finished work of Jesus...but scripture tells us that *"through faith we're kept by the power of God unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last season"*.

In fact we can have a look at that, it's in 1 Peter 1:3-9 (NKJV)

"Blessed [be] the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you....

who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, [being] much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen you love.

Though now you do not see [Him], yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith--the salvation of [your] souls".

8.

When you think, this was Peter writing this, a man whose faith had been so severely tested. His world was turned upside down, having denied knowing the Lord with swearing and cursing, when only a short while earlier, was prepared, (or so he thought), to even die with The Lord if it came to that. Then at that precise moment, looking up and seeing Jesus there, bloody and beaten looking back at him...., then hearing the cock crow....., *“And Peter remembered the word of Jesus who had said to him, "Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times." So he went out and wept bitterly.* (Matthew 26:75 NKJV)

He must have been crushed with all kinds of emotions, guilt, sorrow, fear..., wondering as well probably what Jesus thought of Him. Then from a distance watching in horror as Jesus was crucified and finally died.

Just days later when Mary told everyone that she had seen The Lord and that He was risen....and then seeing the empty tomb for himself....perhaps the words spoken to him by The Lord just before His crucifixion, very slowly filtered through in the midst of all his grief and guilt .

*“Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift [you] as wheat but I have prayed for you, **that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me,** strengthen your brethren.”* (Luke 22:31-32 NKJV)

And that’s where the battle is, in our thoughts, usually a sense of condemnation, that spirals into self examination and despair... but whatever it is, the aim is to negate our faith somehow and have us turn away from The Lord because of a sense of shame, failure, or feeling rejected, all kinds of reasons.

It’s remarkable though, the change in Peter after this experience, which was clearly intended to destroy him..., no longer proud and boastful but humbled and very aware of his need of The Lord ...and the one who would strengthen his brethren.

It’s that principle of God’s grace abounding in the very areas of our weakness.

So that now..., just looking to Jesus, he was able to write...,

*“...who according to His abundant mercy has begotten **us** again to **a living hope** through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, **to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven**”*

Incidentally, JP (Joseph Prince) points out that after the cross and the shed blood of Jesus, the Accuser was cast out of heavens realm...., which is why in Hebrews 9:23 it speaks of the blood of Jesus having to cleanse heavenly things. This is in Hebrews 9....verse 23,

“Therefore it was necessary that the copies..(referring to the tabernacle and animal sacrifices) of the things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, [which are] copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us”. (Hebrews 9:23-24 NKJV)

We know that when The Lord Jesus offered himself on the cross, He fulfilled all the animal sacrifice types that foreshadowed Him ... but there was one, The day of Atonement, when **the blood of the sacrifice** for the whole nation **was sprinkled once on the mercy seat and then seven times on the ground before the mercy seat.** This is in Leviticus 16:14-15 NKJV, talking of Aaron the High Priest on the day of Atonement, a picture of what The Lord would do....

"He shall take some of the blood of the bull and sprinkle [it] with his finger on the mercy seat on the east [side]; and before the mercy seat he shall sprinkle some of the blood with his finger seven times. Then he shall kill the goat of the sin offering, which [is] for the people, bring its blood inside the veil, do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bull, and sprinkle it on the mercy seat and before the mercy seat”.

Which is what this scripture in Hebrews 9 refers to, when it speaks of things in heaven being purified..., The type was only effective for one year but Jesus’ offering of himself, is of eternal effect, once for all.

9.

So while The Accuser of the brethren had kept up his accusations day and night before God, mentioned in the book of Revelation..... from the moment the blood of Jesus was shed for us, as we saw earlier, no more will there ever be a voice of accusation heard against us in heaven ... because The Accuser has been cast out. The one who speaks now in heaven, speaks for us, The Lord Jesus our Great High Priest, our kinsman redeemer, who knows everything about us and loves us more than we can ever know. We are family.

Shortly before the Lord was crucified He said, "Now is My soul troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this cause came I unto this hour..... (John 12:27, KJV)
....."Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out". (John 12:31 KJV)

Now, it's only here, in our thoughts, that the accuser can operate...but regarding this and almost indignantly, scripture says....,

"Who is he that condemns ?" "It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us".

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter."

Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord". (Romans 8:34-39 NKJV)

So the Lord Jesus is our vision, our Hope, God's promise to us and the final thought is this.., it's in Romans 5, a scripture we know really well but I'm going to substitute one word, the word 'through', (dia)..., which can also be translated as 'by' or 'because of'.... and when I read it or it comes up on the screen, you'll see immediately that everything we have and will be, is 'because of' The Lord Jesus.

That it's in looking to Him through faith, we receive all that our Father has prepared for us, in this so great salvation. So I've simply substituted 'through' with 'because of'...,since it's the same meaning here.

"Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God..... 'because of' our Lord Jesus Christ...., Because of whom, ... also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand..., And rejoice in hope of the glory of God". (Romans 5:1-2 NKJV)

It's all there isn't it ? It's all because of Jesus....and received by faith.

1. "... having been justified by faith, we have peace with God because of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We look back to the cross where He represented us all, bearing our sin and judgment..., we believe and we're saved..., receiving the gift of righteousness and The Holy Spirit.

If you remember, Paul said to the Galatians, "before whose eyes Jesus Christ was openly portrayed as crucified," reminding them that it was through faith that they had been saved and received The Holy Spirit.

2. "because of whom, also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand....."

By faith we see Him now..., glorified and seated at God's right hand.

"We all...", Paul says, "...beholding as in a mirror the glory of The Lord are being transformed into the same image from glory, to glory, ... by the Spirit".

(The mirror, being the preaching of the glorious gospel of Christ...and of course in a mirror we see our own reflection.

That's the important thing to grasp....because when we understand this, that in seeing Jesus we are seeing ourselves, then we realise why it is the devil tries so hard to have us look anywhere but at Jesus.)

And 3. " we rejoice in hope of the glory of God".

He is our Hope, "Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is...and everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure". (1 John 3:2-3 NKJV).

10.

It's all "because of" The Lord Jesus..., His death, resurrection and glorification..... and faith accesses all the benefits of what The Lord has done for us and that's been promised.

"By faith...", "by faith ...," and "in hope", which is faith for something in the future.

So were back where we started in Hebrews 12....

"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". (Hebrews 12:2 NKJV)

We're told here, that even the Lord had a vision that carried Him through. A certain hope in his heart that enabled Him as the lamb of God to be our sacrifice and endure the cross, all the terrible suffering there. He could see the salvation of mankind and the restoration of all things that would result from His sacrifice, knowing also that it was written of Him in scripture.

And setting His face like a flint and in obedience to the Father's will, He laid down His life for us there. Not some vague hope but a certain hope.... *"for the joy that was set before Him"* .

With Paul likening the Hope of The Gospel to a helmet, part of God's armour that we are to put on, it's clear that this is how our thoughts are protected.

And I won't read it because we're done now... but in Ephesians 6: 10-18, we see there, that all the items of God's Armour are faith related, from head to toe..., from our thoughts, (the helmet)..., to our walk in this world... and then over all, the shield of faith.

Every item based on the finished work of Christ, where the measure of God's love for us was revealed.

Fully protected we receive The Sword of the Spirit and are to pray and watch for all the saints, it says.

Weapons that are mighty before God.

There's loads more left out that I wanted to squeeze in but every time I tried, I felt The Lord bringing me back to this central issue of "looking unto Jesus", which just flowed when I did and stalled when I didn't. To focus on and keep his Word of promise in our heart, of a glorious inheritance in Christ, which is yet to be revealed ...but so very close now.

If I can I leave you with this last passage from Hebrews 6, verses 13-20

"For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, saying, "Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you."

And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.

For men indeed swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is for them an end of all dispute.

(v17) Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise (that's us), the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable (unchanging) things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us. This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil, where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek".

The two unchanging things being, that Jesus, The Son of God, is firstborn from the dead, risen ascended and glorified and is now seated at God's right hand, having accomplished all that He was sent to do....**and**... as it says in the passage above that we just read...., that He is our Great High Priest, forever.

That's Psalm 2:7 . *"You are my son , this day have I begotten you"* (He always was The Son of God but there was a day, when God The Father raised Him from the dead and He became firstborn from the dead), *"...this day have I begotten you"* ... and the scripture was fulfilled. This can never be changed.

And therefore He has been given the position of Great High Priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek, (king of righteousness) which is the firstborn's right and is a family thing. Just as being heirs is also a family thing ...and God is bringing many sons to glory. *The LORD has sworn And will not relent, "You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek."* (Psalm 110:4 NKJV) That's it..., love from me and Teresa.