

The New Hope in Life

Romans 8:1-17

Last week Victor spoke about Romans chapter 7, a chapter that tells us many things regarding the Law and the fact that in Christ we died to the Law.

We also saw that Paul tells us in that chapter that the Law is holy and that the commandment is holy and just and good (verse 12).

And in verse 14 he even tells us that the law is spiritual.

In the last part of that chapter Paul also told us about the spiritual battle he experienced in his flesh and how it is only in Christ that we can be conquerors in that battle.

Today we will look more in detail to the hope and freedom we have in Christ. And in this passage we'll see the word Spirit many times. But that does not necessarily mean only the Holy Spirit. Especially in this passage it may refer several times to the new spirit we receive from God. Let's explore that a bit first.

Ezekiel 36:26-27

- A new heart also will I give you and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep My judgments and do them.
- Dan zal Ik u een nieuw hart geven en een nieuwe geest in uw binnenste geven. Ik zal het hart van steen uit uw lichaam wegnemen en u een hart van vlees geven. Ik zal Mijn Geest in uw binnenste geven. Ik zal maken dat u in Mijn verordeningen wandelt en *dat* u Mijn bepalingen in acht neemt en ze houdt.

In these verses we see that God speaks about 2 spirits that He will give us. The spirit that is mentioned in verse 26 refers to our new nature that we receive from God as He makes us a new creature in Christ.

In verse 27 He actually speaks about the Holy Spirit, that He also will give to us.

This is not the only time in the Old Testament that God promises to give us the Holy Spirit.

We see it for instance also in Joel 2:28-29.

Joel 2:28-29

- And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit.
- Daarna zal het geschieden dat Ik Mijn Geest zal uitstorten op alle vlees: uw zonen en uw dochters zullen profeteren, uw ouderen zullen dromen dromen, uw jongemannen zullen visioenen zien. Ja, zelfs op de dienaren en op de dienaressen zal Ik in die dagen Mijn Geest uitstorten.

In his sermon on the first Pentecost the apostle Peter refers to these verses to make it clear to the people that he and the other apostles were not drunk.

Also the Lord Jesus Christ promised to send the Holy Spirit to be with us always.

We see that for instance in the following verses from the Gospel of John.

John 15:26

- But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall bear witness of me.
- Maar wanneer de Trooster is gekomen, Die Ik u zenden zal van de Vader, de Geest van de waarheid, Die van de Vader uitgaat, zal Die over Mij getuigen.

Here we see the words of Christ in which He tells the apostles that He will send the Holy Spirit. But He also tells us that the Holy Spirit indeed is coming from the Father.

We see that also in His words from Acts chapter 1 on the next sheet.

Acts 1:4-5

- And being assembled together with them, He commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, "which," saith He, "ye have heard from Me; for John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days hence."
- En toen Hij met *hen* samen was, beval Hij hun dat zij niet uit Jeruzalem weg zouden gaan, maar de belofte van de Vader zouden verwachten, die u, *zei Hij*, van Mij gehoord hebt; want Johannes doopte wel met water, maar u zult met de Heilige Geest gedoopt worden, niet lang na deze dagen.

In this passage the Lord Jesus tells His apostles that after his ascension they have to wait in Jerusalem until they have received the promise of God, which is indeed the outpouring of the Holy Spirit as they experienced it on the first Pentecost, or, according to the set times of God, on the Feast of Weeks, 50 days after the Passover celebration. In his sermon on that day the apostle Peter also refers to this promise and the fulfillment of what the Lord Jesus had told them.

So, in the passage we will look at today we have to keep in mind that the word Spirit can refer to both the Holy Spirit as well as the new spirit we received from God, even though it almost all of the times is written with a capital S, which normally indicates it would refer to the Holy Spirit.

Romans 8:1-2

- There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.
- Dus is er nu geen verdoemenis voor hen die in Christus Jezus zijn, die niet naar het vlees wandelen, maar naar de Geest. Want de wet van de Geest van het leven in Christus Jezus heeft mij vrijgemaakt van de wet van de zonde en van de dood.

Due to the fact that the Scriptures have been translated from their original languages into languages we speak and understand we may sometimes get some misunderstandings.

For instance: when we see in the Bible the word law we have a tendency to think that it always relates to the commandments of God as given through Moses.

But that is not always true. And that is actually the case over here. Here the word law is more used in the meaning of a principle, like we also refer to the law of gravity and things like that.

At the same time, here we see already our new hope for life expressed: life in Christ Jesus and what that has done for us.

In the next verse we will see why this was necessary.

Romans 8:3-4

- For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.
- Want wat voor de wet onmogelijk was, krachteloos als zij was door het vlees, dat heeft God gedaan: Hij heeft Zijn eigen Zoon gezonden in een gedaante gelijk aan het zondige vlees en dat omwille van de zonde, en de zonde veroordeeld in het vlees, opdat de rechtvaardige eis van de wet vervuld zou worden in ons, die niet naar het vlees wandelen, maar naar de Geest.

So often we think that the Law and the Spirit are opposing one another.

But as we already have seen in the first 2 verses of Romans 8 and what we see again here is the fact that it is not the Law that is opposing the Spirit, but that it is the flesh that is opposing the Spirit.

This is indeed very important to understand. This is the reason why Paul in the previous chapter did say that the Law is holy and that it indeed is spiritual. And because the law is spiritual the flesh opposes it and rejects it.

And Paul continues to point that out in the following verses.

Romans 8:5-6

- For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.
- Immers, zij die naar het vlees zijn, bedenken de dingen van het vlees, maar zij die naar de Geest zijn, de dingen van de Geest. Want het bedenken van het vlees is de dood, maar het bedenken van de Geest is leven en vrede.

I have said it many times before, but I'll just repeat it one more time over here: one of the results of repentance and salvation should be a change in our mind and our behavior!

As long as we are in the flesh we will seek for earthly things, the things of the world and the things of the flesh. But all that is just temporary and following those things leads to eternal death.

In Colossians 3:1-2 Paul reminds us of the following:

If then ye were raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth.

Basically he saying there the same thing as in these verses.

Romans 8:7-8

- Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.
- Immers, het denken van het vlees is vijandschap tegen God. Het onderwerpt zich namelijk niet aan de wet van God, want het kan dat ook niet. En zij die in het vlees zijn, kunnen God niet behagen.

As long as we are in the flesh we will oppose the Lordship of God and our Lord Jesus Christ. That is the result of being under the rule of sin.

Remember what Satan told Eve in Genesis 3:4-5:

And the serpent said unto the woman, "You shall not surely die; for God does know that in the day you eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and you shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."

He basically says that they should not trust God.

Compare that to Hebrews 11:6:

But without faith it is impossible to please Him. For he that comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

Let's continue.

Romans 8:9-10

- But you are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.
- Maar u bent niet in het vlees, maar in de Geest, wanneer althans de Geest van God in u woont. Maar als iemand de Geest van Christus niet heeft, die is niet van Hem. Als Christus echter in u is, dan is het lichaam wel dood vanwege de zonde, maar de geest is leven vanwege de gerechtigheid.

This is another part of our new hope in life!

As long as we were in the flesh, unsaved, we had to work out everything ourselves.

But once we are saved, the old person died to sin and to the law and the new person we are in Christ is being guided and strengthened by the Holy Spirit.

And He is with us to stay, as our Lord Jesus promised.

We have a mighty Helper!

And we should depend on Him and not try to figure out and do everything ourselves from our human understanding and in our human strength. Remember that Christ also told us to abide in Him!

Let's go to the next verse.

Romans 8:11

- But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwells in you.
- En als de Geest van Hem Die Jezus uit de doden opgewekt heeft, in u woont, zal Hij Die Christus uit de doden opgewekt heeft, ook uw sterfelijke lichamen levend maken door Zijn Geest, Die in u woont.

The Holy Spirit has been given to us so that He may do in us what we cannot do ourselves.

That is true for living in this body as a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ and it is true of the resurrection of our mortal bodies at the end of times.

So, our hope is not only new, but it is also complete and for eternity.

That should have a serious impact on our lives here on earth as disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ as we see also in the next verses:

Romans 8:12-13

- Therefore, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if you live after the flesh, you shall die: but if you through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, you shall live.
- Welnu, broeders, wij zijn aan het vlees niet verplicht om naar het vlees te leven. Want als u naar het vlees leeft, zult u sterven. Als u echter door de Geest de daden van het lichaam doodt, zult u leven.

The fact, that we are no longer slaves of sin, should result in a change in our lives whereby the old deeds will disappear from our lives.

Again this is something we cannot do in our own strength. But in Christ, and guided and strengthened by the Holy Spirit this is possible. For with God nothing is impossible.

Let's continue.

Romans 8:14-15

- For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For you have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but you have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.
- Immers, zovelen als er door de Geest van God geleid worden, die zijn kinderen van God. Want u hebt niet de Geest van slavernij ontvangen, die opnieuw tot angst leidt, maar u hebt de Geest van aanneming tot kinderen ontvangen, door Wie wij roepen: Abba, Vader!

Just think about John 1:12-13:

But as many as received him, to them gave he the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on his name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

These verses continue to add to the hope we have in Christ Jesus, isn't it? What a great comfort to know that in Christ and as His disciples we truly are children of God.

Indeed that should also take away our fear in this life, especially if we would have to suffer for the sake of Jesus' name.

Let's go to the last verses for today.

Romans 8:16-17

- The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: 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.
- De Geest Zelf getuigt met onze geest dat wij kinderen van God zijn. En als wij kinderen zijn, dan zijn wij ook erfgenamen: erfgenamen van God en mede-erfgenamen van Christus; wanneer wij althans met Hem lijden, opdat wij ook met Hem verheerlijkt worden.

Again we see that the Holy Spirit is involved in making us know for sure that we are children of God.

And do we actually realize what that means for eternity?

We are no more under condemnation, so what is there to fear for us?

We have hope for eternity and for this life we have the guidance and strength provided for us by the Holy Spirit.

What more can we ask for? What more do we need?

God is giving us truly all we need!

Shall we pray?