Living with Hope BY Malusi Skunyana

Read Hebrews 11:13-16

HEB 11:13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of [them], and embraced [them], and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

HEB 11:14 For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country.

HEB 11:15 And truly, if they had been mindful of that [country] from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned.

HEB 11:16 But now they desire a better [country], that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.

The patriarchs were truly people living with hope, they anticipated the fulfilment of God’s promises in their day, and yet they died without seeing the fulfilment of those promises. Though they saw the promises afar off, yet they held onto them by faith, longing for the day when they would see their fulfilment. The experience of the patriarchs teaches us that we need to take God at His word, believing that what He has promised He will accomplish.

Abraham was a man of faith, a man who took God at His word, and believed that what He promised He would do. He understood that nothing is impossible with God, and believed that He could accomplish His purposes. When God called him out of his country to the place he would receive as an inheritance, he obeyed, and he went out, though “not knowing where he was going.” Hebrews 11:8. This told of a remarkable faith, and from this point onwards, Abraham and his descendants looked forward to the promised land. But the generations of Abraham until Jacob all died before taking possession of the promised land or seeing any of the other promises. Nevertheless, they endured in the faith even to the end of their lives. But as strangers and pilgrims on the earth, they had looked forward to something better than an earthly inheritance. Their faith reached forward to the realization of the chief of all God’s promises, the entrance of all God’s children in the heavenly city where He has prepared dwelling places for them. These men and women of faith kept their eyes fixed on this wonderful promise, that someday they were going to live with God in the heavenly mansions in that beautiful city whose builder is God Himself.

To the patriarchs, God’s promises were worth waiting for, though they would seem to be delayed, they would surely be fulfilled. We may draw a lot from their faith and experience with God that we may be able to live with hope just as they did. We need to be reminded that as Christians we are also strangers and pilgrims on earth, waiting for that glorious day when we shall see our Lord coming to this world to take us home to heaven. Indeed God has prepared mansions for us in His glorious city in heaven, and those mansions will be ours only if we will remain faithful to Him to the end. Let us be careful not to lose our faith because of the things of the world and risk losing eternal life. Let us not allow earthly circumstances to shake and remove our hope, but let it pierce through the darkness and turmoil, and let it remain anchored in God’s promises.

Dear friend, no matter how dark and unpromising the outlook may seem, do not lose your faith in God. Hold on to the blessed hope that Jesus is coming again, let this hope carry you through your most difficult times. “For yet a little while, and He who is coming will come and will not tarry.” Hebrews 10:37. I pray that God will keep you and carry you all the way, until we see Jesus coming with the clouds of heaven. God bless you! Amen!