

# History Augmented by Future Hope

by Bryan Anthony

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*The sermon explores how the promise of future hope gives meaning to history and life through the lens of Scripture.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 139:16, Amos 5:24, 1 Corinthians 15:54-55, 1 Thessalonians 4:16

**Topics:** "Eternal Life", "Future Hope"

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## Description

Bryan Anthony preaches about the profound hope and promise found in the Bible, emphasizing that the meaning of history is rooted in the promise of the future and the anticipation of eternal life. He highlights how the Scriptures provide a vision of a transformed world where God dwells among men, war ceases, righteousness prevails, and justice flows endlessly. Anthony encourages believers to reject hollow hopes in temporary things and embrace the hope of resurrection life, where death is ultimately defeated. He reminds listeners that every day is significant when viewed through the lens of God's promises, urging them to find meaning in the assurance of a glorious future.

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## Transcript

"When this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, 'Death is swallowed up in victory.'" -1 Cor. 15:54

In his book *Israel: An Echo of Eternity*, Abraham Joshua Heschel gives us these poignant thoughts:

What lends meaning to history? The promise of the future. If there is no promise, there is no meaningful history. Significance is contingent on vision and anticipation, on living the future in the present tense.

This is one of the gifts of the Bible to the world: a promise, a vision, a hope.

History is not a flimsy course of disconnected happenings devoid of duration. History has a memory of moments. Man may forget, history remembers. Man has often tried to destroy history, yet again and again the memory of history bursts forth seeking to repair the absurdity caused by brutality and suicidal tendencies. It is the memory of history that holds together despair and hope, defiance and promise, in spite of the passion to refute all hope.

(Abraham Joshua Heschel, *Israel: An Echo of Eternity*, Farrar Straus Giroux Publishing; 1967, pp. 127-128)

Perhaps the greatest tactic of the prince of darkness, in his "passion to refute all hope," is to create and instill a hollow hope in fleeting things that don't lead to the eternal life of God, which alone destroys death and meaninglessness. America is known as the land of hope. People from all over the world travel here in hopes of experiencing democratic liberties, and even more, in hopes of finding prosperity and peace. The tragedy in this brand of hope is that at its best, it only stretches the span of a lifetime. What is the meaning of life then? Are we created merely to grow up, work a job and raise kids, only so they can grow up, work a job and raise kids? What is the meaning of all this?

Heschel wrote that the Bible gives us a "promise, a vision, a hope."

The great hope is that in the last analysis, this world will be transformed into a dwelling of God Himself, the nations will study war no more, righteousness will roll like a mighty river, and justice like an ever-flowing stream. The great promise is that God will literally live amongst men forever (Rev. 21). The great vision is of a world wherein God Himself functions as the Father and King of all. The hope is that, no matter what befalls the righteous in this life, death itself will once and for all be "swallowed up" in the victory of resurrection life.

History, with all of its sweeping statements, colorful characters, and remarkable events, is yet hollow and without meaning unless there is a promise of life following the inevitability of death. But when we see the "promise, vision, and hope" that the Scriptures set forth, every day is powerfully charged with meaning and significance. Do not see yourself through the brutal eyes of hopeless thought. Your days are not meaningless, dear soul. To paraphrase M'Cheyne, "The Lord of all history is looking with intensest interest upon all your steps."

Take heart, dear believer! Hope and promise are accessible through the Holy Spirit, and if you have been redeemed, your present is totally charged with the Light of the future age. Turn to Him today, receive life in the inner-man, and find meaning in the promise of the resurrection to come. We will not all sleep forever, but "we will all be changed."

"O death, where is your victory? O grave, where is your sting?"

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