

*I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord. (Psalm 27:13-14)*

The apostle Paul tells us in his letter to the Roman Christians that Christ both died, and rose, and revived that He might be Lord both of the dead and living. We understand from this that the Lordship of Christ does not change with a man's status from being among the living to being among the dead: He is Lord over all, and every knee will bow to Him, either here or there.

The hope of Christianity is in life after death. We who believe in God through Christ Jesus expect to live again after death. Heaven is therefore the goal, hope, and final expectation of every believer. We who suffer much misery here among the living expect to be greatly comforted and blessed when we pass to that realm which we only know now as "among the dead" or as the writer of Hebrews puts it "the spirits of just men made perfect.

But the psalmist is speaking, in the passage considered, of a hope prior to the hope realized after this life. He believes to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. He is greatly oppressed. His enemies are spreading lies about him. He is being hounded for his life. He is shut out from everything and everyone he loves. Yet he does not sit back and despair and hope for death so that he can rest from such sorrows. His God is a God of the living as much as a God of the dead. Will He not then rescue His beloved people who cry to Him for deliverance? Indeed He will!

We, therefore, who live by faith wait on the Lord to strengthen hearts, to encourage and deliver us in this present life. We have not adopted a pessimistic, fatalistic passivism which turns everything in this life over to the devil and the wicked. The goodness of the Lord which we expect might not come at the time we expect it to. We may have to wait a little longer until our faith is severely tried. But we will wait on the Lord, and we will see His goodness...in the land of the living as well as in the life hereafter.

-C.M.