

SAILING ON THE SHIP OF LIFE

[Heb 6:19](#) “Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast.”

Our language would be drab and colorless without the many pictures and comparisons in daily use. We often speak of a person as having a sunny disposition, or being as busy as a bee, etc.

The Bible contains many pictures, similes, and metaphors which add to its beauty and understanding. Paul tells Timothy, for instance, there are such as have made “shipwreck” of the faith.

Our text has a similar picture, “Hope..... as an anchor of the soul.” There are many thoughts suggested, such as a ship, an anchor, an implied storm, a way of safety, etc. Let us expand and enlarge these thoughts in this Easter season of hope.



WE HAVE THIS
HOPE
as an anchor
for the soul.
**A HOPE BOTH
SURE & STEADFAST.**

HEBREWS 6:19

SAILING ON THE SHIP OF LIFE

1. THE VESSEL

What a beautiful picture, a sailing vessel with white sails flapping in the breeze, surrounded by the deep blue of the sea. Such a scene has often stirred the imagination of many a poet.

The soul of man is like that ship, a most beautiful creation of God. The life, mind, and heart of man truly is a thing of beauty as David said in [Psalm 139](#), "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made."

The ship's launching is a great day and many of the workers and friends are present to see the ship slide down into the sea. Speeches are made, and hopes are high for a long and useful life for the vessel.

The day of our birth was our ship's launching, and how excited our parents and family were as a new soul was brought into the world to sail on the sea of life with them.

The docks are busy, the ship is loaded and balanced well, all is ready for the journey to the distant land. Everyone hopes the valuable cargo will reach its destination safely. A few last minute instructions and order, and the ship is on the way.

The cargo in the ship of life is the eternal welfare of our body and soul. All of our future comforts and happiness, our eternal destiny, all depend upon a safe journey. Can there be a more precious cargo? How important that we steer the ship aright, how disastrous a shipwreck! How carelessly and indifferently we often regard our priceless ship and cargo.

2. THE EQUIPMENT

A ship without a rudder is helplessly tossed about on the sea, without hope of ever reaching the port. The pilot uses the rudder to steer a straight course toward the distant harbor.

God's Word alone is the only safe guide, and is like a rudder for the ship of life. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet," and we might add, "Thy Word is also the rudder of my ship which alone can guide me through the uncharted sea of life." Without this rudder we would flounder about, hopeless and helpless.

"Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast."

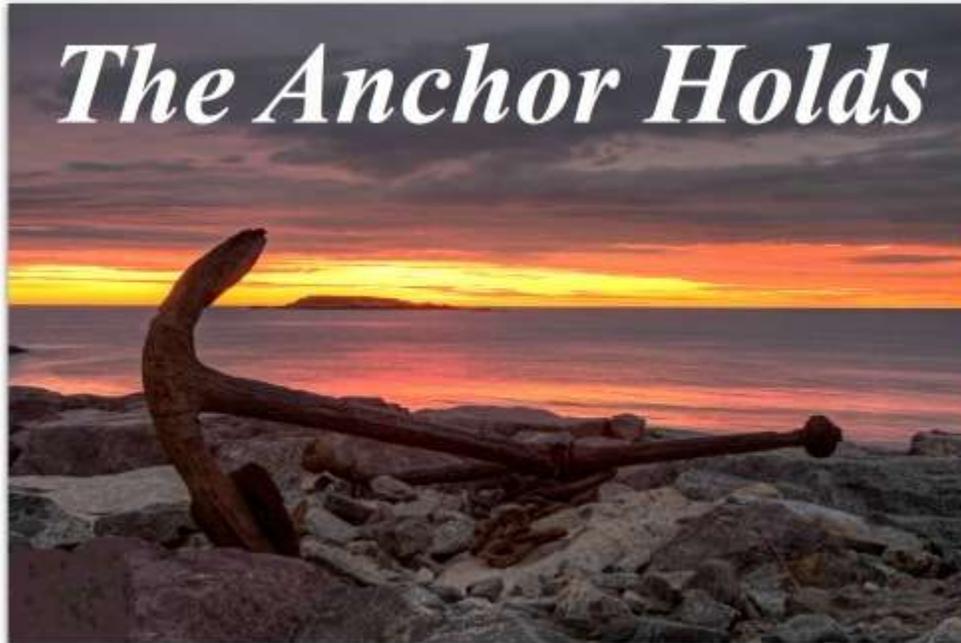
The ship's anchor is very important, especially in time of trouble. Often, during a storm, the anchor is the only security for the ship and must be heavy and strong to hold the ship in the hour of trouble.

Hope is the anchor of the soul. Hope always has a good object in mind, not something bad; always a future goal in view, and not something that is past. Hope also has an attainable object before it, not something impossible to realize.

Hope is akin to Faith: "the evidence of things not seen." [Heb 11:1](#)

The safe landing of our precious cargo of life into the heavenly harbor, with its attendant joys and happiness, is the attainable and ultimate goal of our hope.

The anchor is useless if it does not have a strong cable or chain to unite it with the ship. When the cable or chain is snapped or broken, the anchor is permanently lost.



Our faith in Christ as our Savior from sin is the cable which holds our anchor of hope. **We believe that Jesus died and rose again for the sins of the world, and we further believe that through faith in His blood we are saved.** This is the strong chain on which our hope depends for safety and security.

When the anchor is thrown into sand or some other loose bottom, it cannot hold. To be really secure the anchor should be on firm ground or among rocks. That is the way of safety in a tempest or storm.

Those people who have not Christ will find no firm anchorage for their ships when the storms of life overtake them. The cross of Jesus is the Rock of Ages upon which we can toss our anchors and find security in any storm of life. "On Christ the solid Rock I stand; all other ground is sinking sand." 3.

THE JOURNEY

A ship is built for the sea and launched into the sea. The journey may be short or it may be long, the sea may be smooth or it may be very rough. But a ship is built to sail and travel regardless of what weather lies ahead.

We have all been launched on the sea of life by the Lord, and there is no backing out. Some of us are just starting our journey, some are half way through, others can already see the docks in the harbor of our destiny. Who can tell what storms we may yet encounter? At times we might even get sea-sick and tired of life. None can hope to go through life without any rough seas. There are days of many crosses and afflictions when it looks as though the ship might go under. In these perilous times let us remember that He who created the winds and waves can calm them when it so pleases Him.



How happy and relieved the captain and the crew of the vessel when they have weathered all storms and the cargo is safely landed in the distant harbor. O how happy we will be when we have reached our heavenly harbor. There we will need the anchor no more, for all storms are past, all will be smooth sailing forever.

Hope is a wonderful gift of God, and the Easter season is the time of hope. Jesus rose from the dead; and we shall rise with Him. We live in that hope, we journey through life with that hope, and we want to reach those distant shores by that hope. The stronger our hope becomes, the better our chances are to survive all the storms before us as we sail along in our little sailing vessels. The anchor of hope does not quiet or still the storms of life, but it does hold the vessel secure and firm. We pray that none of us suffer shipwreck, for that would be an eternal disaster. God grant us all a safe arrival in that heavenly harbor for Jesus' sake.

How can we possibly improve on the words of the well-known hymn in expressing our faith?—

“Jesus, Savior, pilot me over life’s tempestuous sea; Unknown waves before me roll, hiding rock and treacherous shoal. Chart and compass

came from Thee: Jesus, Savior, pilot me. When at last I near the shore and the fearful breakers roar 'Twixt me and peaceful rest. Then, while leaning on Thy breast, May I hear Thee say to me, "Fear not, I will pilot thee."

AMEN

PRAYER. O blessed Trinity, we thank Thee that in holy baptism Thou didst promise to pilot and direct our lives through all the storms of life and to guide us safely to Thy eternal harbor, We also thank Thee for safely bringing us this far on our journey. The harbor is already in sight. Continue to pilot us on the true course which leads to Thy glorious presence. Hear us for Jesus' sake. AMEN.