

A Living Hope

Key Verse: *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.”*
—I Peter 1:3

Selected Scripture:
I Peter 1:3-12
Spirit and conform their lives to the image of the Master.—Rom. 8:29

PETER INTRODUCES THIS epistle by identifying himself as an apostle of Jesus Christ, and addresses his words primarily to Jewish Christians who resided outside the commonwealth of Israel. These were members of God's elect, but not because the Heavenly Father arbitrarily selected them as individuals to be members of the church. On the contrary, they accepted the invitation to become part of a body of believers who would obey Jesus Christ their Savior, consecrate themselves, receive the Holy

Spirit and conform their lives to the image of the Master.—Rom. 8:29
This same privilege of becoming a part of the body of Christ is offered to devoted individuals throughout the entire Gospel Age, who after accepting the redemptive merit of our Lord's shed blood, sacrifice their earthly interests and make the doing of God's will a priority in their conduct.—I Pet. 1:1,2

Our Key Verse affirms that neither God nor Jesus is part of a coequal trinity. This verse also states that the Heavenly Father has set forth the magnificent hope of a heavenly inheritance for us based upon the resurrection

of Christ, who provided the ransom price needed to redeem us from the death sentence which fell upon mankind in Eden.

Consecrated believers also have the prospect of receiving an incorruptible inheritance if they faithfully maintain a continuing relationship with the Heavenly Father. This hope “that fadeth not away” will preserve them until the end of their earthly course.—vss. 4,5

“Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.”—vss. 6-9

In the foregoing mention of salvation, two aspects may be considered. Peter reminds us that the believer who is diligent in pursuing a life of holiness will have the ultimate privilege of being a part of the royal priesthood and will live and reign in heaven with the Savior, Jesus Christ. Additionally, in that capacity, when God’s kingdom is established on earth, the church will have a share in helping to bless all the willing and obedient members of the human family who will learn righteousness under the most favorable of conditions when Satan is bound for one thousand years.—Rev. 20:1-6

God’s great mercy in giving believers an abundant hope to be joint-heirs with Christ in the promised kingdom should spur each of us to be diligent in developing the necessary graces and crystallization of character to participate in such an important feature of the Heavenly Father’s overall divine plan for all the families of the earth. ■