

A living hope

Peter exclaims, 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead'. This living hope is referred to as an 'anchor to our soul'. This hope has entered within the veil. We know this to mean that Christ has gone ahead of us and taken His seat at the right hand of the Father. He is the 'living hope' because He is the firstfruits from the dead. This is truly the culmination of the Lord's great mercy toward us.

It's not as if this hope is only a future goal. It is a living hope which we must lay hold of right now. Christ is our connection to the day of resurrection. Paul has so clearly enunciated that Christ is the firstfruits and afterwards He will bring those who are His. Because He is the living hope, we are a certain firstfruits. Even though we are not yet physically raised from the dead, we have been raised to sit with Him in the heavenly places.

Our life-long pre-occupation must be with coming to Him, and being joined to Him who is the Head of the body. We are immediately reminded of the words of Isaiah, 'Come to Me, and you will live'. If we do this then our inner man is being renewed. And our outer man, although perishing, waits in hope for that glorious day when He proclaims 'life forevermore'. We must build ourselves up on our most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keeping ourselves in the love of God, 'waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus to eternal life'.

References:

1 Pet 1:3
Psa 133:3
Jude 1:21

Further Study

Col 1

Daily Psalm

Psalm 33

The inward and outward man

Every person would be in some way aware of the reality of an inward and outward man. The glory of the gospel allows our inward man to be renewed as we receive Christ and eat His flesh. It continues to be renewed from the very first day to the last. The outward man, that is, our mortal body, is perishing but will be renewed in the resurrection of the last day. Hence, we must be begotten inwardly and eat Christ's flesh in preparation for the resurrection. Remember that His flesh is the bread of heaven, the bread of God coming down to us.

The bread is the living and abiding word. It is the word that is proclaimed to us. If we have been begotten inwardly, then we will also be begotten from the dead by that very same living word. We know that all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth. We are reminded of Lazarus to whom Jesus called, and he did indeed 'come forth'. His resurrection was not to immortality, but Jesus performed this amazing miracle to demonstrate the power and authority of a word proceeding. His word will most certainly call to the graves in the last day. So long ago, Job spoke the immortal words, 'After my skin is destroyed, this I know, that in my flesh I shall see God'. David spoke likewise, 'I will be satisfied when I awake in your likeness'. We must give ourselves to waiting eagerly for this day when His sure mercies are fully revealed. As Paul said, we groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

References:

Psa 17:15 John 5:28
Job 19:26 2 Cor 4:16
John 11:43-44

Further Study

2 Cor 5:1-10
Eph 3:13-21

Daily Psalm

Psalm 34

Spirit and life

There can be no doubt that the resurrection of our bodies is a mystery. However, this mystery is being unfolded. That great day of resurrection will be quite similar to any other day of hearing the word of the Lord. We might suggest that if we do not hear it now, then we will not hear it then. We must learn to hear and receive a living and proceeding word. By this word, we understand that we are not yet what we shall be. This proceeding word is the word of our individual *zoe* sonship. His words are indeed Spirit and life; the very substance of His glorified body coming to our lives. Hence, Jesus said, 'Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life within you'.

The word coming to us has within it the power and capacity to give us *zoe* life. Indeed it will 'zoe-fy' us. Paul was very clear that the last Adam, Christ, is a 'life-giving' Spirit. He is 'life-giving' because He has given us His flesh to eat. This is not mystical. His physical flesh is the very substance, or we could say the DNA, of our resurrection bodies. When Jesus rose from the dead, His body was able to be seen, touched, looked upon and handled. We are reminded of the encounter of Thomas with the Lord Jesus where He said to him, 'Touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have'. This substance is given to us by a word. Again, His words are Spirit and life. Like the apostle John, we look upon and handle this substance when we receive the Word of Life.

References:

1 John 3:2 1 Cor 15:45
John 6:53
Luke 24:39

Further Study

John 6:59-68

Daily Psalm

Psalm 35

An Everlasting Covenant

What an amazing promise that the prophet Isaiah revealed to us! If we incline our ear, and come to Him, our soul shall live. The Lord makes an Everlasting Covenant with us. This Everlasting Covenant is the very agreement between Father, Son and Holy Spirit to give us Their life. This is 'the sure mercies of David'. The mercy of the Lord, promised and revealed to David, is the very fulfilment of the Everlasting Covenant.

In the covenant life of the Godhead, the Father gave His *zoe*-life to the Son and to whomsoever the Son gives it. Remember that the foundation of this covenant was in the dialogue and oath which was revealed to David. Peter referred to this in his message on the Day of Pentecost. David overheard this dialogue, so to speak, and recorded, 'The LORD says to my Lord, sit at My right hand'.

The apostle Paul referred to this same covenant oath in his message at Psidian Antioch. He accounts that 'God has fulfilled this promise to our children in that He raised up Jesus, as it is also written in the second Psalm, "You are My Son, today I have begotten You".' He developed this passage further in the book of Hebrews by adding, 'I will be a Father to Him and He shall be a Son to Me'. According to the desire and intention of our heavenly Father, expressed in the Everlasting Covenant, we have been predestined to adoption as sons. The strength and imperative of His word to David is unequivocal, 'The Lord has sworn to David a truth from which He will not turn back'. Jesus has been raised from the dead as the firstborn among many brethren, with the glorious inheritance of sonship.

References:

Psa 132:11 Acts 13:33
Eph 1:5 Psa 110:1
Isa 55:3 Heb 1:5.

Further Study

Psa 89:20-37

Daily Psalm

Psalm 36

Abraham and David

Indeed, the Lord has made covenants with both Abraham and David. They both participated in a progressive unfolding and revealing of the Everlasting Covenant. To each of these patriarchs the Lord spoke of the fruit of their bodies. To Abraham He said, 'One who will come forth from your own body, he shall be your heir.' And to David, He swore an oath from which He would not turn back. 'I will set upon your throne the fruit of your body.'

Accordingly, Jesus is called the son of Abraham and the son of David. The simple message is that Christ descended in the flesh from the lineage of these fathers, when He was born in the womb of the virgin Mary. The promises to Abraham were almost completely about a son in the flesh. Paul says, 'What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh, has found?'. He found the faith to reveal the Son of God in his flesh. He believed to bring forth a son from his own body and thus Jesus was born in his lineage.

Jesus came into mortal flesh as the seed of Abraham. But more than this, He was raised from the dead, and ascended into heaven, according to the promises to David. In fulfilment of 'the sure mercies of David', He destroyed the power of death and corruption. Neither of these could lay hold upon Him. We could say that He came down to take up our flesh according to His covenant with Abraham. And He took our flesh with Him, through resurrection, to His own original and intrinsic throne according to His covenant with David.

References:

Psa 132:11 Acts 2:24
Psa 89:35 Gen 15:4.
Rom 4:1

Further Study

Gen 15:1-6
Rom 1:1-4
Luke 20:37-44

Daily Psalm

Psalm 37