

## in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,

Each of these is a province with many churches in them. John wrote to the seven churches of Asia (Rev. 1:4), and Paul wrote to the churches in Galatia (Gal. 1:2). We do not know how many were in Pontus, Cappadocia or Bithynia. These are found just above the cities Paul preached to on his first missionary journey. Paul attempted to go into Asia and Bithynia on the second journey and was forbidden (Acts 16:5-7). Several of these provinces were represented when the first sermon was preached by Peter (Acts 2:9). Therefore Peter had become familiar with some who were living in these provinces.



*And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. ... 9 Parthians and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and **Cappadocia, Pontus** and **Asia**, 10 Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Acts 2:5,9-10*

Aquila had also been born in Pontus.

*And he found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in **Pontus**, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla Acts 18:2*

We learn that Paul went to **Galatia**, on the second missionary journey, but we learn more about this visit in the letter he wrote to them than we do from Luke's account:

*Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of **Galatia**, they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia. 7 After they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit did not permit them. Acts 16:6-8*

Paul had been forbidden to enter Bithynia and Asia at that time, but at some time later, he or someone else had gone there. Yet there is also the possibility at least for Pontus and Cappadocia that these were started by those who heard Peter's sermon in Acts 2 and remained in Jerusalem until Saul laid waste the church. Peter may have had a strong tie with these churches for that reason.

Among the most important things we must remember about this letter is that it reaches out to multiple congregations in diverse areas of the Roman empire. This will be important when we assess Peter's words to the elders in Chapter Five.

### 2 elect

These pilgrims of the dispersion who are *elect*. Most of translations (except KJV/NKJV) keep this term in the original Greek word order. But since it is an adjective, it can be placed here as a further description of those who strangers and pilgrims. Like most adjectives, we can say the house that is green or the green house. So also here, the elect exiles (ESV) or the aliens who are chosen (NASB).

*to the **elect** who are sojourners of the Dispersion... (ASV)*

*To the pilgrims of the Dispersion... **elect** according to... (NKJ)*

*To those who reside as aliens... who are **chosen** 2 according to the foreknowledge of God (NASB)*

those who are **elect** exiles of the dispersion according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, (ESV)

Both capture the intent. The elect are the picked out, chosen, select, and choice ones. There were still many in the dispersion who had not yet been chosen. They have heard but rejected or not yet heard. Peter is not writing to any of the dispersion who have yet to be called, because all the blessings he will go on to describe are only for those who are already “elect.”

*“eklektos... picked out, chosen... 1. chosen by God... hence Christians are called... the chosen or elect of God... 2. Unive. Choice, select, i.e. the best of its kind or class, excellent, choice, select, i.e. the best of its kind or class, excellent, preeminent...”* (Thayer, p 197; 1588)

Peter will return to this in the next chapter and discuss it much more fully (1Pet. 2:4-10). While God desires all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth, each man or woman, by their own free will, will make the final determination (the deciding vote) that will complete the election, selection, or rejection. Paul spoke of this in the first chapter of the first Corinthian letter. God chose things that are foolish, base, weak and despised and placed them in the gospel to test us for a love for the truth and an absolute faith and trust in God that is willing to set aside what we understand in order to trust in Him.

Hence, Those who obey the gospel are the elect and all who reject the gospel reject the honor of being chosen and picked out by God. that honor.

### **according to the foreknowledge of God the Father,**

God’s “foreknowledge” is one of the both comforting and perplexing. It gives us the comfort that because God knows everything before hand He can never be surprised or placed in a position where we often are when something arises we were not prepared for.

*proginosko, prognosis ... to know about something prior to some temporal reference point, for example, to know about an event before it happens - 'to know beforehand, to know already, to have foreknowledge.'* (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT: 4268)

Since we know that God promised before time began that He would give us eternal life, He factored in every obstacle and problem we might face in reaching it and has already given us the solution. It is this foreknowledge that makes it possible for Him to reveal Scripture once for all time, knowing that nothing new will arise that He was unprepared for.

Peter here revealed that our election was based on and “according to” God’s foreknowledge.

*“kata,... a preposition denoting motion or diffusion or direction from the higher to the lower... II with the Accusative... 3. it denotes reference, relation, proportion, of various sorts; a. distributively, indicating a succession of things following one another... b... as respects; with regard to; in reference to; so far as relates to; as concerning;...c. according to, agreeably to; in reference to agreement or conformity to a standard, in various ways (aa) according to anything as a standard, agreeably to...(bb) in proportion to, according to the measure of...”* (Thayer, p. 328; 2596)

The relationship between our election and God’s foreknowledge are like two sides of an equation. His foreknowledge = our election. This election of God is in harmony and according to God’s foreknowledge. Paul elaborated more fully in His letters.

*just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, 5 having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, Eph. 1:4-5*

This passage reveals that God was well aware of all the obstacles and problems that would have to be overcome, but loved us so much that He was willing to do it all to make us holy and without blemish. He knew there would be a group of men and women who were ashamed of their lives and thoughts. Who wanted to do better and wanted to be right with Him, and would be willing to do whatever He asked and believe whatever He revealed.

These people are the ones Peter is writing to at this time. We must search the Scriptures to find all that God has revealed about these things to be certain that we have done all within our power to be all that God foreknew that we could become.

While God wants all men to be saved, it is evident that not all are saved. While some would blame Him stating that He is the one who chose this, that is a terrible and vile false doctrine. To make God responsible for the terrible things man does and refuses to repent of is folly. God's foreknowledge of man's wicked use of his freewill does not make Him responsible for it.

Therefore election was foreknown by God, but still rests with each individual who must, as it were, cast the deciding vote in their own election. God is voting for all men to be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth. God is voting for all men to come to repentance. God is not willing that any should perish. Who then is responsible for our election? If God is voting for all, but not all are saved, then who made the final choice? Each person casts that vote for his or her election when they first hear the gospel and they decide whether to accept or reject it. Thus the free will of man is left intact by God. Each person must decide to obey God and submit to His commands before they can become elect. Each person has the right to become a child of God.

### **God's Foreknowledge**

The teachings of the Scriptures about God's ability to "have knowledge of beforehand" is an attribute which is beyond man's ability to comprehend. We do not have such an ability so we cannot understand how it works. God has the ability to know how things are going to unfold and what the end result will be before they even occur. This is obviously one of the things God was speaking of in Isaiah.

*For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith Jehovah. 9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. Isa. 55:8-9*

It seems to this author that some of the greatest doctrinal errors and controversies facing Jesus' disciples centers on things like this. When God reveals something that is far beyond man's own ability, our speculations on how God is able to do it or how he chooses to exercise such ability are worthless. Since his ways are not our ways and his thoughts are not our thoughts and the difference is so high that even that cannot be measured (we don't even know how high the heavens actually ascend), how baseless our own ideas are seen to be! What ought to be obvious is that since we cannot understand them, speculation is useless.

*The secret things belong unto Jehovah our God; but the things that are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law. Deut. 29:29*

Yet many are undeterred by such Scriptures. Through the lense of human eyes and with no guidance from the Holy Spirit some have sought to explain these secret things. Yet God's foreknowledge can only be what he reveals it to be. Nothing more and nothing less. Since we do not have this skill, we cannot determine exactly how it is used. The Spirit outlined the depths of God's knowledge in one of the Psalms of David. After reading it we can at least speak more intelligently about the subject.

*O Jehovah, thou hast searched me, and known (me). 2 Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising; Thou understandest my thought afar off. 3 Thou searchest out my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. 4 For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Jehovah, thou knowest it altogether. 5 Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thy hand upon me. 6 (Such) knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. 7 Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence? 8 If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in Sheol, behold, thou art there. 9 If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; 10 Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. 11 If I say, surely the darkness shall overwhelm me, and the light about me shall be night; 12 Even the darkness hideth not from thee, but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike (to thee). 13 For thou didst form my inward parts: Thou didst cover me in my mother's womb. 14 I will give thanks unto thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: Wonderful are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. 15 My frame was not hidden from thee, when I was made in secret, (and) curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.*

*16 Thine eyes did see mine unformed substance; and in thy book they were all written, (even) the days that were ordained (for me), when as yet there was none of them. Ps 139:1-16*

God “searches” and “knows” us. He knows our “downsitting” and “uprising.” He understands our “thoughts afar off.” He is “acquainted with all our ways.” Every “word in our tongue” he “knows it altogether.” Even this knowledge is “too wonderful” for our writer, so “high” that he “cannot attain unto it.” This even includes knowing where he is at all times and being fully able to do the above under any and all circumstances. For our purposes though, it is 16 where “foreknowledge” is discussed. “Thine eyes did see mine unformed substance; and in thy book they were all written, (even) the days that were ordained (for me), when as yet there was none of them.” This is God’s foreknowledge! Before David was born, “the days that were ordained” for him were already “all written” in God’s book.”

This foreknowledge forms the heart of God’s ability to plan and then flawlessly carry out those plans. Immediately after Adam & Eve’s sin in the garden, God promised to send a savior. Later, to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Judah, he successively promised that their descendants would become a great nation and that the savior would be born through their children. Later prophets continued to give more and more details of God’s foreknowledge. He knew where Jesus would be born, and where he would be raised. He knew how Jesus live, how he would die, etc. After the crucifixion, on the day of Pentecost, Peter informed the Jews(Acts 2:23) that all they had done was “by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God.” God had known and planned for these people to crucify Jesus. Does such foreknowledge take away freedom of choice and guilt for actions? Absolutely not! This will become the theme of the next chapter, so we will leave that to be explained at that time. Suffice it now only to quote the main concept of that chapter. God is the potter and we are the clay. The choices we make in how we live our lives determines the quality and type of clay that we become. By our own choices we make ourselves into vessels of honor or vessels of dishonor. After we make our choices, God then determines how we will be used.

*Howbeit the firm foundation of God standeth, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his: and, Let every one that nameth the name of the Lord depart from unrighteousness. 20 Now in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some unto honor, and some unto dishonor. 21 If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, meet for the master’s use, prepared unto every good work. 2Tim. 2:19-21*

It is here that we must part company with those who wish to create elaborate ideas of exactly how all of this works. Only God knows exactly how all of this works because only God has this ability. The Scriptures do not tell us exactly how God uses this ability. Through all the multitudes of questions that will arise, Deut. 29:29 warns us not to go beyond what is written. God knows our days, he knows our frame, he knows our strengths and our weaknesses. He wants all to be saved and come to repentance (2Tim. 2:3-5; 2Pet. 3:9). He blesses the poor in spirit and those who mourn (Mt. 5:3-4). While at the same time using men like Pharaoh, Judas and the Jewish rulers in the time of Jesus Christ to fulfill his purposes in a very negative way.

As is so often the case while walking the path that leads to life, we find doctrines in the Scriptures that are straitened and narrow. We must not stray to the right or to the left, but be content with what is written. The path to fully understanding God’s foreknowledge is clouded by other Scriptures that warn us not to carry things too far.

*And Jehovah saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. 6 And it repented Jehovah that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. 7 And Jehovah said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the ground; both man, and beast, and creeping things, and birds of the heavens; for it repenteth me that I have made them. Gen 6:5-7*

*And they built the high places of Baal, which are in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to cause their sons and their daughters to pass through (the fire) unto Molech; which I commanded them not, neither came it into my mind, that they should do this abomination, to cause Judah to sin. Jer 32:35*

How shall we understand these things? Can God repent and be grieved about what he already knew? Can he say it never came into his mind if he already knew? Does he know everything or voluntarily limit himself? Since we do not know the answer to these things, we must not go beyond what is written.

### **in sanctification of the Spirit,**

The preposition “in” is always used when someone is in the midst or center of something.

“EN... *in, on, at, with, by among*. I LOCALLY; 1. of Place proper; a. in the interior of some whole; within the limits of some space... 5. used of that with which a person is surrounded, equipped, furnished, assisted, or acts... c. of that which one either leads or brings with him, or with which he is furnished or equipped; esp after verbs of coming, (EN of accompaniment), where we often say *with ...* d. of the instrument or means by or with which anything is accomplished, owing to the influence of the Hebr. prep... much more common in the sacred writ. than in the prof... where we say *with, by means of, by(through)...*” (Thayer, p. 209-212; 1722)

Thus the elect are in the midst, in the interior of “*sanctification of the Spirit.*” In this case, it is this sanctification that makes us elect. We are elect according to the foreknowledge of God “*by means of*” and “*through the instrumentality of*” the sanctification of the Spirit.

“*hagiasmos... 1. consecration, purification... 2. the effect of consecration: sanctification of heart and life, ...*” (Thayer, p. 6; 38)

Most of the words in the NT that begin with “*hag*” refer to something that has been sanctified, set apart and made holy to God. Everything that is connected to God is by definition holy and set apart for Him to use. Unfortunately, sin defiles and removes holiness. No one could be elect until they were consecrated and sanctified, in order to become holy and consecrated for God. The means by which the Holy Spirit accomplished this is the essence of the gospel. Paul spoke of it in Romans.

*for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, Rom. 3:23-26*

When we are born of water and the Spirit (Jn. 3:3-5), we gain the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:3-5), and are there after sanctified by the Holy Spirit. Since only the Holy Spirit can give us the means by which that blood can be made accessible to us. No one can be made elect without first being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. Peter, speaking to mature Christians does not see the need to elaborate.

*Nevertheless, brethren, I have written more boldly to you on some points, as reminding you, because of the grace given to me by God,<sup>16</sup> that I might be a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. Rom. 15:16*

Being sanctified by the Holy Spirit is accomplished through the ministering of the gospel of God. The Holy Spirit used men to preach the gospel which He revealed. When anyone obeys the gospel, the Spirit sanctifies them. Think of the sanctification of the Ethiopian Eunuch (Acts 8) the washing away of Paul’s sins (Acts 22) and Cornelius (Acts 10). This was something God had chosen from the beginning, and by first sending Jesus to die and shed His blood, and then to send the Holy Spirit to explain it all and bring the sanctification that comes through faith, trust, and obedience.

*But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, 14 to which He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. 2Th*

## 2:13-14

There is nothing mysterious or difficult about it. The Holy Spirit revealed the gospel, it is His sword (Eph 6:17), only by its use can anyone be sanctified by him.

### **for obedience**

The preposition “for” is another term used many times in the New Testament. It is defined:

“*eis*,... a Prep. governing the Accusative, and denoting entrance into, or direction and limit: *into, to, towards, for, among*. ... 3. it denotes the end; and a. the end to which a thing reaches or extends, i.e. measure or degree... b. the end which a thing is adapted to attain... c. the end which one has in view, i.e. object, purpose;... d. the end by which a thing is completed, i.e. the result or effect... (Thayer, p. 183-186; 1519).

This is a preposition that is used when one is outside and wants to enter. Whatever follows this preposition is the means by which the “motion,” “direction,” or “end” can be accomplished. God wanted obedience. This is why the Holy Spirit sanctified. This is why God chose the elect in His foreknowledge. This is what makes us His elect, day by day. All followers of the Lord who have become sanctified through their hearkening to the call, do so to comply and be in submission to God. This is the purpose of their election. Those in Christ are the elect and the sanctified and have been given all this grace in order that they might be led to obedience to God. Thus “*obedience*” is of the greatest importance to the Christian.

“*hupakouo*... *to listen, hearken*; 1. prop: of one who on a knock at the door comes to listen who it is, (the duty of the porter)... 2. *to hearken to a command, i.e. to obey, be obedient unto, submit to...*” (Thayer, p. 638; 5219)

Two things are therefore required for true obedience. First, there must be a careful listening to the commands, it just won’t do for one not to hear exactly what God expects. Second, there must be a submission and obedience to those things that are carefully heard. Several passages come to mind. James warns us to be doers and not hearers only (James 1:22-25), while Paul stated that this had been God’s intent for ages.

*Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery kept secret since the world began 26 but now has been made manifest, and by the prophetic Scriptures has been made known to all nations, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, for (eis) obedience (hupakouo) to the faith – Rom. 16:25-26*

### **and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ:**

In one short verse, Peter has described the role of the Father, the Holy Spirit and Jesus Christ in our salvation. The Father made the plans in His foreknowledge, Jesus came to earth and created the means by which those plans could be accomplished and the Holy Spirit then revealed exactly what must be done to receive the sanctification God had foreknown and Jesus had made possible.

What Jesus did is summed up with the term “*sprinkling of the blood.*” This is an Old Testament concept that was elaborated on in Hebrews.

*But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. 12 Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption... 19 For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water, scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, 20 saying, “This is the blood of the covenant which God has commanded you.” 21 Then likewise he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry... 23 Therefore it was necessary that the copies of the things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. 24 For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; Heb 9:11-12; 19-21; 23-24*

What the Old Testament typified and shadowed with the sprinkling of the blood of the animal on all

parts of the tabernacle and the people, along with the Passover itself, is exactly what Jesus did after His blood was shed and He returned to heaven.

*By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, lest he who destroyed the firstborn should touch them. Heb. 11:28*

It is exactly what He has done for us. Without the shedding of blood no remission can occur. Jesus brought his blood right into heaven where he can now sprinkle it upon the souls of those who are in need of it. This He does as each is baptized (Rom. 6:3-4; Col. 2:12-13; 1Pet. 3:21-23). We are buried in the water of baptism after our faith and repentance have reached a level strong enough to force us into that burial. When this occurs God applies the blood. God also explains how this blood is continued to be sprinkled throughout the life of a Christian. (1 Jn 1:6-8; 2:1).

### **Grace to you and peace be multiplied.**

These are the standard Greek and Hebrew terms of greeting for that day. They are used in the majority of the NT epistles. They elevate the common greetings of the day into something greater and higher. Peter greets them with the hope (from God who can bring it to pass) that they will have a day filled with wonderful peace and grace.

These two verses should greatly elevate the self-image of all God's people. Though the world may not view or treat them well, God holds such in the highest regard. They are His elect, choice and precious ones. They are elect because God, the Holy Spirit and Jesus have put forth great effort and energy to bring them into that condition. As far as God is concerned (and what else matters), these sojourners are the greatest people on the earth. God did all this so they would be obedient. That very obedience to God is also the reason for the persecution they were enduring.

### **3 Blessed be**

The term "blessed" comes from a Greek term that has found its way directly into our language. When we give a eulogy, we are doing what Peter does here.

*"eulogeo lit., to speak well of (eu, well, logos, a word), signifies, (a) to praise, to celebrate with praises, of that which is addressed to God, acknowledging His goodness, with desire for His glory, ... (b) to invoke blessings upon a person... (c) to consecrate a thing with solemn prayers, to ask God's blessing on a thing... (d) to cause to prosper, to make happy, to bestow blessings on, ..." (Vine, W. E., Expository Dictionary of NT Words, Vol. I, P. 132-133)*

This is how exactly how Paul had begun the letter to the Ephesians. God is worthy of all the praise, adoration and consecration that we can bestow upon Him. He is wonderful and gracious! He is great and awesome! He is Worthy! God's people should always praise honor and adore Him for the works of grace and kindness He has placed in their lives.

### **the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,**

This is a rich and beautiful expression encompassing the union and closeness of the Father to our Lord. He is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Thus, though speaking of the need to praise and glorify the Father, it is the relationship He has with His Son that is emphasized by this phrase. It was God who sent Jesus into the world to become His Son and to save all of us of our sins. It was His plan and His desire and will that Jesus came to accomplish. Hence all the praise and adoration we feel toward Jesus should also be directed to the Father because everything that Jesus did for our salvation is what God wanted Him to do.

### **who according to His abundant mercy**

Peter now uses "*kata*" to make "*God's mercy*" = "*our being begotten again.*" Our being born again, is "*in proportion to*" and "*in regard to*" His mercy. God was merciful and compassionate toward us and this prompted Him to do something for us. It was because of this mercy that He begat us again unto living hope. It is also this mercy that should bring about our "*eulogy*" to God. "Mercy" is:

*"eleos... mercy; kindness or good will toward the miserable and afflicted, joined with a desire to relieve them; 1. of men towards men... 2. of God towards men... 3. the mercy of Christ, whereby at his return*

to judgment he will bless true Christians with eternal life... (Thayer, p. 203-204; 1656)

“In Greek, *eleos* (mercy) is a *pathos* (strong emotion), ...the emotion roused by contact with an affliction which comes undeservedly on someone else. ... in the face of the unfortunate this emotion is an *eleein* which includes the elements of both awe and mercy... in this sense of mercy, sympathy is very common. (Kittel Vol 2 p. 477-487)

It is amazing and wonderful to think that our God with the foreknowledge of our terrible wickedness and evil would still feel mercy toward us. He feels sympathy, pity, compassion, and good will, but that alone is not mercy. It was also joined with a powerful desire to relieve and help man in his sinful state. This mercy was so vast that the Spirit put a superlative in front of it to describe its quantity and quality.

“*polus*,... *much* used a. Of multitude, number, *many numerous, great*... b. with nouns denoting an action an emotion, a state, which can be said to have as it were measure, weight, force, intensity, size, continuance, or repetition, *much* l. q. *great, strong, intense, large*... c. Of time *much long* ... d. Neut. Adverbially, of the mode and degree of an action...” (Thayer, p. 529; 4183)

God had an emotion of mercy that was “*great, strong, intense, and large*.” So much so that it is as high as the heavens are above the earth.

*For as the heavens are high above the earth, So great is His mercy toward those who fear Him; 12 As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us. 13 As a father pities his children, So the Lord pities those who fear Him. 14 For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust. Ps. 103:11-14*

It was with these feelings in His heart that with His foreknowledge, He devised, sent His Son to to execute and the Holy Spirit to reveal exactly how it would be done.

### **has begotten us again**

“begotten again” is a single term in the original language:

“*ana-gennao*... to produce again, beget again, beget anew;...” (Thayer, p. 36; 313)

God produced us again. He set up a plan to change us into something new. This is the new birth.

*Jesus answered and said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” 4 Nicodemus said to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?” 5 Jesus answered, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. Jn 3:3-5*

This is the spiritual reality of our salvation. We were dead in our trespasses. But in the midst of obedience to the gospel, at the point of baptism, God made us alive again.

*And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, ... 4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), Eph 2:1, 4-5*

*buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. 13 And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, Col. 2:12-13*

Since we were dead, we needed to be born again before we could enter the kingdom of God, exactly as Jesus stated above.

Everything God did to make this new birth possible are attributed to His great mercy. Back in eternity expending great effort to devise a plan whereby sinful creatures might be brought back to him. Considering the awesome price that would have to be paid and then willingly paying that price. Truly God is worthy to be praised.

### **to a living hope**

Peter uses the preposition “*eis*” to stress the entrance into along with the purpose and result. God’s purpose for our being born again was that we might receive a living hope. Thus the result of

being born again is that we are now in possession of a living “hope.”

*“elpis... expectation, hope; i.e expectation whether good or ill; 1. rarely in a bad sense, expectation of evil, fear; ... 2. much more fre. in the classics, and always in the N. T. , in a good sense: expectation of good, hope; and in the Christian sense, joyful and confident expectation of eternal salvation...”* (Thayer, p. 205-206; 1680)

People’s expectations of the future give them a reason and the excitement to keep them doing what they are presently doing, even when they must make sacrifices to do it. People find it much easier to make sacrifices and suffer deprivation when they know it is temporary and it is for a very good reason.

Hope is always made up of two essential components. First there must be a strong desire for what has been promised, and then there must be a confident expectation that we will be able to receive it. If either of those is absent then there is no hope. But once we have both of these, then we will eagerly wait for it with perseverance.

*For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? 25 But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance. Rom. 8:24-25*

This is exactly what Abraham felt when God told him he would soon have a son. Though he called something that did not exist as though it did, Abraham did not waver. His confident expectation was based on God’s promise and thus, never wavering, his absolute trust gave glory to God.

*Abraham ... believed — God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did; 18 who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations, ... 19 And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb. 20 He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, Rom. 4:17-21*

We are now to do exactly what our father Abraham has done. Regardless of the circumstances, we too will never waver through unbelief. This is a living hope, that passes right through any terrible circumstances and even death itself. When all other hopes are gone, this one is still alive!

*“zao... to live... I prop. 1. to live, be among the living, be alive(not lifeless, not dead)... 2. to enjoy real life, i.e. to have true life and worthy of the name, --active, blessed, endless in the kingdom of god... 3. to live l. e. pass life, of the manner of living and acting; of morals or character...”* (Thayer, p. 269-270; 2198)

This is the great difference between the one hope (Eph 4:4) of the Christian that God has given to us all the other hopes and dreams men have devised to take its place. It manifests God’s great mercy, gives us another reason to speak well of and praise him. This hope gives us a reason to live, as it is a joyful and confident expectation that what we are living for will bring a reward beyond our highest dream.

This is the dynamo of motivation that keeps each Christian going. As Abraham before us, it is a living hope that cannot be quenched regardless of the obstacles. Every other hope this life offers cannot pass the veil of death. We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. (1Tim. 6:7). But the hope we have from God is living, active and alive. It will pass beyond this life into eternity.

Those whose hope for the future is based on money, power, recreation, or family, do not have a living hope. None of them can pass with him to the other side. No matter how much effort and toil we put into them and no matter how greatly successful we might be in attaining them, if we are thoughtful and considering all the factors, it is all vanity and a striving after wind (

*Whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them. I did not withhold my heart from any pleasure, For my heart rejoiced in all my labor; And this was my reward from all my labor. 11 Then I looked on all the works that my hands had done And on the labor in which I had toiled; And indeed all was vanity and grasping for the wind. There was no profit under the sun. Eccl. 2:10-11*

But we have a living hope because we have been begotten again. This is a hope that all that we now do will pass with us into the next life. That which the Egyptians futilely attempted by burying their possessions with them God has freely offered to His elect.

### **through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,**

The preposition “through” is defined:

“*dia*.. .A. with the GENITIVE: *through*... III. of the Means or Instrument by which anything is effected; because what is done by means of a person or thing seems to pass as it were through the same... 2. of the instrument used to accomplish a thing: or the instrumental cause in the stricter sense:... *by the service, the intervention of, by means of, with the help of*... 3. with the gen. of a thing DIA is used to denote the manner in which a thing is done, or the formal cause... II. of the Ground or Reason one account of which anything is or is not done; *by reason of, because of*... 1. of the reason for which a things is done, or of the efficient reason, when for greater perspicuity it may be rendered *by*... 2. of the reason or cause on account of which anything is or is done, or ought to be done; *on account of, because of*... “. (Thayer, p. 132-135; 1223)

The means by which God has given us this living hope is our faith and conviction that God raised Jesus from the dead. It is our conviction on this topic that not only gives us a living hope, but also reckons our faith as righteousness.

*being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform. 22 And therefore "it was accounted to him for righteousness." 23 Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, 24 but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, Rom 4:21-25*

This is the foundation and the proof upon which to base our living hope. It gives substance and assurance to it. The fact that Jesus was denied His life, was beaten, tortured, mistreated and killed, then raised from that death to receive blessings from God for doing it gives assurance to those who must do the same. The doctrine of the resurrection and the proofs that Jesus truly was raised from the dead gives great assurance to those who wish to believe that it can be done. The 500 witnesses prove that Jesus was raised and with that proven our own resurrection naturally follows. Rom. 1:3-4; Acts 17:30-31; 1Cor. 15:12-19

### **4 to an inheritance**

Peter again uses “*eis*” to denote purpose. God’s intent in giving to us this hope through the resurrection of Jesus from the dead was in order that we might have this inheritance. This is a secondary reason for Jesus resurrection. It is what our living hope focuses on concerning the resurrection. The resurrection is a portal, a means by which we gain something else. It is not the full fruition of the hope given to Jesus’ disciples by the mercy of God. It is only the door that brings it all to us. God promises an inheritance.

“*kleronomia*... 1. An inheritance, property received (or to be received) by inheritance... 2. What is given to one as a possession... a. Eternal blessedness in the consummated kingdom of God which is to be expected after the visible return of Christ... b. The share which an individual will have in that eternal blessedness... (Thayer, P. 349;2817)

God has given us some powerful promises regarding this inheritance.

*For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." 16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs — heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together. 18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. Rom. 8:15-18*

*And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!" 7 Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ. Gal. 4:6-7*

When each of us was born again we first became a Christian and a son of God. But as a result of becoming a son, we also have become heirs to the inheritance of eternal life with God in heaven.

An inheritance so glorious that no tribulations, trials or suffering in this life are worthy to be compared with it. God explained through Peter that this was His purpose and the end result of His mercy. There are so many verses that describe this inheritance to us. We will receive an incorruptible body, a new heavens and new earth made out of the heavenly image. It will be a glory that cannot be compared with the sufferings of this present time.

### **incorruptible**

Another reason why this is a living hope is because it is not subject to decay, it does not lesson with the passage of time.

*“aphthartos... uncorrupted, not liable to corruption or decay, imperishable... immortal: of the risen dead...”* (Thayer, P. 349; 2817)

*diaphthora* an intensified form of No. 1, "utter or thorough corruption," referring in the NT to physical decomposition and decay, is used six times, five of which refer, negatively, to the body of God's "Holy One," after His death, which body, by reason of His absolute holiness, could not see "corruption," Acts 2:27,31; 13:34-35,37; (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:1312),

*aphthartos* "not liable to corruption or decay, incorruptible" (a, negative, and A, No. 2), is used of (a) God, Rom 1:23; 1 Tim 1:17 (KJV, "immortal"); (b) the raised dead, 1 Cor 15:52; (c) rewards given to the saints hereafter, metaphorically described as a "crown," 1 Cor 9:25; (d) the eternal inheritance of the saints, 1 Peter 1:4; (e) the Word of God, as incorruptible" seed, 1 Peter 1:23; (f) a meek and quiet spirit, metaphorically spoken of as "incorruptible" apparel, 1 Peter 3:4. (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:862)

This inheritance is not subject to decay. It will not corrupt. It is not like a flower or even a human body. It is imperishable All that is around us now is incorruptible. People, homes, cars, trees, fences, appliances. All grow old, decay and ultimately cease to function. Not so the inheritance of the Christian.

*in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." 1Cor. 15:52-54*

All that we see happening around us will not affect our hope. The corruption of this age will not pass through to our inheritance. It is above and beyond anything in this life. It will never decay, never grow old, it will retain its newness, cleanness, beauty and effective through out eternity.

### **and undefiled**

*“amiantos... not defiled, unsoiled; free from that by which the nature of a thing is deformed and debased or its force and vigor impaired...”* (Thayer, P. 32; 283)

Our inheritance is like the garden of Eden before sin entered. It is unsoiled and free from any of the things which could defile and debase it. This too is the hope for the child of God. It will never be changed for the worse. It is not able to be stained or scratched, bumped or scraped.

### **and that does not fade away,**

*“amarantos... not fading away, unfading, perennial...”* (Thayer, P. 30; 262)

*A. maraino* ... was used (a) to signify "to quench a fire," and in the passive voice, of the "dying out of a fire"; hence (b) in various relations, in the active voice, "to quench, waste, wear out"; in the passive, "to waste away," James 1:11, of the "fading" away of a rich man, as illustrated by the flower of the field. (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:3133)

*amarantos* "unfading" (a, negative, and A, above), whence the "amaranth," an unfading flower, a symbol of perpetuity ... 353), is used in 1 Peter 1:4 of the believer's inheritance, "that fadeth not away." (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:263)

A fire left untended will fade away. A flower once cut and given as a gift, immediately begins to fade. So does the finish on a new car, and the carpet in a new home. There are few gifts that one

could give to another that would not fade and tarnish with the passage of time. But this inheritance will never fade. It never loses its beauty or its freshness. Though flowers fade, rapidly losing both their color and beauty, heaven will never fade or lessen in quality.

**reserved in heaven for you,**

*“tereo... to attend to carefully, take care of; i.e. a. prop. to guard... b. metaph. to keep, ... to hold firmly... c. to observe ... d. to reserve...”* (Thayer, p. 622; 5083)

Reserved is only one of the definitions of this term. Our inheritance is carefully being attended and guarded for us. Our God will keep it for us and no one can take it away. It will be there for us when we are ready for it. If we remain faithful in our service to Him then it will definitely be there. Our inheritance is being safely kept for us. It cannot be removed, broken into, defiled, or harmed. God is guarding and keeping it for us.

The greatness of this hope is enhanced when all others are either willingly or by force taken from us. The natural aging process purges many of the false and foolish hopes from us. Civil government can also as in the case here, through persecution take them away. Wise Christians willingly remove them from themselves that the power of God might wax as strong as possible in them. They rely solely upon the one hope God has given (Eph 4:4)