

# Praise for the New Birth

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1 Peter 1:3-5

## TEXT:

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God’s power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time” (English Standard Version).

Εὐλογητὸς ὁ θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὁ κατὰ τὸ πολὺ αὐτοῦ ἔλεος ἀναγεννήσας ἡμᾶς εἰς ἐλπίδα ζῶσαν διὰ τῆς ἀναστάσεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐκ νεκρῶν, εἰς κληρονομίαν ἀφθαρτον καὶ ἀμίαντον καὶ ἀμάραντον, τετηρημένην ἐν οὐρανοῖς εἰς ὑμᾶς τοὺς ἐν δυνάμει θεοῦ φρουρουμένους διὰ πίστεως εἰς σωτηρίαν ἐτοιμῆν ἀποκαλυφθῆναι ἐν καιρῷ ἐσχάτῳ.

## NOTES:

- I. Peter blesses God, v. 3.
  - A. Blessing God is well-known from the Old Testament.
    1. Gen. 9:26.
    2. Ps. 66:20.
    3. Cf. Lk. 1:68.
  - B. The God who is blessed is the God and Father of Jesus Christ.
- II. By God’s mercy we have been born anew to a living hope, v. 3.
  - A. God is a God of mercy.
    1. God revealed himself to Moses as “a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness” (Ex. 34:6).
    2. God is “rich in mercy” (Eph. 2:4).
    3. God saved us, not because of our own deeds, but “in virtue of his own mercy” (Tit. 3:5).
  - B. This mercy gave us a new birth to a living hope.
    1. “Living hope” naturally follows “new birth”—If Christians have been born again, they are spiritually alive.
    2. Jesus said that unless one is “born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (Jn. 3:3). Jesus does use a different Greek term here than is used in 1 Pet. 1:3.
    3. The hope that we as Christians have is living—it’s an abiding, active hope. This is hope that doesn’t end.
- III. We could be born anew because of Jesus’ resurrection, v. 3.
  - A. Jesus’ resurrection from the dead allows Christians to have a “living” hope.
  - B. The resurrection is crucial to Christianity.
    1. Jesus was “designated [the] Son of God in power ... by his resurrection from the dead” (Rom. 1:4).
    2. If Christ has not been resurrected, we are still in our sins (1 Cor. 15:17).
    3. Baptism saves through Jesus’ resurrection (1 Pet. 3:21).
- IV. Christians have been born anew to an inheritance.
  - A. The background for the Christian thought of “inheritance” lies in the Old Testament.
    1. The idea was often used Canaan, the promised land.
      - a. God promised Abraham that the land would belong to his descendants (Gen. 12:7).
      - b. Joseph told his brothers that God would bring the Israelites to the land God promised (Gen. 50:24).
      - c. Moses was not permitted to enter the land God promised to the patriarchs (Deut. 34:4).
      - d. God told Joshua that he was giving Canaan to the Hebrews (Josh. 1:2).
      - e. Joshua would cause the Hebrews to “inherit” the land God swore to the patriarchs (Josh. 1:6).
    2. The idea then came to stand for the reward of the godly (or ungodly) at judgment.
      - a. The “smooth stones” were the Hebrews’ “portion” (Is. 57:6).
      - b. Daniel would stand in his “allotted place” at the end of the days (Dan. 12:13).
  - B. This second idea was carried over into the New Testament.
    1. The rich young man asked Jesus, “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” (Mk. 10:17).

2. "Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God?" (1 Cor. 6:9).
  3. Those who are impure have no "inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God" (Eph. 5:5).
  4. Slaves are reminded that "from the Lord [they] will receive the inheritance as [their] reward" (Col. 3:24).
- C. The idea, then, is that this inheritance is eternal salvation.
- V. This inheritance is sure, v. 4.
- A. The salvation is imperishable—the inheritance will not rot or decay.
    1. We exercise self-control to receive an imperishable crown (1 Cor. 9:25).
    2. The dead shall be raised imperishable (1 Cor. 15:52).
  - B. The salvation is undefiled--free from moral or religious filth.
  - C. The salvation is unfading--not like the flowers which fade; it is free from the natural ravages of time.
  - D. The salvation is kept in heaven. In heaven, this salvation is free from anything which could corrupt it.
- VI. These Christians are guarded by God's power through faith, v. 5.
- A. God's power protects or guards Christians until they can receive this inheritance.
    1. The term "protect" means to protect with a garrison or military guard.
    2. Christians are guarded from Satan's attacks.
      - a. God will not allow us to be tempted beyond our strength (1 Cor. 10:13).
      - b. No one can snatch us out of Jesus' hand (Jn. 10:29).
  - B. Yet, this protection comes through faith.
    1. This is not a blanket promise for protection.
    2. This is a promise for protection if we have faith. If we lose our faith, we are no longer protected.
- VII. Christians are guarded "for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time," v. 5.
- A. Our salvation isn't going to be revealed until the last time.
  - B. This is God's final display of power for his people--he is no longer protecting them. He is now vindicating his people.