

What is “the Blessed Hope” of the Believers?

By Robert I. Adams

In Titus 2:13, we read of awaiting “the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.”

The question we will be looking at is: What did the apostle Paul actually mean by the phrase “the blessed hope”?

We can find help in answering this question in the same letter Paul wrote to Titus. In chapter 1, Paul mentioned having “hope of eternal life.” And in chapter 3, he again mentioned “the hope of eternal life.” It is therefore logical to conclude that when Paul wrote “the blessed hope” in chapter 2, he had in mind “the hope of eternal life.”

Let’s see how Paul used the word “hope” elsewhere:

In 1 Thessalonians 5:8, Paul wrote of “the *hope* of salvation.”

In Romans 5:2, Paul wrote of rejoicing “in *hope* of the glory of God.”

In Acts 24:15, Paul said, “I have *hope* in God ... that there will be a resurrection of the dead.”

Here, Paul defines the Christian hope as being the resurrection. In conjunction with what we see Paul says in his letters about hope, those resurrected from the dead who believe in Christ will be finally saved, have eternal life, and the glory of God.

Paul stated that believers who die will be resurrected when Jesus returns. In 1 Thessalonians 4:15-16, he wrote that at “the coming of the Lord ... the dead in Christ will rise.”

The apostle Peter also wrote about hope. In his first letter, he encourages his readers, and says, “Rest your *hope* fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ” (1 Pet. 1:13).

Like Paul, Peter connected the concept of hope to what believers will experience at the revelation of Christ when He comes. The apostle John did the same. In his first letter, he wrote: “But we know that when He appears, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as he is. Everyone who has this *hope* in him purifies himself, just as he is pure” (1 John 3:2, 3).

John says that our hope is becoming like Jesus when He appears.

This aligns with what Paul wrote in Philippians 3:20-21, where he says that we await Christ, “who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body.”

For those believers who are dead when Jesus returns, receiving a body like the one Jesus has will happen in the resurrection. Moreover, for those believers still alive when Jesus returns, their bodies will be changed, as Paul relates in 1 Corinthians 15:51-53:

“We shall all be changed, 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.”

Paul also wrote of the return of Christ in his second letter to the Thessalonians where he says that believers in the church experiencing “persecutions and tribulations” will be given “rest ... when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God” (2 Thess. 1:4, 7).

When Christ comes and is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels all persecution and tribulation the church is going through will end. The believers will be given rest when their bodies are changed and they are gathered to Jesus together with the believers who are resurrected.

According to what we have looked at, the “blessed hope,” is the confidence believers have of receiving a glorified body like the one Jesus has. Paul connects this to Christ’s “glorious appearing” thus showing that the resurrection and glorification of the believers happens when Christ comes from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire.

The “blessed hope” will therefore be finally realized at the second coming of Christ.

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