

# Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

Vol. XXX

March 22, 2020

No. 12

## An Unfading Hope

(Jerry Fite)

**B**ut we hoped that it was he who should redeem Israel (Luke 24:11). This was not uttered in victory, but seemingly in defeat. Cleopas, one of the men traveling from Jerusalem to Emmaus, was speaking with sadness. Jesus had proven Himself as a prophet, being mighty in deed and word. Yet, He had just been crucified. The bubble of hope had been burst with the cross. Or, so he thought.

Many an athlete has started the season with conference, national or world title in sight, only to have lofty hopes dashed to the ground when defeated at season's end. And how many hopeful fans have tried to be hopeful in defeat by saying, “Well, wait till next year.”? How many college basketball enthusiasts are seeing their favorite team having to wait to next year, not because they were defeated by another team, but because all teams were defeated by a virus pandemic.

What is ironic in Cleopas' statement is that he is speaking to a resurrected Jesus. Jesus was not defeated by death, He was alive! But Cleopas had already heard this information. He says, “Moreover certain women of our company amazed us having been

early at the tomb: and when they found not His body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels, who said He was alive. And certain of them that were with us went to the tomb and found it even so as the women had said: but him they saw not” (Luke 24:22-24).

What is the problem, Cleopas? You might not know that it is Jesus to whom you are speaking but you have heard the evidence that He is alive. By your own admission, you also know that it has been three days since Jesus' death (Luke 24:21). Jesus had promised that he would rise from the dead within three days, and now apparently, He has. Why are you speaking as if your hope has faded? Could it be that you, like Jesus' own apostles were basing your hope on Jesus redeeming Israel from Rome, instead of the people's sins? Jesus is alive, but has not come to overthrow Rome, and restore the kingdom back to Israel (cf. Acts 1:6). Is this why you are sad in your faded hope, Cleopas?

Cleopas' hope was mistaken. The one hope of heaven for those redeemed from sin is based upon Jesus fulfilling His

promise and raising Himself from the dead. Those who have submitted to the message of the Gospel have been begotten “unto a living hope” (1 Peter 1:3). This hope leads the redeemed Christian “unto an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you (1 Peter 1:4).

How can we be assured that this hope of heaven, which we have never seen, is a surety? God, who has promised the inheritance that fadeth not away, “cannot lie” (Titus 1:2). He has based this promise for hope on that which only God could fulfill: the resurrection from the dead. Our hope is lively, because it cannot be diminished by death. Because Jesus was raised, the Christian will be raised putting on incorruption (1 Corinthians 15:53).

Have you, like Cleopas, a mistaken hope? If our hope is bound within the confines of this life, then it will surely fade in death. If our hope is bound in temporal political hopes, it will fade in time. But the one hope that Jesus secured in His resurrection takes us beyond this life into the eternal bliss of heaven. Such a hope will only become brighter. It will never fade!