

Unwithering Grace

Scripture Reading — 1 Peter 1:13-25

*Set your hope on ... grace ... through the living and enduring word of God.
1 Peter 1:13, 23 —*

The Bible uses the word “wither” to describe many things—reeds, fields, leaves, grass, branches, vines, plants, and the world itself. Even more sobering is news that the human heart, the starry host, nations and cities, vast numbers of the wicked, and even the joy of humankind will wither.

Against this multitude of fading things stand some that do not seem to wither. The person who delights in the law of the Lord is “like a tree planted by streams of water ... whose leaf does not wither” (Psalm 1:3). “The blameless spend their days under the LORD’s care ... In times of disaster they will not wither” (Psalm 37:18-19). And as Peter explains in our reading today, believers in God through Christ are born again of imperishable seed. They do not lose hope at worldly prospects of a bleak future.

In a vision of eternity Ezekiel sees a river where fruit trees of all kinds grow: “Their leaves will not wither. ... Their fruit will serve for food and their leaves for healing” (Ezekiel 47:12).

We know that our hearts will be whole again, healed of infirmity, pulsing with joy, for Peter urges us, “Set your hope on the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at his coming.”

Prayer

God of abounding grace, we give thanks today for the Spirit of hope who keeps our hearts and our hopes fresh by the grace already given to us. Through Jesus Christ, Amen.

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