

## ***ARE YOU READY FOR THE DAY OF THE LORD?***

**2 Peter 3**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

If I were to ask you, What does the Bible say about the anti-Christ? What are the signs of the times? When is Jesus coming back? What is the Parousia? What are the different millennial perspectives? What is the difference between a futurist and a preterist?, would you know what I'm talking about, or would you be clueless?

All of these questions have to do with eschatology, the study of the end times, and most Christians today fall into the clueless category.

But eschatology is not a difficult subject to comprehend. Sure, there are some passages of Bible prophecy that are difficult to understand, but for the most part, the passages of the Bible that deal with the end times are very clear and straightforward. We are going to deal with one of those passages today.

### **12 FACTS ABOUT THE DAY OF THE LORD**

**ONE: The day of the Lord is Christ's return.**

**2 Peter 3:3-4** "Above all, be aware of the this: Scoffers will come in the last days scoffing and following their own evil desires, saying, 'Where is his coming that he promised? Ever since our ancestors fell asleep, all things continue as they have been since the beginning of creation.'"

Peter says that scoffers (mockers) will make fun of those who believe in the second coming.

Verse 10 "But the day of the Lord will come like a thief." So the day of the Lord is the day of Christ's second coming.

We also see the day of the Lord equated with the second coming of Christ in **2 Thessalonians 2:1-2** “Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered to him: We ask you, brothers and sisters, not to be easily upset or troubled, either by a prophecy or by a message or by a letter supposedly from us, alleging that the day of the Lord has come.”

The day of the Lord is Christ’s second coming. When you come across verses about the day of the Lord, they are referring to the day of Christ’s return. When you read verses about Christ’s return, they are referring to the day of the Lord. Passages about the day of the Lord help us understand Christ’s return. Passages about Christ’s return help us to understand the day of the Lord.

Verse 3 “Scoffers will come in the last days....”

What are the last days? The context tells us. Peter warns about scoffers. Then Peter spends the rest of the chapter arming his readers to stand up to scoffers. And then he says that scoffers will come in the last days. So the last days were happening when Peter wrote this letter.

They were living in the last days, and so are we.

Acts 2:17 says that the last days were happening on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2. **Acts 2:17** “And it will be in the last days, says God, that I will pour out my Spirit on all people....”

Hebrews 1:2 says that Jesus and those living in the first century were in the last days. **Hebrews 1:2** “In these last days, he has spoken to us by his Son. God has appointed him heir of all things and made the universe through him.”

The last days started with the incarnation (first coming of Christ), and they will conclude with the return of Christ.

Verse 3 “Scoffers will come in the last days scoffing and following their own evil desires, saying, ‘Where is his coming that he promised?’”

When did Jesus promise to come back? **Matthew 25:31** “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne.”

**TWO: Those who believe in the day of the Lord will be mocked.**

**2 Peter 3:3-4** “Above all, be aware of the this: Scoffers will come in the last days scoffing and following their own evil desires, saying, ‘Where is his coming that he promised? Ever since our ancestors fell asleep, all things continue as they have been since the beginning of creation.’”

The second coming of Christ has always been a target of the enemy.

In 2 Thessalonians 2:1-3, Paul warned his readers of false teachers who were claiming that the second coming had already occurred; that Christ had already returned.

And here Peter warns his readers about scoffers who will say that Christ will never return.

A scoffer is a mocker. They are synonyms. But a scoffer does not mock out of fun. A scoffer has contempt for his victim. He wants to shame his target. He wants to hurt his target. He despises his victim.

This is Peter’s motive for this entire chapter. Peter knows that scoffers will make fun of Christians for believe in the second coming of Jesus Christ. “He said He was coming back, but where is He?”

We need this encouragement today. It has been 2,000 years since Christ promised to come back, and we’re still waiting. Christians are easy targets for scoffers. And with each passing year, it get’s harder and harder to not be discouraged by the scoffers.

So Peter encourages us with these words. **2 Peter 3:5-7** “They deliberately overlook this: By the word of God the heavens came into being long ago and the earth was brought about from water through water. Through these the world of that time perished when it was flooded. By the same word, the present heavens and earth are stored up for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.”

God created the entire universe with words – “Let there be light.”

He created the world “from water through water.” When God first created the world, there was no land. It was just water (Gen 1:2). So God brought about the earth from water. And then on the third day of creation God created dry land, so He brought about the earth through water (Gen 1:9).

God has the power to create the universe. God has the power to destroy the earth with a flood. And this same God will destroy the heavens and the earth, and judge and destroy the ungodly. In other words, those who scoff now will suffer on the day of the Lord.

**THREE: The day of the Lord will see the destruction of the present heavens and earth.**

**2 Peter 3:7** “By the same word, the present heavens and earth are stored up for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.”

On the day of the Lord, which is the day of Christ’s return, God will destroy the present heavens and earth with fire.

He reiterates this a few verses later, in verse 12. **2 Peter 3:10-12** “10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief; on that day the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, the elements will burn and be dissolved, and the earth and the works on it will be disclosed. 11 Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, it is clear what sort of people you should be in holy conduct and godliness 12 as you wait for the day of God and hasten its coming. Because of that day, the heavens will be dissolved with fire and the elements will melt with heat.”

So on the day of the Lord, “that day (v. 10)”, Christ will destroy the heavens and the earth.

**Verse 10** “on that day the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, the elements will burn and be dissolved....”

What are the elements? Even the earth’s most basic, fundamental building blocks – think periodic table; think atoms, molecules, protons, neutrons and electrons – will be destroyed.

**Verse 10** “and the earth and the works on it will be disclosed.”

This either refers to the judgment – the day of the Lord will include the destruction of the heavens and earth, and the judgment in which everyone’s deeds are made known and brought out into the open.

Or it refers to the earth being destroyed. Several translations, including the KJV, AMP, and NASB translate the word “disclosed” as “burned up”.

Both translations work because other verses tell us that both of these things will occur on the day of the Lord.

I think it means that the earth and the works on it will be burned up because verse 7 says that the heavens and earth are stored up for fire. And then verse 11 says, “Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way...”

Why? Peter will explain a few verses down.

**FOUR: The day of the Lord is the day of judgment.**

**2 Peter 3:7** “By the same word, the present heavens and earth are stored up for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.”

Verse 7 teaches us something else about the day of the Lord. It is the day of Christ's second coming; it will see the destruction of the heavens and earth; and it is also the day of judgment.

Jesus spoke often about the day of judgment.

**Matthew 12:36** "I tell you that on the day of judgment people will have to account for every careless word they speak."

We've already seen that the day of the Lord is the day of Christ's return, and Jesus said that the day of His return is the day of judgment.

**Matthew 25:31-32** "31 When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. 32 All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate them one from another, just as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats."

So the day of the Lord, the day of Christ's return, is the day of judgment, when everyone will stand before Christ to be judged.

Revelation 20:11-15 calls this the great white throne judgment.

**Verse 7** "By the same word, the present heavens and earth are stored up for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly."

Peter makes it very clear that the day of judgment will also be the day of destruction of the ungodly. It is not a day of second chances. It is a day of reckoning. A day of vengeance (2 Thess 1:6-10).

**Matthew 25:46** "And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

The day of the Lord is a terrible day for unbelievers because it will be the day of their judgment and eternal destruction in hell (see also 2 Thess 5:2-3).

## **FIVE: The day of the Lord will come like a thief.**

**2 Peter 3:8-9** “Dear friends, don’t overlook this one fact: With the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day. The Lord does not delay his promise, as some understand delay, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish but all to come to repentance.”

Peter encourages us with two reasons not to grow impatient with God.

First, God is timeless. 2,000 years seems like a long time to you, but to God is it nothing. He is outside of time. It may seem like God is moving slow to you, but not to Him, and not in reality. There is no time to God. And when we step into eternity, we will step outside of time too.

Second, God is not delaying, He is being patient. He is giving people more time to repent. He doesn’t want anyone to perish.

God loves the world (Jn 3:16). He does not take pleasure in the suffering of mankind (Lam 3:33). If you are not a believer, you should rejoice that the day of the Lord has not come yet. If you have unbelieving friends and family members, you should rejoice that Jesus has not come back yet.

Peter reiterates this in **2 Peter 3:15** “Also, regard the patience of our Lord as salvation....”

This is more proof that the day of the Lord is also the day of destruction for the ungodly, because on that day the ungodly will “perish”.

**2 Peter 3:10** “But the day of the Lord will come like a thief; on that day the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, the elements will burn and be dissolved, and the earth and the works on it will be disclosed.”

The day of the Lord is synonymous with the second coming, or Parousia of Christ, and this day will come like a thief.

**2 Thessalonians 5:2-3** “For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. When they say, ‘Peace and security,’ then sudden destruction will come upon them, like labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.”

The timing of Christ’s return is a mystery. It will come like a thief in the night. Unexpected. So anyone who claims to know when Christ is going to return is misled and misleading others.

Verse 10 “But the day of the Lord will come like a thief; on that day the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, the elements will burn and be dissolved....”

Once again, notice that the day of the Lord is the very day that Christ will destroy the heavens and earth.

#### **SIX: The day of the Lord is called the day of God.**

**2 Peter 3:11-12** “11 Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, it is clear what sort of people you should be in holy conduct and godliness 12 as you wait for the day of God and hasten its coming. Because of that day, the heavens will be dissolved with fire and the elements will melt with heat.”

Peter gives the day of the Lord another name – the day of God.

The second coming is referred to by many different names in the New Testament. The day of the Lord (2 Pt 3:10); the day of God (2 Pt 3:12); His coming (*parousia*); His appearing (*epiphaneia*); His revelation (*apokalupsis*); and the blessed hope (Titus 2:13).

#### **SEVEN: The day of the Lord is a wonderful day for Christians.**

**2 Peter 3:11-12** “11 Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, it is clear what sort of people you should be in holy conduct and godliness 12 as you wait for the day of God and hasten its coming....”



The word “hasten” means speed. Christians want to speed the day of the Lord.

Why? It is a day of destruction for the ungodly, but it is the day of glorification and rewards for believers. When Christ comes back, He will give believers their new glorified bodies, completing their salvation.

**Philippians 3:20-21** “20 but our citizenship is in heaven, and we eagerly wait for a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ. 21 He will transform the body of our humble condition into the likeness of his glorious body, by the power that enables him to subject everything to himself.”

At Christ’s second coming believers will be given brand new bodies that are completely free of sin, and suffering, and pain, and sickness, and scars, and weakness, and imperfections, and mortality.

The day of the Lord is a day to hasten because it is the day that Christ will vanquish His enemies. On that day He will destroy the Antichrist, and unbelievers, and Satan (2 Thess 1:6-10; 2:8).

**EIGHT: The day of the Lord will see the creation of the new heavens and earth.**

**2 Peter 3:13** “But based on his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness dwells.”

Another reason that we hasten the day of the Lord is because it will not only be the destruction of the present heavens and earth, but the creation of the new heavens and earth.

“But based on his promise.”

The new heavens and earth were promised by God all the way back in the Old Testament.

**Isaiah 65:17** “For I will create a new heaven and a new earth; the past events will not be remembered or come to mind.”

The best description of the new heaven and earth is found in Revelation 21.

**Revelation 21:1-2** “Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. 2 I also saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared like a bride adorned for her husband.” Revelation 21 goes on to describe the new Jerusalem like this:

- It is arrayed with God’s glory. Her radiance is like a precious jewel, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. Rev 21:10-11
- The city will be laid out in a perfect square, with its length and width equal – 1,400 miles. Rev 21:15
- The city will have a “massive high wall.” Rev 21:12
  - The wall will have twelve gates, three on each side. Rev 21:12, 13, 21
    - Twelve angels, one for each gate, will be guarding the gates. Rev 21:12, 13
    - The names of the twelve tribes of Israel will be inscribed on the gates. Rev 21:12
    - Each gate will be made of a single pearl. Rev 21:21
  - The wall will be 216 feet high. Rev 21:17
  - The wall will have twelve foundations, each made of a different jewel – jasper, sapphire, chalcedony, emerald, sardonyx, carnelian, chrysolite, beryl, topaz, chrysoprase, jacinth, and amethyst. Rev 21:14, 19-20
  - Each of the wall’s foundations will have the name of one of the twelve apostles. Rev 21:14, 19-20
  - The wall is made out of jasper, a reddish stone. Rev 21:18
- The city is made of pure gold, clear as glass. Rev 21:18
- The main street of the city will be made out of pure gold, transparent as glass. Rev 21:21
- There will be no temple, because the Lord and the Lamb are its temple. Rev 21:22

- There will be no sun or moon, because the glory of God illuminates it, and its lamp is the Lamb. Rev 21:23
- The city gates will never close. Rev 21:25
- There will never be night. Rev 21:25
- Nothing unclean will ever enter it. Rev 21:27
- No one who does what is detestable or false will enter it. Rev 21:27
- Only those written in the Lamb's book of life will enter it. Rev 21:27
- God will dwell with and live with humanity. Rev 21:3
- He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Re 21:4
- Death will be no more. Rev 21:4
- Grief, crying, and pain will be no more. Rev 21:4

**NINE: Christians must prepare for the day of the Lord by being holy.**

The next four facts about the day of the Lord are about how Christians are to wait and prepare themselves for it.

**2 Peter 3:14-16** “14 Therefore, dear friends, while you wait for these things, make every effort to be found without spot or blemish in his sight, at peace. 15 Also, regard the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our dear brother Paul has written to you according to the wisdom given to him. 16 He speaks about these things in all his letters. There are some matters that are hard to understand. The untaught and unstable will twist them to their own destruction, as they also do with the rest of the Scriptures.”

This is an important passage for the doctrine of the Bible, because Peter says that Paul's letters are Scripture – equal in inspiration and authority to the Old Testament.

“Make every effort to be found with spot or blemish in his sight.”

The first way for Christians to prepare for the day of the Lord is to be holy.

This is the second time that he said this. Verse 11 “Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, it is clear what sort of people you should be in holy conduct and godliness.”

What is holiness? Moral blamelessness. It is the moral character of God and Christ. When Christ comes back, we don’t want Him to find us living in sin; we want to be found without spot or blemish.

**TEN: Christians must prepare for the day of the Lord by pursuing peace.**

**2 Peter 3:14-16** “14 Therefore, dear friends, while you wait for these things, make every effort to be found without spot or blemish in his sight, at peace.”

Not only must we prepare for the day of the Lord by being holy, but also by pursuing peace.

Peace is the absence of conflict and hostility.

There are two kinds of peace we must pursue as we wait for the day of the Lord.

First, peace with God. This is what salvation is all about (Rm 5:1). Christ died on the cross to reconcile us to God. But the only way to have peace with God is to turn to Christ in faith as Savior and Lord. Otherwise you remain an enemy of God. And if you are an enemy of God on the day of the Lord, then you will be destroyed.

Second, peace with fellow believers. Christ wants us to be unified, not fighting, and bickering, and devouring each other. When He returns, we want Him to find us at peace with one another, getting along and getting things done for Christ.

**ELEVEN: Christians must be on their guard so that they are not led away by unbelievers.**

**2 Peter 3:17** “Therefore, dear friends, since you know this in advance, be on your guard, so that you are not led away by the error of lawless people and fall from your own stable position.”

Peter returns to the theme of scoffers. The entire chapter is a warning about scoffers, and an encouragement as we face scoffers.

Here Peter gives us a command. Be on your guard so you are not led away by the error of lawless people.

All around us there are people who do not believe in Christ; they do not believe He is coming again. They either do not believe in God at all, or they believe in a false god. This is the case with the majority of people on earth. “The days are evil (Eph 5:16).” And it is easy to get pulled away from pure to devotion Christ.

Be on your guard. Don’t let this happen. Paul said, “Do not be conformed to this age.... (Rm 12:2).” James said that pure and undefiled religion is “... to keep oneself unstained from the world (James 1:27).”

**TWELVE: Christians must prepare for the day of the Lord by growing in Christ.**

**2 Peter 3:18** “But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity.”

We are to prepare for the day of the Lord by being holy, pursuing peace, being on guard so that we are not led away, and by growing in Christ.

Until the day of Christ’s return, or until you die, whichever comes first, you are commanded to strive for spiritual growth. To learn God’s word more and more, and to become more and more like Christ. To love God more and more, and to love others better and better. To be more and more useful, and productive, and fruitful for Christ.

**CONCLUSION**

We don't know when the day of the Lord will be, but we know it will be.

While we wait for the day of the Lord we must not sit on our hands and stare at the sky. We have work to do. We have been give a great commandment and a great commission. We must grow in Christ, and we must strive to reach as many people for Christ as we can.

Are you ready for the day of the Lord? If Jesus comes back today, will you be ready to meet Him. Are you living a holy life? Are you saved?