

LIVING FOR GOD IN UNCERTAIN TIMES #9

“God’s Promise Is Not Slack”

2 Peter 3:1-2

¹ Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in *both of which* I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder), ² that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior,

***Thought** – Remember, Peter knows that he is about to die and is leaving this final letter (**2 Peter 1:13-14**). He has exhorted the believers to grow in their faith, to trust in the prophetic word, and to be aware of the false teachers that would arise. Now in closing, He stresses the need to keep the Second Coming in mind.

He mentioned the Second Coming in his first letter (**1 Peter 4:7**), but now he wishes to "**stir up your pure minds by way of reminder.**" This word "**pure**" carries with it the idea of being tested by sunlight to expose any flaws. Well, the same thing happens when our minds are exposed to the light of scriptures by the illumination of the Holy Spirit. The word of God "**is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart**" (**Hebrew 4:12**).

So Peter wants to "**stir up**" or wake up our "**pure minds**" so that we will "**be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets**" of the Old Testament, as well as the teaching of the New Testament "**apostles of the Lord and Savior.**"

To think the Old Testament is somehow old and outdated is a serious

error. Peter makes it very clear we need both Old and New together to get a clear picture of God and what He has to say.

2 Peter 3:3-4

³ knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, ⁴ and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation."

***Thought** – One reason we need to be "**stirred up**," alert, and "**mindful**" is "**that scoffers will come in the last days.**" The Greek literally means "**upon the last of days.**" Peter knows that he is speaking about a future time beyond his own day and ministry. This word "**scoffers**" means mockers and is used of false teachers in **Jude 18**.

These "**scoffers**," or mockers who make a joke of the Second Coming, are "**walking according to their own lust.**" This is their nature. They love the things of the world and so scoff at any thought that judgment is coming and even at the door (**Matthew 24:33**).

One thing they say is, "**Where is the promise of His coming?**" There is no telling when that might happen, for "**all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation.**"

2 Peter 3:5-6

⁵ For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, ⁶ by which the world *that* then existed perished, being flooded with water.

***Thought** – "**For this they willfully forget**" or ignore this truth on purpose that God already intervened once, and He will intervene again.

In the days of Noah, the warning of coming judgment was given and ignored, and it will be again. The same God that fulfilled His word then will fulfill it again. It's just that simple.

2 Peter 3:7

⁷ But the heavens and the earth *which* are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

*Thought – "But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word," after the flood:

Genesis 8:22

²² "While the earth remains,
Seedtime and harvest,
Cold and heat,
Winter and summer,
And day and night
Shall not cease."

Genesis 9:11

¹¹ Thus I establish My covenant with you: Never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood; never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth."

The "**same word**" that has kept those promises for thousands of years is also the "**same word**" that keeps this present world "**for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.**"

Applying this word "**perdition**" to people makes it clear that the one who is destroyed is responsible for his situation. As this judgment takes place at the Great White Throne, the earth will also be refined by fire

2 Peter 3:8-9

⁸ But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. ⁹ The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

***Thought** – God's view of time from an eternal perspective is far different than our view of time from our earthly, temporal perspective. To "**the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.**" Now, there is a prophetic importance to this Scripture, such as in **Hosea 6:2** which states that after two days the Lord will revive us, and that 2,000 years is upon us! We will soon enter into a seventh day of rest referred to as the millennial reign (**Revelation 20:4**).

But the main point Peter is making here is that Jesus will come right on time, for "**the Lord is not slack on His promise, as some**" on earth "**count slackness.**" He is not running late but will also not come early, for He wants to give us time, "**not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.**"

In other words, God allows things to continue for the sake of all those who will "**come to repentance**" in the coming days. Aren't you glad He gave you time? But make no mistake. He is coming right on time!

2 Peter 3:10

¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.

***Thought – "But the day of the Lord will come."** Not *might* come. God is not willing that any should perish, but He is coming **"as a thief in the night"** when people are not expecting Him (**1 Thessalonians 5:2; Matthew 24:44**). In this case, Peter is using **"the day of the Lord"** as a time frame which begins with the catching away of the saints, the seven-year tribulation, the millennial reign, and the Great White Throne of Judgment, until the new heaven and new earth which John saw in **Revelation 21:1**.

Yet Peter describes the transformation of the old **"heavens will pass away with great noise,"** and the earth **"will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up."**

When John sees this **"new heaven and new earth,"** there is no more sea (**Revelation 21:1**). Can you imagine the heat and the steam which would have to take place to dissolve the sea, and what that would do to the sky, which is also called the first heaven?

My friend, you do not want to miss this.

2 Peter 3:11-12

¹¹ **Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness,** ¹² **looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat?**

***Thought – "Therefore since all these things will be dissolved"** and pass away, **"what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct,"** which includes all manner of life and behavior. To be **"holy"** is to be set apart from the things of the world and to be separated unto

God. If all things of the world are going to pass away, what are we holding on to?

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"Godliness" is to live God's way and flows from a healthy reverence of who God is.

"Looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God" is believed by many to mean that the faster we accomplish the great commission, the faster He will come. This word **"hastening"** (*speudontas*) actually means **"eagerly waiting,"** or longing and being ready, as a bride prepared for the wedding. When everyone is prepared, it doesn't prolong things, but it doesn't necessarily speed them up either.

People also get this thought from **Matthew 24:14: "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all nations, and then the end will come."**

The fulfillment of this actually takes place in:

Revelation 14:6-7

⁶ Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people— ⁷ saying with a loud voice, "Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water."

So here's my thought. We are to be eagerly waiting upon the Lord, preparing His bride, fulfilling the great commission, and we need to hurry because we only have so much time. Period.

2 Peter 3:13-14

¹³ Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

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¹⁴ Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless;

***Thought** – So we look forward to this time of a "new heaven and new earth in which righteousness dwells," knowing that Jesus is coming at a time unexpected, so we need to be ready.

We want to be found by "**Him in peace, without spot and blemish,**" for Jesus is coming looking for a bride "**not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish,**" having been washed by the water of the word (Ephesians 5:26-27).

2 Peter 3:15-16

¹⁵ and consider *that* the longsuffering of our Lord *is* salvation—as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, ¹⁶ as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable *people* twist to their own destruction, as *they do* also the rest of the Scriptures.

***Thought** - We should not be discouraged by scoffers, false teachers, or date setters, knowing "**that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation**" to many. He will not come early for their sakes, and will not come late for our sakes.

These things can be confirmed by the writings of "**Paul, according to the wisdom given to him**" by God. It is especially these things concerning end times "**which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction**" as Jim Jones, David Koresh, Charles Manson, etc., etc., etc., "**as they do also the rest of the Scriptures.**"

2 Peter 3:17-18

¹⁷ You therefore, beloved, since you know *this* beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; ¹⁸ but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.

***Thought** – Peter closes his final letter to his "**beloved,**" warning us to "**beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness**" where you now stand with the Lord, "**being led away with the error of the wicked.**" This reminds me of when Paul said, "**Let him who thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall**" (1 Corinthians 10:12). In other words, believers never outgrow their need to be watchful.

The way to guard against this is to "**grow in the grace,**" the divine influence upon the heart and its reflection in the life, and the "**knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ,**" continually renewing our minds (Romans 12:2) and being conformed into His likeness (Romans 8:29).

"To Him be the glory both now and forever."

God Bless!

See You Next Week!

*Pastor Grant Cole
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